

**More than just “Hello” and “Ni hao”:
Exploring bars and intercultural communication in a touristic town,
Yangshuo, China**

by

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to explore the communication and interaction between westerners and Chinese people in western bars in the touristic town of Yangshuo in southern China. Yangshuo is worldly famous for its breath-taking Karst Mountains, rice fields and water buffalos. It has attracted millions of visitors annually, both domestic and international. The tourist center of Yangshuo consists of a main street, West Street, and many other small streets around it. In recent years, bars and night clubs have been established, bringing a more modern and western atmosphere to the main tourist streets that are paved in marble and lined with ancient buildings. This research is focused on bars, western bars in particular, as a unique setting for intercultural communication and interaction.

First of all, this research introduces a background of intercultural communication definitions, the link between bars and tourism in China, as well as international tourism in China. With the goal of understanding the intercultural phenomena in bars through conversations and observations, I explored the role of bars in the community, the social and intercultural situations in bars, and the reflection and outcome of those communication and interaction. Field work was conducted in July and August 2010, by using both qualitative and quantitative research methods: questionnaire survey and ethnographic participant observation. I was able to obtain a broad perception of the subject as well as detailed description from participants, including myself.

A broad range of literature related to bars and spaces in leisure and tourism, as well as in the fields of intercultural communication, intercultural host-guest relationship in tourism, tourism and cultural understanding, and tourist experience were reviewed. The gaps in the literature were identified. Limited research was done by addressing the actual situations of intercultural communication and linking the social and intercultural theories with actual practice, especially in a tourism context. Also, the role of western bars, as a new form of recreational, cultural and social space in China needed more attention.

Chapter four and five present major findings of this research. Informants were divided into five groups: western tourists, local westerners (westerners who have become residents), Chinese tourists, Chinese students studying English in Yangshuo, and local residents. Preliminary findings from questionnaire survey indicate that westerners and Chinese people have difference reasons for visiting Yangshuo and going to bars. Bars have both social and recreational functions for westerners but are of less interest to and have more limited functions as attractions to Chinese tourists. Local residents have the least interest in western bars but Chinese students often go to them, mainly to practice English with foreigners. Detailed analysis of qualitative data suggests intercultural communication and interaction have difference purposes and styles for the different groups. Students, locals who work in the bars and local westerners have most contact with western tourists. Chinese tourists tend to interact with westerners in non-verbal ways, such as in games and photo-taking. Language is a major communication barrier but westerners made more effort to overcome this, reflecting both desire and need as visitors in a foreign land.

The research findings can seek theoretical explanation through many social and intercultural theories. They suggest tourist-host interaction and communication has been overrated, especially when tourists are travelling in a different culture. The level of contact and cultural understanding is relatively superficial, but more meaningful than mere commercial exchanges. The trend of globalization and cultural homogeneity was well recognized by both cultural groups. The acknowledgement of cultural difference and interaction between customers should be encouraged and facilitated in bars, in order to create an authentic bar experience and nurture effective intercultural communication.

Keywords: Intercultural Communication, Intercultural Interaction, Bars, Yangshuo

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Research background

1.1.1 Intercultural communication and Tourism

Dodd (1982) has defined intercultural communication as “interpersonal communication within a ‘special’ context, namely a situation where one perceives cultural differences” (p, 3). Although in many situations, intercultural communication refers to interpersonal communication, there are also forms such as intergroup communication, inter-organization communication and international communication that are unique forms of interpersonal communication (Kim, 1988). Intercultural communication can be divided into interethnic, interracial, and international communication (Samovar et al., 1981). Intercultural interaction and encounters are practical forms of intercultural communication (Carbough, 2007).

Culture is difficult to define because there are many perspectives of defining it as well as the various forms of culture itself. I intend to adopt a constructivist perspective to study culture, which is to define culture as a network of shared knowledge but not limited in racial, ethnic, and national groups, rather considering social context and situation that activate shared knowledge in practice (Hong, 2009). In this research, the use of the term “culture” combines the macro and micro forms of culture. The macro form of culture identifies the participants from their racial, ethnic and national identities, while the micro form of culture classifies the participants further into different groups considering their role in this research.

Culture is the foundation of communication and affects communication in various ways, such as language used in communication, the effects of cultural values of norms on communication, cultural identity, etc (Samovar et al., 1981). Moreover, it is communication that reflects the value and norms of a culture (Jordan-Jackson & Davis, 2005). According to the concept of self-construal in social psychology, independent self-construals and individualism are most representative in western culture, while interdependent self-construals and collectivism are dominant in non-western cultures (Singelis, 1994). In terms of communication, the “independent self” tends to be direct in communication while the “interdependent self” engage into indirect communication and “reading other’s mind” (Singelis, 1994). Therefore, it is possible, but difficult for two individuals with different self-construals to communicate. The social psychological aspect of intercultural communication will be further discussed in the literature review.

The terms cultural communication, cross-cultural communication, intercultural communication and intergroup communication are often used interchangeably. Baldwin and Hunt (2002) have clarified the differences among these concepts: cultural communication is the communication practice of a specific cultural group, cross-cultural communication refers to the comparison and scholarly analysis of communication of two or more cultural groups, intercultural communication often refers to individuals from two cultures communicating with each other, while intergroup communication can be identified as communication between two groups that involve social identity. Two important social identities are cultural and ethnic identities, and the social identities strongly influence

intergroup communication (Hubbert, Gudykunst & Guerrero, 1999). Interpersonal communication and intergroup communication are a continuum and, most of the time, the communication process interchangeably shifts within the continuum. Evidently, as depicted below, only social identity theory regards the relationship between intercultural and intergroup communication as a continuum. Both interpersonal and intergroup communication can represent intercultural communication at a certain level, also, positive and effective intercultural communication can foster healthy intergroup relations. Figure 1.1 illustrates the relationship of interpersonal, intergroup and intercultural communication (Baldwin & Hunt, 2002). In this project, the term intercultural communication used as interpersonal communication is a focus, but it is influenced by and also influences intergroup communication.

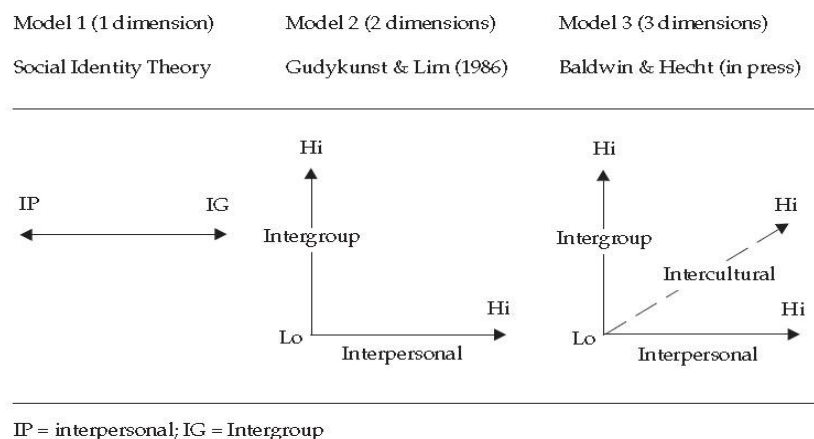


Figure 1.1: Model of Intergroup Communication (Baldwin & Hunt, 2002, p. 274)

The world has become a village because of globalization. Globalization has successfully shortened the distances between continents and provided more chances for intercultural encounters. The emergence of multicultural societies and the growing

international and intercultural mobility have triggered research in this field (Sarbaugh, 1988). Different types of sojourners, such as refugees from wars, immigrants, business people, international students and international tourists are seen to have structural differences in intercultural communication, such as communication motivations, patterns, competence, as well as conflict styles. These differences impact their intercultural encounters in both positive and negative ways (Hinnenkamp, 2009).

Tourism, especially international tourism, is closely connected with intercultural communication. On the one hand, in terms of temporary intercultural interaction and exchange, tourism has potentially become a way of reducing existing barriers in intercultural communication. Presumably traveling internationally or interculturally can help tourists gain knowledge of the destination and a bigger world, it also increases opportunities for local people to express their culture and to gain knowledge of the guest cultures. Therefore tourism improves mutual understanding of people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds and also uses the differences between cultures to attract visits and generate revenue. Tourism experiences are often experiences of intercultural exchanges (Jack & Phipps, 2005). On the other hand, the level of intercultural communication between tourists and hosts can affect the development of tourism. For example, business communications, educational communications, as well as cultural exchanges can serve as chances for tourism promotion. Effective intercultural communication can result in the change of attitude of both parties towards each other, thus potentially benefiting tourism development and both tourists and hosts' experience in tourism (Zhang et al., 2006).

Within the context of tourism, intercultural communication is defined as a communication process experienced by tourists and hosts with cultural differences (Reisinger, 2009). Social interaction is an important component in a tourist's experience. Otten and Geppert (2009) argue that intercultural communication should be seen as “a special mode of social interaction that increases semantic and knowledge asymmetries among the interacting individuals” (p. 13). Social interaction can be interpreted as encounters with other people, while intercultural communication can be viewed as encounters that deal with the production, consumption, and exchange of meaning. Thus, these two concepts are closely bonded. Intercultural communication is often presumed to be enhanced by tourism through face-to-face intercultural interactions and the increases of intercultural awareness.

Social interactions that occur through tourism are often complex, for they include the subject, situation, context, and styles, etc. The studies of social interaction in tourism often emphasize the interaction between tourists, especially independent tourists; therefore they have a strong emphasis on the “word-of-mouth” promotion in which tourists share information about accommodation, food, attractions, tourist services and other information, and influence destination marketing and destination image. Studies of intercultural communication associated with tourism have a broader concern, including intercultural adaptation of tourists, tourists’ satisfaction with place, relationships between tourists and hosts, and tourists’ attitude change towards the destination and host culture. Moreover, the studies of intercultural communication also have significant links to cultural anthropology

and socio-linguistic studies. Therefore, to integrate the studies of intercultural communication and social interaction means to put communication and interaction into a context with both cultural and social considerations.

1.1.2 Bars and Tourist Destinations in China

International tourism in the Asia and the Pacific region has developed rapidly in the last decade; international arrivals have been continually increasing (Figure 1.2, UNWTO, 2010). China is one major destination country in the east, as it has very profound culture and history. The Silk Road brought people from the east and west together 3000 years ago and nowadays more and more international tourists go to China from all over the world and experience the oriental wonders. The major distinction between Chinese culture and western culture has been identified as the representatives of collectivism and individualism, which strongly determine the way people communicate in their daily lives (Xu & Mei, 2002). Therefore, both cultures inevitably affect the communication between western tourists and Chinese hosts, and between western tourists and Chinese tourists. The demand and outcome of intercultural communication during western tourists' trip to China can influence their travel experience, satisfaction to the destination; possibly also impact their understanding of the other culture, interpersonal relationships with the culturally different others, and their intercultural communication competence. At the same time, it also has an effect on local community and tourism development.

The tourism industry has been influenced by globalization in many ways. One of the outcomes is the propelling of international tourism; another is the export and import of

cultural values, habits and knowledge between the host and guest cultures. But the transferring of cultures usually flows from the main-stream or economically stronger culture to the weaker ones. Therefore, intercultural communication has resulted in the appearance of not only personal outcomes of individuals who have engaged in those communications, but also, the transaction of places, such as social and business establishments.

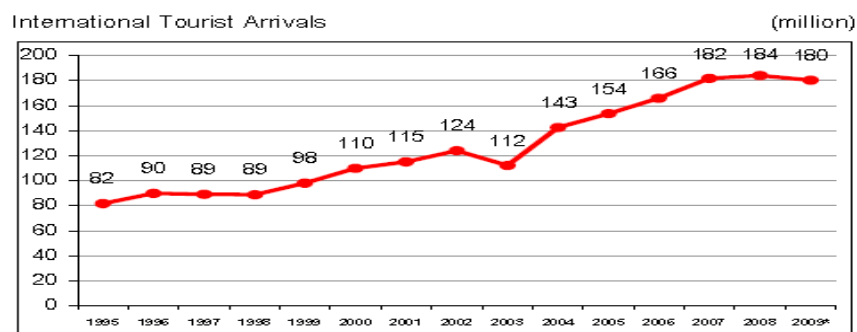


Figure 1.2: Asia and the Pacific: Inbound tourism (UNWTO, 2010)

As China’s tourism industry grows rapidly, as well as its economic growth, it has become one of the major tourist destinations in the world. International tourist arrivals ranked fourth in 2005 (UNWTO, 2005, derived from Xi et al., 2008). As a major revenue generator, tourism has increasing importance in the Chinese economy, and even has become the major force in the recovery of the economy from the lingering global economic recession (UNWTO, 2010). Within the tourism development plan of the Chinese government posted on the World Tourism Organization website, enriching the cultural dimension of tourism is one of the missions of 2009 (UNWTO, 2010). The Chinese government officially recognizes 56 ethnic groups and multiculturalism has always been a pride of the Chinese people. Chinese culture, as well as different ethnic cultures in China,

has become tourist attractions and has also brought multiculturalism to many tourist destinations (Chen, 2006).

However, the westernization and commercialization of Chinese culture have not showed any positive impact on China's public awareness of cultural preservation. Therefore, many tourist destinations in China have built up modern establishments and tried to attract more tourists. Westernized places, such as bars, coffee shops, and western restaurants, have appeared abundantly in small scaled Chinese tourist destinations. It is critical to accuse the existence of those establishments. On one hand, they are the results of cultural communication, which satisfy the needs of western tourists as well as Chinese tourists; while on the other hand they provide contexts for intercultural communication and social interaction in tourism. However, these establishments do not necessarily cater to local residents; only generate job opportunities to local community.

This research set stage in one type of those western establishments, bars. The research of taverns, bars, clubs, and cafés in leisure studies can be associated with the concept of "third places" which indicates that places beyond home and work - the first and second places, have become meaningful in people's daily life (Oldenburg & Brissett, 1982; Oldenburg, 1999). The studies of bars in China have not touched this concept but emphasized their recreational function and culture of bars. It is known that bars and clubs are common in many western countries, however, bars only came to China in the 1980's, they started to get popular among young people, "white collar" working class, and western music fans. Recreational places similar to bars are tea houses in China, they have served as

places for traditional operas and performances, customers of ancient tea houses are seniors or retirees, and more and more tourists go to famous tea houses nowadays as well.

Bars in the western world have a lot of forms, such as pubs, taverns, clubs, discos, etc, as well as they are in China, the Chinese word for bar is “Jiu Ba”, “Jiu” means alcohol and “Ba” is merely the transliteration of the English word bar, it also includes various forms of bars, but the emphasis is that “Jia Ba” counts all bars that serve alcohol. Generally speaking, bars are imported to China as a result of globalization and most of them are in big cities, such as Beijing, Shanghai, with an image of modern, young, and fashionable. There are also stereotyped perceptions of bars relating to drug use, crimes, and sex trade, thus bars have a negative image in general public. Not only in big cities, nowadays there are more and more bars appearing in touristic towns in China, such as ethnic minority towns, ancient historic towns, and rural areas. Interestingly, bars in China do not usually appear singly but often with the development of bar streets or bar district, whether in big cities or small tourist towns. Therefore many bars are connected in the same area.

1.2 Purpose Statement

1.2.1 Research purpose and social significance

This research focused on the function of bars as to provide spaces and opportunities of interaction and communication between tourists and hosts from different cultural backgrounds, in the case of a multicultural destination: Yangshuo, China. The purpose of this study is examining the role of bars in the community and bars as the spatial setting of intercultural interaction and communication between different western and Chinese groups

in Yangshuo: western tourists, local westerners, Chinese students study English in Yangshuo, Chinese tourists, and local residents. Mixed methods were used in data collection and analysis. Questionnaire surveys were conducted with western and Chinese tourists, as a quantitative instrument to obtain the macro perception on bars and intercultural communication from tourists. In order to investigate the details of the role of bars and the characteristics and outcomes of intercultural interactions and communication, ethnographical approaches such as participant observation, thick description, informal interviews, and video recordings were conducted to collect qualitative data.

From a pilot study of western tourists' written blogs about their travel experience in Yangshuo, conducted as part of the graduate course assignment for REC 673, the researcher was able to build basic understandings of the patterns and experiences of western tourists' intercultural interaction and encounters with local people and with other tourists. Therefore, this research project was designed to explore into this subject in-depth. The pilot study assists the researcher to build theoretical foundations, select case study for this project, and to guide future data collection.

The world is all about people, and what people do and think matter. The promotion of humanity and peace has been the primary task to making the world a better place, and the requirement of "global thinking" and embracement of cultural, ethnic and personal diversity have become an agenda of many organizations. Tourism is seen to connect different cultures and people in a unique way. In the world of tourism, two major forces are tourists and hosts. Tourists and hosts might not only be different in culture, what tourists

do and hosts want from tourism are different, but tourism has brought these two parties together. They are sharing spaces, resources, and so forth, whether they are the same or different and whether they like it or not. But the contact between tourists and local people, and between tourists from different cultures, can be very limited, because of the lack of opportunity and communication barriers. Bars, in the tourist town, are providing the context and opportunity for intercultural communication.

Many studies in China have addressed consumer behavior in bars, and included bars in leisure studies of young Chinese or of the emerging middle-class in China. Recently more scholars have shown the interest in bar street in tourist destinations from a marketing perspective. Not only tourists and locals' interest in bars varies, bars as a setting for drinking and communicating, will generate more than just money and jobs. Communication and interaction are inevitable and necessary for providing understanding and satisfaction to tourists and locals, but the situation is different when the context is a western setting and both parties are from different cultures. Although many researchers have successfully addressed the problems associated with tourist-host relations, community attitude towards tourism and tourists, and the impact of tourism, there is limited research on intercultural communication in the tourism field. This research thus can provide insight on the role of bars for tourists and locals, and reflect from intercultural communication in bars on the contexts, processes, influencing factors, and outcomes of the communication practices between western and Chinese in tourism.

The social significance of this research can be concluded in three aspects: Firstly, this research contributes to the understanding of intercultural phenomena, especially intercultural interaction and communication in the tourism context. Tourism sometimes is seen as the force of promoting peace, by tourists visiting places and hosts facing tourists. But whether these interactions and communications happen and how tourism promotes cultural understanding through communication and interaction between people in a specific destination. This research provides empirical understanding of the outcomes of having personal conversations between culturally different groups from individuals' perspectives.

Secondly, the study of places and spaces in leisure and tourism can benefit from this research. The role and impact of bars with western concept in a rural Chinese town contribute to the understanding of leisure styles in the tourist community and local community of Yangshuo. The concept of third places in leisure and health studies might not fit in the context of tourism, because it is often oriented towards local community and benefits locals individually and the community as a whole. However, the linkage between third places and community can possibly be transformed in the tourism context. In addition, in the context of tourism development in China, bar street is a unique and contemporary form of entertaining space both in big cities and in touristic towns, the presence and role of this type of space is rarely researched.

Lastly, this study contributes to tourism impacts on small scale community. Tourism has brought bars to local community as well as to tourists. However, as an interesting leisure setting, the appearance of western style bars may bring cultural novelty or

resentment to local community and familiarity to western tourists. Bars itself, as well as the experience of communicating and interacting with tourists it creates, can be treated as a result of tourism development, which may impact on how locals understand westerners and western culture, and on how they view their own culture and identity. This research provides insights on the shift of culture and identity of local residents in a tourist destination.

1.2.2 Research Goal and Objectives

The goal of this research is to examine intercultural communication and interaction in western bars in the traveler center in Yangshuo, China. The implications of this research are to provide empirical study to the intercultural phenomena in tourism in order to fill the gaps in intercultural interaction and communication studies and in the tourism field, moreover, it will examine the role of bars as "third place" in a tourist destination and significance of intercultural communication within those places, in order to provide insights on intercultural communication improvement for tourism developers and planners.

There are four objectives of this research, the research questions according to each objective are listed below.

- a. Examining the role of western bars in Yangshuo to western and Chinese customers
 - Who are the customers, western tourists, Chinese tourists, or local residents?
 - What are the reasons of westerners and Chinese going to bars?
 - What are they doing in the bars? What are the activities?
- b. Investigating the difference in bars as contexts and the facilitation of intercultural

communication

Do western customers and Chinese customers communicate in bars?

Why do they communicate or not communicate in bars?

How do bars and other contexts facilitate more or less communication?

- c. Identifying the process and content of intercultural communication and interaction in and out of bars

How do people approach for conversation?

What do they talk about in their conversation?

What are the purposes of intercultural communication and interaction between Chinese and westerners in Yangshuo?

- d. To identify the outcomes of intercultural interaction and communication in bars

Do tourists or local residents improve their understanding of different cultures they interact and communicate with?

What are the personal outcomes gained from those communication and interactions?

How do Chinese and westerners perceive those communication and interactions?

Are there stereotypes towards the other culture and other people?

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Research on bars in tourism and leisure

2.1.1 Bars and Third Places

There is few existing literature on the relationship between bars and tourism. Bars in big cities, such as London, become multi-culture spaces and tourist attractions (Shaw, Forrester & Karmowska, 2004). Malam (2008) has examined the heterosexual masculinity in southern Thailand's tourism industry. The setting of her research is a beach bar in southern Thailand. She examined hegemonic and subordinated masculinities through the encounters between bar workers and Thai transgendered people, tourist women, and tourist men. Although the focus of her research is not on bars, it has showed the complexity of the encounters inside the bars between workers and tourists contextually and culturally.

Bars are also researched as one element of the symbols of leisure and vacation tourism in Chinese ancient towns. According to Ding, Lu and Huang (2006), Lijiang ancient town has 46 bars in 2006, Zhouzhuang town and Huizhou town rarely have any bars. However, this difference has not been highlighted in the study. Lijiang has great surrounding scenery, which provides tourists the opportunity of a variety of activities, not limited to the ancient town. Therefore, the main function of the bars in Lijiang should be providing night entertainment. Moreover, the international arrivals in Lijiang are much higher than the other two towns, bars as a form of western leisure space may satisfy the needs of international tourists. Although the researchers resulted in that Lijiang has more developed leisure and vacation tourism than the other two towns, the identification of leisure and

vacation tourism is not very convincing and the role of bars in tourism development is not investigated.

Tourism and leisure studies are often closely connected, therefore, many studies addressing the leisure function of bars, as well as the sociability and emotional attachment of bar patrons, can also be tested and examined in tourism. One of the most important concepts link bars with leisure studies is the concept of third places. According to Oldenburg and Brissett (1982), third places are characterized by “sociability and nondiscursive symbolism”, where face-to-face but not programmed interaction would occur. Beatley and Manning (1997) emphasized another characteristic of third places in civic communities, that third places may often be private owned but are open to the public. Mair (2009) explores curling clubs as third places in rural communities in Canada, and discovered the changes of community can impact the changes of third places. Grower-only farmer’s market is examined as a third place for growers and shoppers as customers and sellers, although it’s a workplace, it provides informal associations and social life for farmers (Tiemann, 2008). In the context of backpacking, O’Regan (2008) identified internet cafés as an indicator of the hypermobility life style of backpackers, they may not be aimed at enhancing tourist-local contact but they are likely third places for local residents. There are a large variety of places can be categorized as third places, they can be both private and public, therefore bars, restaurants and cafés where patrons are customers/consumers, can be categorized as commercial third places (Rosenbaum, 2006).

Oldenburg (1999) has summarized ten functions of third places to communities as unifying neighborhoods, helping newcomers, sorting people with specific interests, bringing youth and adults together, caring for neighborhood, fostering political debates, reducing cost of living, entertaining, nourishing friendship, and the importance to retired people. Third places are indicators for community quality of life. The relationship between the presence of third places and community quality of life have proved to be positive, third places can provide opportunities of social interaction for community members in order to foster community and communication (Jeffres et al., 2007). Residents on different age level choose different types of places as their third places (Jeffres et al., 2007). However, in general organizations, clubs and parks are more popular than commercial third places and residents are in favor with public rather than private places. There is also an increasing trend of the construction of web third places by community residents (Jeffres et al., 2007). Online chat rooms, games, and social networks are becoming new forms of third places: virtual third places, in the digitally connected world (Ducheneaut et al., 2007; Moore et al., 2009).

Rosenbaum (2006) has categorized places by physical and social dimension, the social dimension of places consists of “observable activities, functions and meanings, which often arise from social relationship between people” (p. 61). He concluded that the social supportive role of third places intrigue older customers to patronize third places and add emotional dimension to those places. Social support in the commercial third places is revealed in companionship, emotional support and instrumental support from customers

and employees (Rosenbaum et al., 2007). In the case of older adults' attachment to a fast-food restaurant, Cheang (2002) discovered that exchanging social support is relatively less important; rather, the attached meaning to restaurant as a third place for older adults is to simply be with friends, play and laugh. Rosenbaum (2006) has also revealed the health related function of third places, he claimed that third places can help remedy or reduce negative symptoms of emotional or social loneliness.

The health related function of third places not only benefits the health of a community, it also promotes emotional as well as physical health of individuals. Frumkin (2003) has proposed several research agendas that link the concept of "sense of place" with public health. From the research of Glover and Perry (2009) on the role of third places on people living with cancer, the researchers suggest that third places can be seen as a supplement for medication and provide escape from home and hospital and emotional support from others who are also living with cancer. As a summary, sociability is one of the main criteria of constructing a third place but third places can become important components not only of community development but also of individuals' daily lives. However, the role of public leisure spaces is rarely examined either in a cross-cultural context. In this research, whether the bars fit the criteria of third places and the role and function of bars as newly developed places in the community are examined.

2.1.2 Tourist Bars in China

The phenomenon of bars being established in tourist towns in China has recently started bringing Chinese scholar's attention. Long (2009) first brought up the term "Tourist

Bar” (旅游酒吧) in her research on the phenomenon of bar street, which is also called “Foreigner Street” in Dali, Yunnan, southwest China. Similar old towns such as Lijiang, Yangshuo, and Fenghuang in China, also have similar bar street or area. The culture sensation of tourist bars in Dali lies mainly in the categories of spiritual experience and culture communication (Long, 2010). Bar streets have become themed streets in many destinations in China, including some famous bar streets in big cities (Huang, 2006). Some of them have become tourist attractions, such as Sanlitun Bar Area in Beijing.

However, for big cities, bars have a large variety, and substantially attract local residents. In small tourist towns, bar street seems to be more tourist-targeted. Generally there are only small amount of new businesses catering to local residents in such towns, which indicates the high degree of commercialization (Bao & Su, 2004). Unlike the British pub and Irish pub, which have contributed significantly to the image of Britain and Ireland and to the experience of visitors, tourist bars in China do not have such significance. But bars in tourist towns are symbols of leisure in culture tourism; they represent tourists’ need for leisure and entertainment in a culture tourism context (Ding, 2007). Most of the authors in China explored “bar culture”, but they merely used the term to identify the marketing and business value of bars (Tian & Yang, 2010; Xu & Huang, 2010).

Therefore, bars were not researched as social and leisure spaces in China, their influence on tourists’ experience and local’s perception of such places were not well investigated. Also, bars are often associated with negative social issues; no research has yet tapped the scenes behind bars.

2.2 Related Literature on Intercultural Communication

Intercultural communication, as a field of inquiry, has generated a wide range of studies, such as in communication science, anthropology, socio-linguistics, sociology and socio-psychology, etc. (Hinnenkamp, 2009). Although the long tradition of research on intercultural communication was initiated by Edward Hall's book in 1959, *The Silent Language*, intercultural communication theories have only been nourished both in academe and in the public realm since the 1980's. As summarized from recent and earlier studies, there are in general three dimensions of the study of intercultural communication: socio-culture and socio-linguistic related dimension, intercultural behaviour and experiences, and intercultural communication in practice. These dimensions have represented the foci of intercultural communication research over time, although they might overlap and some studies have included more than one aspect of those mentioned above.

The first and initial dimension is the relationship between culture and communication. The socio-cultural perspective includes the influences of culture on communication, cultural conflict and communication and socio-cultural identity in communication (Applegate & Sypher, 1988; Cronen et al., 1988; Collier & Thomas, 1988; Dodd, 1982; Kim, 2008; Singer, 1998; Weisinger & Salipante, 2000). The common goal of these studies is to find links between culture and communication and build intercultural communication theories. The complexity of the meaning and nature of culture and communication became a primary consideration (Samovar et al., 1981).

From a constructivist standpoint, Applegate and Sypher (1988) have defined communication as “occurring when two or more people, with a mutually recognized intention to share, exchange messages” (p. 45); they suggested that cultures differentially value communication goals and alternative strategies of reaching these goals. From an interpretive perspective, Collier and Thomas (1988) have defined culture as “a historically transmitted system of symbols and meanings, and norms” (p. 102); thus it can refer to ethnicity, gender, nationality, profession or any other symbolic system. They have constructed culture system by norms/rules, meanings, and core symbols and suggested that cultural identity, from an interpretive perspective, is an indicator of intercultural communication. Singer (1998) has also outlined the propositions of culture and identity in intercultural communication. He suggested that there is no “culturally identical” individual, but the symbolic group individuals comprise does have a culture and it can pass its perceptions, attitudes, values and other norms to individuals. Because of globalization and internationalization, cultural identity is evolving rather than static and the dynamic of intercultural experiences can form the “intercultural personhood” of individuals (Kim, 2005).

Hall (1992) has categorized the concept of culture in intercultural communication research from three aspects: form, function and locus. A “traditional” concept of culture is in the forms of community, serves as identity and shared group membership, and the locus of culture is in the expressions of identity. The perspective of coordinated management of meaning takes culture as conversation which helps to explain social interaction and

communication while, in the perspective of ethnography of communication, culture is the code of meaning making and the locus of culture is in the inter-subjective discourses, symbols and signs (Hall, 1992).

A Coordinated Management of Meaning theory (CMM) was first developed by Cronen, Chen and Pearce (1988). It criticized the “mainstream” theories in intercultural communication as taking the worldview from Descartes and taking individuals as the fundamental unit of analysis. CMM has been developed in the last two decades and presented by Pearce (2005) in the form of understanding and explaining cultural communication in some extreme and alternative situations, such as in the cases of terrorism. CMM theory seeks communication as performative under multiple levels of contexts and forms of motivations (Pearce, 2005).

Many cultural communication theories have been developed and revised over the years, and are still applicable nowadays, but the theoretical limitations are inevitable and constantly appear in the research on culture and intercultural communication. As described as a “paradoxical loop”, Koch (2009) has summarized one limitation as “it is constructing precisely those differences that it initially intended to overcome”. This indicates that the researchers try to identify cultural differences and difficulties but the ultimate goal of intercultural communication is to overcome those differences and difficulties in order to communicate. Because of the changing nature of culture (Singer, 1998), it is difficult to build a theoretical framework of intercultural communication.

The next dimension within the paradigm of intercultural communication is intercultural behaviour and experiences, including many socio-psychological studies, numerous intercultural adaptation theories and relevant empirical studies, assessment of intercultural sensitivity, and the study of intercultural competence, etc (Dodd, 1982; Gudykunst, 1988; Gallois et al., 1988; Jackson, 2008; Paige et al., 2003; Tesoriero, 2006). It is generally agreed that intercultural communication is usually interpersonal, because groups, organizations, or nations do not communicate, people do (Kim, 1988; Singer, 1998). But the studies of an individual's intercultural behaviour and experiences can often reflect intergroup communication and intercultural relations.

Intercultural behaviour has been linked with many psychological studies. The earliest one is culture shock. Culture shock has had a long tradition of academic focus since the 1950s. The descriptions of culture shock have also developed over time, from the traditional U-curve, to W-curve, and many other forms (Oberg, 1960; Brein & David, 1971; Dodd, 1982). Culture shock is closely linked to acculturation, or intercultural adaptation. Similar to culture shock, cultural conflict, stress, expectation gaps can also have negative impacts on intercultural experiences. Intercultural adaptation has become an effective way to reduce culture shock and cultural conflict, and therefore to enrich intercultural experiences and communication (Brein & David, 1971; Kim & Ruben, 1988; Gudykunst, 1998; Lin, 2006; Shupe, 2007).

Social psychologists of inter/cross-cultural studies have categorized individuals from western and non-western cultures as individualists and collectivists, generally

individualists use independent self-construals and collectivists use interdependent self-construals (Smith & Bond, 1993). Singelis (1994) developed a Self-construal Scale, to measure individuals' self-construals and proposed that it is possible to have both interdependent and independent self-construals. The differences between individualists and collectivists that influence their communication and interaction have been researched and listed to help both parties to communicate and interact effectively.

The characteristics of collectivists' behaviour include the relationship between group memberships with behavior change, comfortable in unequal relationships, see competition as threatening, emphasize harmony and co-operation, emphasize face image (public self) and help them preserve their face in interactions, do not separate criticism from the person being criticized and avoid confrontation whenever possible, cultivate long-term relationships, tend to be formal in interactions (Triandis et al., 1988), collectivists also tend to avoid conflict or use a third party to mediate conflict, their communication style is more indirect and prefer non-verbal or implicit messages (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001).

The characteristics of individualists' behaviour include not predictable from group memberships, emotionally detached from ingroups, be proud of their accomplishments and say negative things about others, prefer equal relationships, do not see competition as threatening, not emphasize harmony and co-operation, do not form long-term relationships and that initial friendliness does not indicate an intimate relationship, tend to maintain relationships when they receive more rewards than costs, do not respect others based on position\age\gender as much as collectivists, do not view outgroups as highly different

from ingroups (Triandis et al., 1988), tend to solve conflict from when it is small and often separate the conflict from the person with whom they are having conflict with, do not value silence in conversations (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001). Therefore, being aware of the differences and adapt them in communication can assist individualists and collectivists to communicate effectively and reduce misunderstandings and conflicts. However, the differences are not absolute, cultural differences are not the only influences on intercultural communication, there are other factors such as expectations, quantity and quality of contacts, etc (Gudykunst, 1998).

The Anxiety/uncertainty Management theory (AUM) from Gudykunst (1988, 1998, 2005a, 2005b) has been tested and adopted in many empirical studies (Banatwala, 2002; Duronto et al., 2005; Hullett & Witte, 2001; Kodaira, 2002; Miller & Samp, 2007; Sobre-Denton & Dan Hart, 2008; Wickelgren, 2004). The model of uncertainty and anxiety suggests the reduction of uncertainty and anxiety in intercultural communication is influenced by ethnolinguistic identity, second language ability, expectations, group similarity, shared networks, interpersonal salience, self-monitoring, cognitive complexity and tolerance for ambiguity (Gudykunst, 1988). Gudykunst (2005a) has enhanced the model and built the organizational schema which reduces an individual's anxiety and uncertainty management in intercultural situations, thereby improving the effectiveness of intercultural communication. AUM theory has been successfully adopted to analyze intercultural adjustment and adaptation, and used in intercultural adjustment training and effective intercultural and intergroup communication. Gudykunst (1998, 2005b) has

applied the AUM model to intercultural adjustment training (Figure 2.1). The model has explicitly explained the basic dimensions of reducing uncertainty and anxiety, thus how to adjust to intercultural situations and accomplish effective intercultural communication.

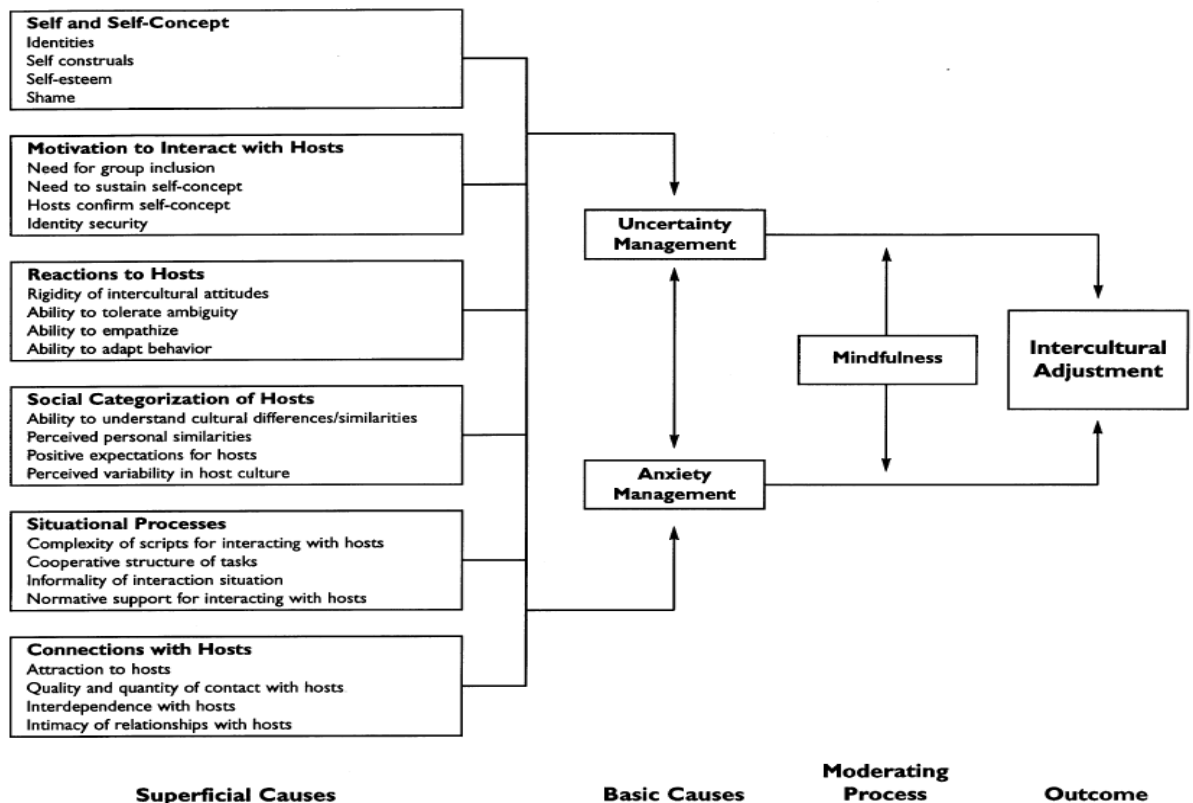


Figure 2.1: An Illustration of AUM Applied to Adjustment (Gudykunst, 1998, p. 231)

The continuous flow of cultures and the increasing mobility of people from different cultures have triggered the research on intercultural adaptation (Cusher & Brislin, 1996; Ellingsworth, 1988). The majority of these studies focus on sojourners, including immigrants, intercultural company workers, expatriates, and international students (Brown, 2009; Fritz et al., 2008; Haslberger, 2005; Lin, 2006; Klak & Martin, 2003; Spencer-Rodgers & McGovern, 2002; Yoo et al., 2005). Intercultural adaptation and adjustment is a multi-dimensional phenomenon. Although it is not possible to cover each

dimension, many researchers have provided both intercultural adaptation theories and empirical studies from dynamic perspectives.

Due to the increasing number of international students and their availability for research, international students' intercultural adjustment appears to be the most popular research topic compare to other sojourners. A study of international students' performance taxonomy by Guzman & Burke (2003) has shown eight dimensions of performance labeled as engaging in academic and non-academic tasks, communicating with host nationals, writing and using the local language, helping and cooperating with other international students, demonstrating effort in an academic setting, maintaining personal discipline, developing social and personal relationships with host nationals, and adjusting to general conditions of living abroad.

The intercultural experiences of sojourners, especially international students, vary with the duration of the sojourn and from geographical, cultural and situational settings. Long-term intercultural sojourns are examined as having transformative power which consists of learning about other cultures, changing perspectives on life, becoming independent, confronting stress, changing priorities, renegotiating domestic life, and coming home as a new beginning (Brown, 2009). From a phenomenological perspective, Kristjansdottir (2009) has examined the influence of cultural knowledge (language, communication styles, norms, and habits) and cultural identity (ethnicity, nationality, gender and social class) on short-term sojourners' lived experience abroad, as well as their

acquired learning in their intercultural experiences. The students described the internal feelings of being invisible or unseen.

Another study of a Chinese student organization on a US campus by Lin (2006) suggested that culture shock of international students is contextually based; social support provided by a student organization as well as communicating with members of the same culture, can contribute to coping with culture shock and gaining intercultural competence. This study has indicated that social interaction with people of the same cultural background can help sojourners' intercultural adjustment. There are also cultural conflicts within the context of international students (Shupe, 2007). Despite of the complex nature of cultural and individual conflict, researchers have suggested mutual understanding should be the procedural achievement of intercultural interactions (Chiang, 2009).

Taking intercultural communication as a communicative process or experience of two individuals from two different cultures, especially of sojourners and hosts, most of the studies only revealed sojourners' intercultural experiences and behavior. It has proved the trend of academic research to focus on the minorities. Another possible reason might be one of the assumptions of much intercultural communication research, that one participant in this process is seen as a "stranger" (Gudykunst, 1983). Thus there is limited studies addressed the behaviour and experiences of both sojourners and hosts in intercultural communication. However, the studies addressing the outcomes of intercultural communication usually provide the mutual outcomes, such as attitude change, intercultural learning and acceptance and so forth (Nesdale & Todd, 2000; Dörnyei & Csizér, 2005).

The outcomes of intercultural communication are usually researched from several directions: cultural predictors, demographic predictors, social influences, personality factors and skills (Smith & Bond, 1993). Contact hypothesis indicates that intercultural contacts can reduce prejudices in certain conditions (Goto & Chan, 2005). It is used by many researchers, to address the causal relationship between intercultural contacts and their outcomes (Smith & Bond, 1993).

Intercultural communication in practice refers to the application of intercultural communication theories in the public domain, including intercultural management and training, especially in the service industry (Clausen, 2010; Lee & Chon, 2000; Bluea & Harunb, 2003). The intercultural communication motivational scale is an instrument used to assess trainees' intercultural competence in order to assist intercultural training (Kupka et al., 2009). Intercultural service encounters are a special form of intercultural interaction with clear interactive goals. There are many studies that addressed intercultural service problems and they suggested solutions from management perspectives (Hopkins et al., 2005; Stauss & Mang, 1999; Warden et al., 2002). Intercultural service encounters between customers and service providers take place often in multicultural societies and tourist destinations. People from different cultures may have different service expectations and satisfaction levels (Constanza, 2001). Perceived cultural distance and intercultural competence are examined to influence inter-role congruence, interaction comfort, adequate and perceived service levels, and satisfaction in the case of new immigrants and service providers in Hong Kong (Sharma et al., 2009).

It is not possible to cover all the dimensions of intercultural communication. Although it is a fairly new field of study, it has covered numerous areas. In addition to the three dimensions above, there are many other aspects of intercultural communication, such as the analysis of facework in communication (Spencer-Oatey, 2006) and plenty of sociolinguistic studies of intercultural communication (Bell, 2007). However, the field of intercultural communication research has been criticized as failing to produce understanding of actual practices of intercultural communication, namely intercultural encounters and cultural analysis of social interactions as well as other associated intercultural dynamics (Carbough, 2007). This study will explore intercultural communication in tourism from intercultural interactions and encounters, thus to understand intercultural communication from interpersonal practices.

The purpose of reviewing literature in intercultural communication from a broader lens is to associate relevant studies with tourism. As a special kind of sojourner, tourists' intercultural communication and other intercultural phenomena have had little attention. The intercultural communication studies can be adapted to tourism from three aspects: the influential factors of intercultural communication, the behavioral and experiential studies of tourists and hosts, the study of intercultural interactions and service encounters in tourism.

2.3 Intercultural Communication Related Studies within the Tourism Context

Evans (1976) firstly proposed the linkage between tourism and cross-cultural communication from an anthropologist's perspective. He suggested that tourist and host

interaction can be examined to follow the variables of temporal, spatial, communication and cultural elements. Within the context of intercultural communication and tourism, earlier studies focused on addressing cultural differences of tourists and hosts (Reisinger & Turner, 1998), in order to provide marketing and planning strategies. There has not been much attention to studying intercultural communication of tourists and hosts, one exception is Sarah Richardson's dissertation in 1996, although it is generally agreed tourists' international or intercultural experiences are inevitably involved with intercultural communication (Reisinger, 2009; Suvantola; 2002) and the nature of intercultural contact between tourists and hosts need to be better understood (Richardson, 1996), the phenomenological study of tourists' international encounters has been constructed on the contact hypothesis that the more contact tourists have can result in both positive and negative perceptions, the finding reveals the subjective and self-discovery nature of tourists' international traveling, but it does not have any data on the perceptions of residents.

One explanation for the limited research of intercultural communication of tourists and hosts is the role of intercultural mediators in tourism; the most representative one is tour guides (Yu et al., 2003). Tour guide competence in intercultural communication is important in connecting tourists and the host community (Yu et al., 2003) but varies from the perception of tourists from different cultures (Leclerc & Martin, 2004). Tour guides can also serve as the key contributors in constructing "authentic tourism" (Reisinger & Steiner, 2006). However, with the development of "alternative" tourism, the number of independent travelers increase over time, especially traveling to developing countries, and alternative

tourists tend to have more direct contact with local residents (Hottola, 2005). As service providers in tourism, tour guides' relationships and interactions with international tourists can also be included in the frame of intercultural service encounters.

Research on intercultural communication in tourism has been suggested as being relevant by many intercultural and cross-cultural researchers (Chen & Starosta, 1996; Katriel, 1995), Steiner and Reisinger (2004) proposed that the basis of intercultural communication in tourism should be the acknowledgement of cultural differences between international tourists and local hosts, and the goal should be the 'spacing' of culturally different individuals. In tourism, hosts and tourists as message senders and receivers of intercultural communication do not need to achieve agreement or create shared meanings (Reisinger, 2009). Rather, intercultural communication in tourism can be seen as a display of cultural differences (Steiner & Reisinger, 2004).

This suggestion is arguable, although this study has successfully demonstrated that intercultural communication in tourism can be very difficult and different and has reconceptualized intercultural communication by proposing the concept of "authentic intercultural communication". It is arbitrary to separate this multifaceted notion from its origin and ignore the nature of intercultural communication in tourism. However, the motivations of tourists in their intercultural experiences differ from other sojourners such as immigrants and international students, thus the system of intercultural communication between tourists and the host community should be examined differently.

From the perspective of cross-cultural psychology, Berno and Ward (2005) have suggested tourism is closely linked with acculturation and cross-cultural theories can be tested and applied in the tourism context for studying tourists' adjustment to cultural change, learning new cultural skills, tourist-host intercultural contact and attitude change, host-community perceptions and so forth. Drawing from the tourism literature, many studies have already made effort to explore the cultural experiences of tourists, as well as intercultural interaction between tourists and hosts.

2.3.1 Tourists' Experiences of Traveling in a Different Culture

There are two foci of tourists' intercultural experiences that are examined within tourism literature: the experiencing of cultural differences and changes, and the different culture and the "other" as tourist attractions and productions. Intercultural communication in tourism can be related to tourists' experiences and behaviour. Traveling internationally can be risky. As Reisinger and Steiner (2006) have examined, there are anxiety and perceived risk along with the intention to travel. Travelling can be exhausting, from the preparatory stage, setting the itinerary to the actual travelling on site, and the recollecting of experience. Due to the spatial, temporal and cultural distances from origins to destinations, tourism, international tourism and intercultural tourism in particular, may have physical costs, such as food pathogens, jetlags and time differences, and psychological costs, such as culture shock (Pearce & Stringer, 1992). Thus tourists do not only "gaze" when they travel (Urry, 1990), they also experience cultural differences.

However, tourists' motivations to travel and the intention to experience the differences vary, thus their contracts with the culturally different "others" also vary.

From a spatial perspective, there are two interesting phenomenon in terms of traveling in a different culture, "tourist bubbles" and "tourist enclaves", also known as "travel centers". These two terms are similar, they both indicate a spatial/environmental phenomenon to create a special environment, space, area cater to the needs of tourists and separate tourists from locals and the other parts of the destination, normally by tourism developers and planners (Howard, 2007; Jaakson, 2004). "Tourist bubbles" are often used on mass tourists, but "tourist enclaves" are used on independent travelers, mostly backpackers (Howard, 2007; Jaakson, 2004). The main function of "tourist bubbles" and "tourist enclaves" is to provide comfort to tourists and to better control and manage tourists, but the existence of these bubbles and enclaves also triggered the interest of tourists to explore and experience more real "differences" and to have more contacts with locals (Edensor, 2007). Therefore, it is arguable about the value of those tourist spaces, especially in a cross-cultural setting.

The concept of "sense of place" is also researched in the context of tourism. Sense of place can be linked with the concept of authenticity of place and the construction of staged authenticity (Lew, 1988). The sense of place of tourists and local residents are formed by different characteristics (Kianicka et al., 2006). Although the senses of place are approximately the same for both tourists and locals deriving from the research on a mountain village in Switzerland and they both emotionally present personal stories with

this place, the meanings and significance attached to these characteristics are different; locals associate occupation, property and childhood memory with the highest significance but tourists attach their aesthetic and leisure needs (Kianicka et al., 2006). An interesting phenomenon of space reclaiming by locals in the historical world heritage town of Lijiang is described by Su & Teo (2008). Food and beverage outlets brought into the town which serve international food became a space of local people as well as foreign and domestic tourists. Local people would try new food at the restaurants and caf  s, they spend more time there and some start to visit frequently; there are also voluntary performances of ethnic dancing by seniors and retirees at the traveler center, the town square. The tourist and local performances encounter in places like bars, restaurants and caf  s, which could be considered tourism intrusions towards local community. But there is limited research on how the presence of tourism spaces/traveler centers, western food and beverage outlets, bars and night clubs would impact local people's leisure activities. Moreover, there familiar setting for western tourists in an "exotic" place will raise many questions, such as authenticity, culture preservation, etc.

Whether tourists need to communicate and interact with locals is another associated question; many related issues remain unsolved and debatable. It is agreed independent travelers tend to have more contacts with local people and more interests on culture. Therefore, this research will focus on, but not limited to, independent travelers, and will link the spatial factors of intercultural communication with the concept of "tourist enclaves".

Many scholars have perceived that tourists do not experience culture shock, because of their short stay at a destination and their limited contact with the other culture (Dodd, 1982; Brien & David, 1971). Reisinger (2009) argues that tourists have experienced the same degree of culture shock as other visitors. Not only tourists, the hosts have also experienced culture shock (Pearce, 1984). Many concepts of culture shock and adjustment developed in the cases of immigrants and other sojourners are also applicable in tourism (Furnham, 1984). Hottola (2004) has pointed out that the term “culture shock” is not suitable for describing tourists’ initial feelings toward a culture and they are exaggerated; thus the term “culture confusion” is more appropriate. She has divided culture confusion into two phases, initial culture confusion and adaptation/opposition. It suggests that learning and control management are more central in the process of intercultural adaptation than depression and recovery.

In order to enhance the understanding of control management of tourists’ intercultural adaptation, Hottola (2005) has identified the metaspaciality of control management of backpackers. “Metaspace” in his sense refers to the space where tourists can avoid or reduce the influence of host culture and get “retreat”. Interestingly, he has discovered that western backpackers experience a sense of togetherness, which is unusual in western culture. The concept of “metaspace” is similar to “tourist enclave” among backpackers. “Metaspace” emphasizes the function of control management, and the space can be fluid and temporary, also created by tourists themselves, while “enclaves” are planned and built

area. Hottola's works have provided an alternative theoretical framework in this field and a better understanding of intercultural situations in tourists' experiences.

Culture confusion is often faced by tourists when they enter a completely different culture. The degree of cultural confusion sometimes depends on how much the "host" culture differs from "home" culture and the "interculturalness" of the participants (Brien & David, 1971; Kim, 1988). Hottola (2004) has pointed out that, due to the lack of study on tourist experience, the "theoretical discussion of culture shock and intercultural adaptation remains subservient to sojourner studies" (p. 448). As a summary, when tourists travel in a different culture, there are many factors such as motivation, intention to interact, previous experiences, social context, travel patterns, as well as spatial issues that may influence their intercultural communication and adaptation.

"The search for authenticity", or authentic experience, has been a major goal of tourists' experiences, initiated from cultural, ethnic, and heritage tourism (Ondimu, 2002; Li & Hinch, 1994; Li & Wall, 2003). The still influential work of Goffman (1956) has addressed the concept of "front region" and "back region" of a place; the "front region" is where authenticity is "staged" and shown to tourists (MacCannel, 1973), while the "back region" is where local people live their daily life without consider to attract tourists, thus culturally it is more sensitive to tourists. Wall and Oswald (1990) suggested tourism should provide both experiences of "front region" and "back region" in order to provide a transitional experience to tourists. Cohen (1988) suggested authenticity could be seen as "a continuum leading from complete authenticity, through various stages of partial

authenticity, to complete falseness” (p. 378). He also divided tourist experience into five modes: recreational, diversionary, experimental, experiential, and existential (Cohen, 1979).

Wang (1999) categorized authenticity as objective authenticity: the authenticity of origins, constructive authenticity: the authenticity of symbols, and existential authenticity: the search for the authentic self. Existential authenticity emphasizes the state of being of tourists when they participate in tourist activities (Belhassen et al., 2008). While the concept of existential authenticity is widely used in the tourism literature and constructive authenticity is also adopted to explain many tourism phenomena, such as Disney World, objective authenticity cannot be abandoned because it is by far the most solid and common criteria of authenticity.

As reviewed above, the main foci of the tourism literature on tourists’ intercultural experiences are facing cultural differences and culture and the “other” as tourist attractions. However, tourists’ experiences are not limited to or sometimes may even go beyond seeking authenticity. Intimate encounters with hosts by western tourists trekking to a mountain tribe in Thailand have proven to be one important criterion to judge authenticity (Conran, 2006). In the study of tourist experience in general, there are also other directions, such as tourist experience and the tourist’s attitude change. Tourist’s experience has been linked with the change of the tourist’s attitude towards the place visited (Gomez-Jacinto et al., 1999). The change of attitude can be negative or positive, and negative attitudes appear more often (Gomez-Jacinto et al., 1999).

A new model of tourist experience and attitude change (Gomez-Jacinto et al., 1999) has extended the model of Fisher and Price (1991). The original model explains travel motives as factors which determine the amount of intercultural interaction of tourists. The new model was developed through a quantitative study of French and Italian tourists at Costa del Sol in Spain. This model proposes the direct influence of tourist motivations and destination attractions on intercultural interaction, tourist activities and service quality. It also indicates the indirect influence of intercultural interaction, tourist activities, and service quality on attitude and stereotypes, mediated by holiday satisfaction. A recent study by Nyaupane, Teye and Paris (2008) has discovered that higher pre-trip attitude results in decreasing post-trip attitude, and non-tourism related service plays an important role in tourists' attitude change towards host.

2.3.2 Intercultural Interaction of Tourists and Hosts

Reisinger and Turner (2003) wrote a book on cross-cultural behaviour in tourism, they have reviewed those studies relevant to tourist-host contact and listed the main factors that influence this type of contact. Tourist-host contact is social in nature, and cultural influences on this contact are the most vital. In this research, tourist-host contact refers to a form of intercultural interaction which involves personal relationship. As a form of social interaction, intercultural interaction in the context of tourism often refers to tourist-host interaction (Yoo & Sohn, 2002).

The interactions between tourists and hosts from different cultural backgrounds often take place in commercial situations (Jaworski et al., 2003). Jaworski, Yilanne-McEwen,

Thurlow, and Lawson (2003) have analyzed extracts from two British holiday TV programs, in which the presenters engage in verbal and non-verbal interaction with local people. Using critical discourse analysis, the researchers revealed that the dominant ideology of tourism gives evidence of limited contact between tourists and local people and, in most of those contacts, local people's roles are often "helpers"/ "servants", "experts" or "local scenery". They also revealed a power relationship and struggle within host-tourist interactions.

More in-depth research was conducted by Lawson and Jaworski later in 2007. They have collected and analyzed 194 recorded interactions which describe time; place; situation; interlocutor; languages; topics; results and perceptions of interactions between tourists and hosts in The Gambia. Results show the most amounts of interaction happen between tourists and bar/restaurant staff, and the second happens with local "bumsters". The "bumsters" appear to be very annoying, but they also serve as mediators between tourists and other local people. Although tourists have often expressed their intention to interact with local people in a deeper manner (Conran, 2006; Hottola, 2005), tourists' intention of interacting with hosts is negatively impacted by their avoidance of touts (Hottola, 2005; Lawson & Jaworski, 2007).

Yoo and Sohn (2002) have developed a model of the structure and meaning of international tourists' intercultural interactions (Figure 2.2), based on the study of Koreans who have taken overseas trips within a year. This model suggested that cultural negotiation, tourists' role conflict, and environmental settings are the main components of

international tourists' intercultural interaction. Although the classifications of tourists and the link between intercultural interaction and spatial settings are not well explained, the researchers raised the importance of spatial factors within intercultural interaction. The results of role conflict showed tourists' feelings of racial diffidence. However, it is necessary to compare the results with the situations of western tourists' experiences in the east.

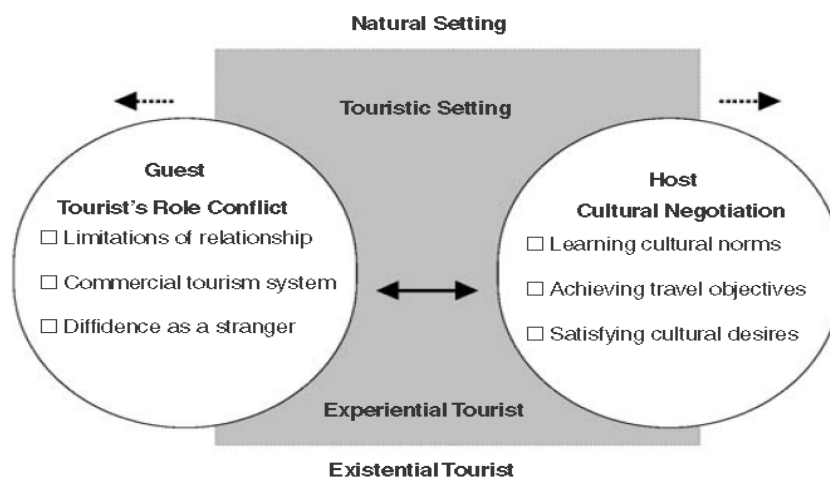


Figure 2.2: Model of International tourists' intercultural interaction (Yoo & Sohn, 2002)

This model demonstrated the main structure of tourist-host intercultural interactions from the tourist point of view, and the role of host in this model seems to be a little deficient. The definition of “host” in this study blurs whether the Korean tourists were interacting with people from the place they visited or were interacting with western tourists from other countries. This was not identified. In the cases of farm tourism in New Zealand (Pearce, 1990), “hosts” were specifically the farm owners who provided accommodation and activities to the tourists. Thus, the concept of host may vary in different situations and must be refined with the researched context.

Tourists and hosts' social relationships can be built through their interactions, and the intensity of their social relationship will positively affect tourists' attitudes toward hosts (Pizam et al., 2000). Tourists and hosts are the two basic groups in the tourism industry, but the framework of tourist-host relationship has not fully developed (Duval, 1998), and the nature of tourist-host interaction and the living condition of the "uninvited host" have been neglected (McNaughton, 2006). Although most of the studies of intercultural interaction between tourists and hosts have taken the stance from tourists' perceptions, several studies have contributed insights from the hosts' side. Host community attitude can impact the intention of intercultural interaction with tourists (Zhang et al., 2006). Host-related research in tourism is often from the perspectives of tourism impact and community development (Besculides, 2002; Brunt, 1999). Hosts' perceptions of tourism vary in different contexts but the perceived economic impacts are generally positive, environmental impacts are negative and the perceptions of socio-cultural impacts are mixed (Pizam et al., 1994). The studies examined host perceptions toward the tourism industry and assumed that tourists as outsiders can provide a general context of tourist-host interaction in tourism settings.

In addition to the tourist-host interaction, the interaction between tourists were also examined, usually described as social interaction if it refers to the interactions between tourists in a social context and the cultural differences were not considered (Murphy, 2001). Murphy (2001) has employed the concept of social situation analysis, to identify the key components of social interaction of backpackers and to explore the phenomenon of

“word-of-mouth” promotion among backpackers. The result showed the importance and the key elements of social interaction in backpackers’ travel experience. Although the focus of this study is to provide evidence to destinations/businesses to cater to the essential needs of the backpacker market, it has successfully employed social situation analysis as a useful tool to studying social interaction. It also suggested that future research examine the cultural influence of social interaction.

White and White (2009) examined social interaction between tourists when they travel to outback Australia. Results from interviews showed the significance of social interaction in tourists’ experiences, especially in remote regions. Tourists were found to be keen to be in the company of others. Their relationships and interactions were free of obligation, consisting of ritualized interchanges. Interactions between tourists enriched their understanding of the cultural and physical environment, offering comfort and companionship. Therefore, although in a narrow sense of intercultural interaction and intergroup interaction, social interactions within a group of tourists are not usually included in such interactions, the social interactions between international tourists and domestic tourists are commonly counted as intercultural. But the interactions between tourists affect their perceptions of the place and the “other” visited; thus, it is also important to include social interactions between tourists into the larger frame of intercultural interaction.

As summarized from previous studies, intercultural communication as a broad and complex subject in tourism is associated with the study of tourists’ intercultural adaptation, authentic experience of the culture and the “other”, intercultural interaction with hosts, and

social interaction with other tourists. It is affected by hosts' attitudes and will result in tourists' attitude change. The spatial issue is also brought up by many researchers (Hottola, 2005; Howard, 2007; Yoo & Sohn, 2002). Although international travel brings chances of intercultural communication to tourists, independent as well as alternative travelers may experience more intercultural contact and adaptation (Hottola, 2005). The major gap identified from the literature is the lack of study of the host, as if to apply the assumption that one party has to be a stranger in intercultural communication. Many researchers take the host, or the host culture, as "the strange" and the novelty. From a spatial perspective, the tourists are deemed to be strangers, or sometimes intruders (Gudykunst, 1988; McNaughton, 2006).

2.3.3 Tourism, Peace, and Intercultural understanding

There have been many debates on whether tourism is a force of promoting peace among nations and cultures and whether tourism is able to reduce prejudices, mitigate stereotypes and enhance cross-cultural understanding. The question remains open to empirical and contextual research. The primary change that tourism can enforce on peace promotion is the positive change of attitude of both tourists and hosts towards each other (Kelly, 2006a). The process of tourism and nature of the journey have taken important accounts on the result towards cultural understanding (Litvin, 2003), cultural distances and previous experiences also influence the level of understanding, while perceptions towards people from different countries also vary (Nyaupane et al., 2008).

A study on individual student traveler's attitude change by Askjellerud (2006)

revealed that travelers shifted from anxiety and misunderstanding of the place and culture to a higher level of cultural and self-awareness, there are also positive influences of travelers participating host community events but questioning one's established beliefs causes discomfort of the hosts. However, tourism is not a natural force for peace, it needs proper management to best facilitate the goal of peace promotion (Kelly, 2006b). Extended stays of tourists, meaningful contacts between tourists and hosts, as well as optimization of community benefits can help harmonize the relationship between people from different cultures (Kelly, 2006a).

The proposition of tourism as the tool of peace promotion fits the high profile and well-researched theory of intercultural interaction and encounters: the contact hypothesis. It suggests that the more meaningful contacts people have with the member of a stigmatized group will change the prejudiced opinions and discriminatory behaviors towards both the individual interacted with and towards the group in general (Allports, 1954, cited in Werth & Lord, 1992; Forbes, 2004). Many empirical studies have given evidences to the contact hypothesis and accepted the generalization of the theory. On the contrary, the alternative result of contact is often neglected. By proposing a model of ethnic conflict of interest, Forbes (2004) has challenged the well-tested theory of contact hypothesis and pointed out that “the model of contact as a cause of conflicts of interest [is] due to the fear of assimilation” (p, 83). He suggested that individuals may increase their cultural understanding over more contact with other group members; it would not necessarily solve the problems of conflict between ethnic or racial groups. Also, it is

obvious the world now has the most cross-cultural and cross-racial contact in history but violence and hatred still exists and is even severer.

Ethnic conflict, group conflict, sometimes may even go beyond the economic cause, is a scientific problem and would not be solved by only theorists. In the tourism context, the contact and relationship between tourist and host also have diverse causes and results. Therefore, to include all contextual, environmental, situational, and personal factors of contact can help better understand this kind of phenomenon and avoid inappropriate generalizations. As a summary, this research places intercultural interaction and communication within the context of bars as shared spaces of both tourist and locals. Through investigation on individual's experience of intercultural interaction and communication, it is expected to reflect on the role of bars in both tourist community and local community and provide data on the positive and negative outcomes of tourism interaction and communication in terms of intercultural understanding.

2.4 Summary of Gaps in Literature

Gaps in the literature are identified from two fields, tourist bars in China and the field of intercultural communication in tourism. As China's economic growth drawing the world's attention, what behind it, is the culture of the nation under economic growth and the daily lives of its people. The uniqueness of the culture is fading as more and more people only focus on the material aspects of life. Bars in China, especially tourist bars in historical Chinese towns, are imported driven by the economic benefits. Therefore, Chinese scholars only focus on consumer behaviour and marketing of bars. There is a lack of study

on the other side of bars: places for socializing and spending leisure time. In terms of tourism in small scale communities, small in the Chinese sense, bars may not be considered intruding, but they certainly changed the image of a destination, sometimes, in the case of Yangshuo and Dali, they are vital components of the destination image.

Tourists are also sojourners, especially international tourists, but they were often separated from other sojourners such as international students or immigrants, because of the relatively short stay of tourists and their purposes of stay at a destination. But the role of interaction and communication between international tourists and local residents may have a direct impact on tourists' experience in a destination and on local residents' attitude towards tourism and tourists. Many intercultural communication theories were applied and contributing to practice, but the field of tourism has shown a lack of linkage to intercultural communication studies. Therefore, this research intends to address the actual intercultural communication situations in a tourism context, and find the link between tourism and intercultural communication theories, as well as find ways to apply theories to practices in tourism development and management.

Chapter 3: Research Methods

3.1 Introducing Yangshuo

This research is conducted in Yangshuo, China. Yangshuo County is located 60km from Guilin city, a major touristic city in southern China (see Figure 3.1, Figure 3.2).

Yangshuo town is surrounded by karst peaks, limestone mountains and is beside the Li River. It is not only attractive because of great natural scenery; but Yangshuo has 11 ethnic minority groups and a long history of farming. Since the 1990s, Yangshuo has become popular among foreign backpackers. Many shops, bars, restaurants, hotels and hostels have been opened for western tourists over the years; some of them are invested in or managed by western tourists who fell in love with the place and then settled down (Chen, 2006).

Yangshuo has created a phenomenon in the tourism industry of China, called the “Yangshuo Phenomenon”. It indicates that Yangshuo has perfectly brought western and eastern culture together and successfully attracted foreign tourists, and the multiculturalism has also become one of the attractions to domestic tourists (Chen, 2006; Deng, 2009; Tian, 2003). However, the impacts of the combination of culture in the long run, the increasing crowd of both domestic tourists and western tourists, and the variety of intercultural contacts remain unpredictable.



Figure 3.1: Map of Yangshuo in China (Photo Source: <http://www.Chinasummeradventure.com>)



Figure 3.2: View of Yangshuo from TV tower (Photo Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yangshuo_County)

In 2009, Yangshuo has one million international arrivals and more than seven million domestic arrivals, consist with not only backpackers but also group travelers (Yangshuo Tourism Bureau, 2010). Yangshuo as a tourist destination is a site of alternative tourism, including agricultural tourism and adventurous tourism (Chen, 2006). The current development plan of Yangshuo tourism is sustainable community development (Yangshuo

Tourism Bureau, 2009). The main tourist activities in Yangshuo include hiking, biking, bamboo rafting, rock climbing, etc. It also has a lot of activities associated with traditional Chinese culture which are specially catered to western tourists, such as cormorant fishing, fan painting, cooking tour, martial arts learning, teaching at Yangshuo's English schools, and so forth (Deng, 2009). In Yangshuo, there are more chances for tourists and local people to get involved with each other. Yangshuo is a suitable case of studying intercultural communication in tourism. It has fairly well-developed infrastructure caters to both international and domestic tourists and multi-dimensional tourism attractions, as well as the mingling of cultures and typical spatial distributions of tourism development. Figure 3.3 shows the view of West Street, with western and Chinese establishments. It has shown that intercultural communication and tourism are closely related, thus Yangshuo can make a unique case study to research on intercultural communication and tourism.

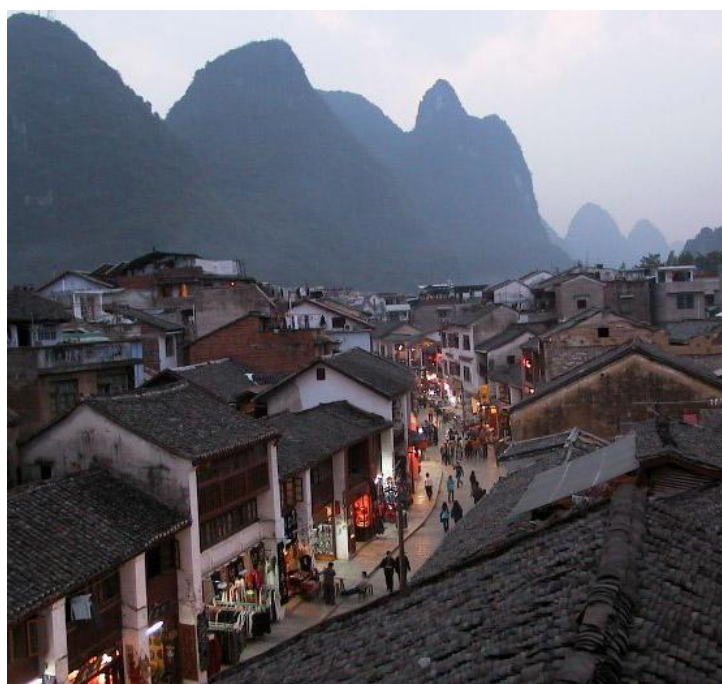


Figure 3.3: A view of West Street in Yangshuo town (Qin, 2009, p.26)

3.2 Doing Ethnography

The main methodology used for this research is ethnography. Ethnography is “essentially involves empirical work, especially observation, with the aim of producing a full, non-reductive text... defined and interpreted by the author” (O’Reilly, 2005, p, 2). Although it is difficult to define ethnography and it has a wide range of applicability, with the encouragement of using multi-method, it is indeed a crucial research method in social development (Weisner, 1996). The approaches applied in this research are participant observation, interviews, and video recordings.

Participant observation is the main method of ethnography. The key elements of conducting participant observation is gaining access, spending time, learning the language, participating and observing, and taking notes (O’Reilly, 2005). Therefore, the goal of participant observation is to feel the feel and talk the talk of the researched objects, people and culture, in order to get non-reductive data for the aim of the research. It is suggested researchers should take a semi-overt role when conducting participant observation, which is to keep the participants informed about the research but minimize the influence of the research agenda on their interactions and expressions (O’Reilly, 2005). Thick descriptions in rich written accounts will be generated from field notes during participant observation and interview materials.

Epistemological considerations:

There is a trend of researching qualitatively in the tourism field as well as in the field of intercultural communication (Tribe, 2004; Otten & Geppert, 2009). I have taken a social constructivist/interpretivist standpoint in conducting this research. Interpretivists believe that reality is constructed, and represented and interpreted in many ways, thus there are multiple realities that are articulated by different values, standpoints, and positions of researchers (Daly, 2007). Interpretivism does not “suggest a separation but rather an interactive and co-operative relationship between the investigator and the object of investigation” (Decrop, 2004, p. 157). The knowledge production within the interpretivist paradigm is an integral and interactive process of the researcher and the researched, thus it is important to take account of the researcher’s inquiry paradigm and how it influences the decision making throughout the research process and to research in a reflective way (Goodson & Phillimore, 2004).

The importance of conducting this research within the interpretivist paradigm is associated with the multi-faceted nature of both culture and communication and the research goal and objectives. Firstly, the underlying theoretical assumptions of culture and communication mentioned previously, fit into the interpretivist paradigm. Secondly, this research will examine the nature of intercultural communication through individuals with different cultural, ethnic, national and organizational backgrounds. The role of participants takes account of their experience of intercultural communication and the perceptions of participants will undoubtedly vary; thus, an interpretivist standpoint fits this research because it accepts the plurality of reality. Last but not least, the role of the researcher

cannot be separated from the research. As a Chinese citizen but at the same time a student from a western university, I identify myself as a domestic tourist but with experiences of actual western culture, and a researcher who studies bars and the communication between people. The reflexivity of the research process will assure the credibility and validity of research outcomes; therefore, it is important for me to constantly reflect on my own identities.

An Add-on: Questionnaire Survey:

A questionnaire survey with both close-ended and open-ended questions was also designed to explore a wider range of population outside of bars, western tourists and Chinese tourists. Questions include reasons of visiting Yangshuo, traveling companionship, conversation with foreigners/Chinese in Yangshuo, bar visiting in Yangshuo, photo-taking with foreigners/Chinese in Yangshuo, etc. Questions on questionnaire surveys are different from, yet complementing interview questions. As an add-on to the qualitative approaches, questionnaires provide a broader and quantitative understanding of the researched context.

3.3 Data collection on site

I spent most nights out at the bars in Yangshuo, usually from 8:00 to 12:00 at night, sometimes even longer. Afternoons were spent writing notes at western cafes where wireless internet was provided and also talking with tourists and staff in the afternoons while tourists were spending their time chatting or reading a book at those cafes and staff members were not busy. Despite spending time in the bars and cafes, I also toured around

myself as a domestic traveller. I went cycling around the countryside and bamboo rafting along the river several times, experiencing the charms of Yangshuo.

3.3.1 Selecting bars

Bar selection was the first stage of conducting my fieldwork, many resources were referred to in this process. The first bar I went to was Bar 98, which was recommended in Lonely Planet. It was close to the hostel I stayed the first night before I found a place to stay for a month. As I stayed longer in Yangshuo, I asked people I talked with in the bars to recommend other bars that were popular there. Most of the bars were cafés during the daytime. They offered both Chinese and western food and some also offered entertainment. The table below lists the seven bars I stayed at in Yangshuo. I chose bars that were popular among western tourists in Yangshuo, because of the amount of customers needed in conducting research. Also, there are plenty of bars in Yangshuo, some of them were nearly empty during weekdays. Therefore, sometimes more than one bar was visited at one night, in order to keep the observation and participation consistent.

As showed below, all the bars have English names and Chinese names. However, some of them were referred to more by their English names, even among Chinese. Guihua Lane is also an old but narrower street aside of West Street, it has been developed as West Street expanded, many bars and shops were open. The number of bars existing in a small town, their bilingual names and bilingual menus indicate the multicultural environment of Yangshuo. The developers and entrepreneurs have established a globalized approach to

attract tourists and provide service. Almost every Chinese work in bars has an English name, which has become their working name.

Table 3.1: Selected Bars in Yangshuo

Bar Name	Business Time	Owner(s)	Location	Offering
Buffalo Bar	7am- 1am	Alf (Australian)	Chengzhong Lane	Food, drinks, TV, pool table and foosball
Bar 98	7am-1am	Jim (Australian), Ton Ton (Chinese)	Guihua Lane	Food, drinks, TV, pool table, quiz night, etc.
The Alley Bar	5pm- Late	Andy (Austrian), Lei (Chinese)	Guihua Lane	Food and drinks
Lucy's Place	All Day	Lucy (Chinese from Yangshuo)	Guihua Lane	Food and drinks
Kelly's Cafe	All Day	Kelly (Chinese)	Guihua Lane	Food and drinks
Showbiz(Hostel)	9pm- Late	Mike (Chinese)	West Street	Drinks, pool table, beer pong
Monkey Jane's (Hostel)	All Day	Jane (Chinese from Yangshuo)	West Street	Drinks, beer pong, card games

3.1.2 Participating and Observing:

An important issue in terms of doing ethnography at bars is what and how I should participate in and observe those interactions. My observations included: who are the people that go to bars in Yangshuo, Chinese tourists, locals or western tourists; whether and how interactions occur between western and Chinese customers, between western customers and staff, and between westerners and different groups of customers. I also participated in

conversations, as doing informal conversational interviews with people in the bars.

Conversational interviews include questions on whether participants had conversation with foreigner/Chinese and details of those conversations. Meanwhile, culture-related questions were also discussed, such as how people perceive culture difference. It is not easy to get familiar with a group of people and discussions may involve group dynamics, so I tended to talk to less than three people at one time. In this way, it was easier to keep my informants all aware of my research subject and on track in the discussion. But the disadvantage is the difference between group and individual travelers was not taken into account in terms of having conversation with strangers.

All the discussions were informal and most of them were audio-recorded with permission obtained, those several times conversations held with the absence of the recorder somehow facilitated very useful discussions which were later written down as field notes. My informants would also ask questions about my research and offer help and suggestions. I discovered that those who travel by themselves are more approachable and, therefore, easier to talk to. The majority of my informants are single travelers and couples and most of them travel independently instead of with a tour group. Tourists who travel with tour groups often have very tight schedules during the day, so I seldom saw any of those tourists at bars during my nights out. Bar workers, female in majority, participated in the most intercultural communication and interaction with foreign customer.

From many of my informants, I discovered they are able to communicate in a commercial setting but they seldom have in-depth conversations. Many conversations

between Chinese and foreigners at bars are held between tourists and Chinese students. Yangshuo has become a hot place for Chinese students practicing English, and western backpackers experiencing rural China while teaching English for a short term. Western tourists do enjoy the chance of getting to know China more through Chinese students, who have better language skills, and Chinese students value the chance of practicing English and wandering around Yangshuo. The groups of participants were categorized as Chinese and Westerner, while approaching people in the bars, through the process of data analysis subgroups emerged and data were analyzed separately (Table 3.2).

Few Chinese tourists participated in intercultural communication at bars, but some foreign tourists told me there were Chinese tourists talking to them to ask for a photo. It occurred to me that although language is the biggest barrier between Chinese and westerners, Chinese do show their interest in foreigners and taking photos is a form of non-verbal interaction. Then, I added questions about photo-taking in my conversational interviews. Photo-related questions were also added in questionnaire surveys.

Table 3.2: Number of participants in recorded discussion and interview

Western Participants (Total: 22)	Chinese Participants(Total: 26)
Western Tourist: 19 (12 male, 7 female)	Chinese Tourist: 6 (3 male, 3 female)
	Local Resident: 14 (2 male, 12 female)
Local Westerner: 3 (2 male, 1 female)	Chinese Student: 6 (3 male, 3 female)

A lack of participation of Chinese tourists and western group tourists was found during my time in bars, questionnaires about bars and conversations were handed out to include a wide range of the tourist market. Very simple and straightforward were the

questions, the intention was to include limited variations and make them interesting to answer. Questionnaires were distributed along the quieter street, Guihua Lane, off the tourist centre, where many western cafes are located and also at KFC and McDonalds, where are usually full of Chinese tourists. In total, I did 200 questionnaires on both Chinese and Western tourists, 100 each. I collected 40 recorded interviews and 5 videos of bar nights. Videos were not aimed at specific informants of interactions, they were captions of general scenes in bars.

3.4 Data Analysis

The analysis of questionnaire surveys was conducted prior to qualitative data. Quantitative results provide a direct view on the research subject and take a shorter time to analyze. Questionnaires were analyzed using the statistical software PASW 18, also known as SPSS. According to the questions asked in the survey, variables were set and responses were coded and input to form a data set. Open-ended answers were categorized and numerical values were attached to different categories for analysis, meaningful texts from open-ended answers were also input as string data and analyzed separately by selecting key terms and phrases. Frequency tables, descriptive statistics, cross-tabulations and non-parametric statistical tests were used to analyze and compare both domestic and international samples. Data from western and Chinese tourists were examined separately but are presented together; selective comparisons will be made between these two groups. The processes of analysis and results will be presented below in the following sequence: the characteristics of tourists, tourists' reason for visiting and their activities in Yangshuo,

tourists' view of Yangshuo, and intercultural interaction and communication in Yangshuo. Interviews and videos were transcribed later into text. Qualitative data was analyzed manually and served as an extension from the quantitative results and as a core of the entire thesis.

Analysis is to make meanings out of data. According to LeCompte and Schensul (1999), analysis of ethnographic data turns data into meaningful stories to the people researched, in another word, it presents results of the study. It involves preparing raw data, conducting analysis, exploring into data deeper and deeper, representing data and interpreting meaning (Creswell, 2009). The analysis strategy designed for this research is derived from the concepts of Cultural Discourse Analysis (CuDA) used in intercultural communication studies and anthropological research (Carbaugh, 2007; Quinn, 2005). The role of conversational interviews CuDA proposed by Carbaugh (2007, 2008) is to treat communication practice as cultural discourse. In Carbaugh's concept of cultural discourse analysis, it is an approach of research design rather than a method or an analytical strategy, the purpose is to form the research of intercultural communication practices. However, Carbaugh has proposed five modes of investigation to research communication practices that can be adapted as analytical strategy for this research: theoretical, descriptive, interpretive, comparative, and critical modes. In order to fit into the purpose of this research, the analysis strategy is designed to apply the interpretive mode of CuDA, which is to seek active meanings in the communication practice and to identify the meanings of researched phenomena to the participants (Carbaugh, 2007).

Carbaugh (2007) identified the concept of cultural discourse as “a historically transmitted expressive system of communication practices, of acts, events, and styles, which are composed of specific symbols, symbolic forms, norms, and their meanings” (p, 169), therefore, CuDA can only be used to identify the communicating system of participants, in this research, the actual situations of interaction and encounter reported by participants and recorded by the researcher. Another usage of CuDA in anthropologist studies is called cultural analysis of discourse (Quinn, 2005). Similarly, it is not one analytical method but a collection of methods based on the focus of cultural meaning, carefully transcribed data and systematic analysis (Broussard, 2009). Broussard (2009) has successfully applied it as an analytical strategy in her research of environmentalism and gender. She has analyzed the effect of environmentalism culture from an international program, and Chinese culture constructed by traditions, society and government, on Chinese women from a rural village. It has proved that cultural analysis of discourse is a suitable strategy identifying the effect of multi-culture. Wu (2010) has proposed the social cultural approach of discourse analysis, which emphasizes the social and cultural context of discourse, social function of language, “routines” of communication, and regards discourse as interactional activities.

In this study, cultural discourse is defined as the way people interactively express themselves determine which culture they embrace, in this case, personal culture, group culture and national culture. However, I did not intend to analyze communication linguistically, rather through personal stories and cultural perceptions. Transcribed

interview and video materials were analyzed with the field notes. Data were printed in paper and highlighters were used in coding and theming. The first analysis procedure was dividing data into five groups of participants: western tourists, local westerners, Chinese tourists, Chinese students, and local residents. Data provided by each group were then analyzed by three main themes, according to the research objectives: role of bars in Yangshuo, intercultural communication and interaction inside and outside of bars, participants' perceptions on the Other culture and the people. Cultural, social and physical context and the differences in group cultures determined the differences in the themes identified with each group, the characteristics of each group were summarized in relation to the research objectives.

A common problem of doing research as an interpretivist is the generalization of research findings. Interpretivists tend to avoid the generalization of finding while they do inevitably generalize (Payne & Williams, 2005; Williams, 2000). Williams (2000) has proposed the concept of moderatum generalization, or everyday generalization of interpretivism. Moderatum generalization follows cultural consistency of the social world (Williams, 2005). It is to take aspects of a situation as instances of a "broader recognizable set of features". Simply speaking, it leads to an understanding of why the researched phenomenon happens. Thus moderatum generalization gives interpretivists as well as other qualitative researchers a suitable way to generalize their research findings. This study will generalize results based on participants' stories, which include all the five groups of people in Yangshuo, but it will take into consideration of the special features of each group and

the socio-cultural context of bars in Yangshuo. Therefore, the generalization is based on the specific case of bars, especially bars in a tourism setting, but it can be of implication of other tourist towns, as well as larger tourist destinations in China.

3.5 Trustworthiness and Credibility Issue

According to Daly (2007), credibility of qualitative research is concerned with the issues of research procedure and research outcome. It needs to be maintained at both stages of data collection and analysis. My identity as a young Chinese female, staying in bars without any company, might generate bias and manipulated answers from informants. Thus, in order to assure the confidentiality of my data, I tried to wear plain clothes and look professional when I went out. After spending sometime in Yangshuo, I was able to make friends with both Chinese and westerners; some accompanied me in bars and joined my discussion with other informants.

At the stage of data transcribing, difficulties were encountered in capturing recordings under loud and noisy circumstances in bars. Several paragraphs were abandoned to avoid inadequate transcribing. In order to maintain the credibility of procedure in this research, operational memos were used to record why certain decisions were made about the sampling, coding, and analyzing of data. From an interpretative perspective, credibility is ensured by being reflexive about how the researcher brings meaning and focus to the research (Daly, 2007), in this research, the reflexivity of the research indicates how personal experience influence the line of inquiry, how participants are chosen and

relationships maintained throughout the project, how key findings are generated and how meaning-making strategies are included in the analysis.

In terms of the credibility of outcome, the results of the research project need to be present carefully, honestly and transparently (Daly, 2007). The key issues of presenting the “truth” are the resonance to the researcher and the participants, triangulation of data, method, investigator and theory, and the epistemological and methodological integrity (Daly, 2007). In this research, triangulation is provided by collecting different types of data, using different analytical methods and opening up various theoretical approaches. However, in order to maintain the epistemological integrity, this project is conducted by the researcher solely at every step, from data collection to data analysis, to ensure the congruence and for the purpose of reflexivity.

3.6 Research Limitations

This research has several limitations. First, ethnographical research traditionally requires a major time commitment. However, this research was based on fieldwork of a reasonably short period of time. However, it can be stressful doing traditional ethnography in bars. Going out every night for a month was a physical as well as a mental challenge. There was not much preparation for facing the challenges or to adjust to the stress involved in such participant observation. Secondly, observation notes on participating in intercultural situations were only selectively presented in the results, because the author’s intercultural experience and knowledge surpassed that of most of the Chinese participants. Moreover, because of the researcher’s lack of prior experience in using ethnographical

approaches, some notes were found to make little contribution to the objectives of the project. Thirdly, the researcher failed to record details of communication situations, because of the desire not to turn a relaxing interaction into a performance for academia. Also, the lights and music in bars did not allow for the shooting of clear videos. Lastly, this research was undertaken in bars where people consume alcohol, but this research did not include the possible influence of alcohol on communication and conflicts.

Chapter 4: Results of Questionnaire Survey

This chapter presents the findings of questionnaire surveys. The questionnaires were distributed to both Chinese and western tourists around the main street of Yangshuo. Most of the participants were approached in and around bars; some of them were also approached in restaurants and shops. This chapter will firstly introduce the demographic characteristics of participants, secondly the reasons of visiting Yangshuo and views on Yangshuo's tourism, following by results of visiting bars and having intercultural conversations, and lastly interaction of photo-taking between Chinese and westerners.

4.1 Characteristics of Respondents

The demographic characteristics of tourists may be expected to influence the answers to many questions and, therefore, the characteristics of respondents are provided first. In the questionnaires, respondents' age and gender, and western tourists' nationalities were surveyed. The ages of tourists varied substantially and were divided into three categories: 18-25 years, 26-40 and above 40. This research was undertaken primarily in bars where alcohol is consumed and, thus, all the informants were over 18. The largest tourist group staying overnight in Yangshuo consists of backpackers; therefore the questionnaire survey

was aimed at a relatively young population of tourists, although it is recognized that backpackers consist of people with a wide range of ages.

Table 4.1: Age and Gender of Respondent

Percent:	Age			Gender	
	18-25	26-40	40+	Female	Male
Western	37.0	48.0	15.0	37.0	63.0
Chinese	56.0	40.0	4.0	56.0	44.0

Two hundred questionnaires were conducted, equally divided between domestic and international visitors. In reality, international visitors were outnumbered by Chinese tourists although the specific proportions of each are not known. Table 4.1 shows that most Chinese respondents were in the youngest of the three age categories whereas western tourists were most frequently in the middle category. Only a few respondents in either group were over 40. Chinese respondents tended to be younger than their western counterparts. Yangshuo is a low-budget destination for Chinese tourists and is, therefore, affordable to many young people. On the other hand, western tourists travelling to China generally need to have more time and money.

A large difference was also found between Chinese and western respondents with respect to gender. More male western tourists completed the questionnaires than females, but the opposite was true for Chinese respondents. One reason for this is that most of western respondents were approached in bars or western cafes, and more men than women tend to frequent those places. Also, many single travelers were approached to complete questionnaires and, in Yangshuo, more western men than women were seen who were traveling by themselves. Chinese tourists who were alone were seldom seen by the researcher in Yangshuo. Potential respondents were usually found in groups at bars, cafes,

on streets, or in KFC and McDonald’s. While many Chinese couples were approached, unexpectedly, the male often refused to receive the survey or pushed it to his female partner. The same phenomenon also occurred with Chinese family travelers: middle-aged parents often refused my request or gave the survey to their adult children, indicating to me that “they represent us”. In doing this, Chinese men and parents are playing a dominant role in this situation by “letting women and children do the work”. As a result, there are more female Chinese respondents and this also helps to explain the small portion of respondents over 40 years of age, particularly among Chinese tourists.

Table 4.2: Nationalities of Western Tourists Interviewed in Yangshuo

Dutch	22	U.S.A.	6	Polish	1
French	17	German	6	Italian	1
U.K.	15	Belgium	6	Israeli	1
Spanish	9	Swiss	4	Irish	1
Australian	8	Austrian	2	Argentinean	1

International visitors in Yangshuo come from a diversity of places: fifteen countries are represented in the nationalities of western tourists (Table 4.2). The great majority (84%) came from Europe and Dutch tourists were the largest group, constituting (22%) of all international visitors. It was expected that visitors would have come from many places but the importance of Dutch tourist was a surprise. However, previous research has indicated that Yangshuo has become a popular destination for package tour operators in Holland (Wijers, 2010) and Dutch tour guides and visitors were visible in the hostels in Yangshuo.

Table 4.3: Group Composition and Length of Stay

Percentage	Western Tourist	Chinese Tourist
Independent	32	23
With friends or family	53	65
In a tour group	11	8

Visiting people in China/ Yangshuo	4	4
Total	100	100

Respondents were asked about their group composition and their length of stay in Yangshuo for it was thought that these might influence the likelihood of having conversations with strangers. The composition of Chinese and western tourists' traveling groups was quite with most respondents travelling friends or family in Yangshuo, at least two people; only a minority was traveling alone. However, one-third of the western respondents were traveling independently compared to slightly more than one-fifth of Chinese respondents. Only small proportions were part of tour groups.

Figure 4.1 shows the lengths of stay of Chinese and western tourists. These figures are quite varied but it can be concluded that most tourists only stayed for a short time, but Chinese respondents generally stayed longer in Yangshuo than international visitors. This finding can be related to the fact that Yangshuo had many Chinese students of English who spent months there, although their main purpose of being in Yangshuo was not to travel. Nevertheless, their stay in Yangshuo involved many touristic and leisure activities. Similarly, some of the long-stay westerners were English teachers or Kung Fu students in Yangshuo. In these cases, the experiences of teaching or learning Chinese culture were part of their travel plans. Therefore, only those who did not consider themselves as residents of Yangshuo were excluded from the survey. Others included travel and associated experiences in their purposes of staying in Yangshuo and they were asked to participate in the survey. The length of stay as reported in this survey represents the length of time the respondent had stayed in Yangshuo at the time the questionnaire was completed rather than the planned length of stay;

therefore it can also be seen as an indicator of the respondent’s familiarity with and understanding of Yangshuo, and also as a reflection of the activities the in which they participated.

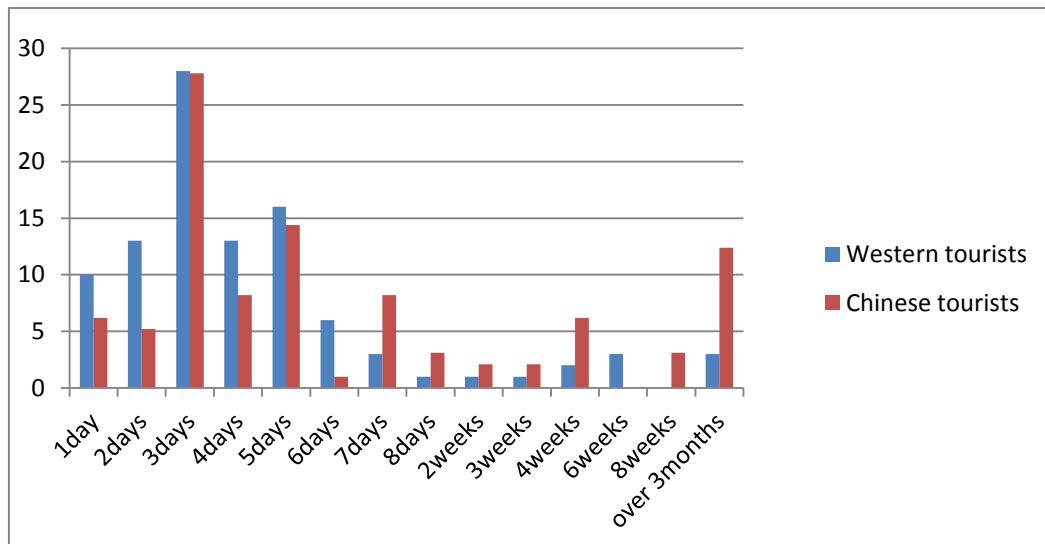


Figure 4.1: Tourists’ Lengths of Stay in Yangshuo

4.2 Reason for Visiting and Activities in Yangshuo

Yangshuo’s tourist attractions were categorized as Ethnic Minority Culture, Rural Lifestyle, Natural Scenery, Shopping, Outdoor Activities, Local Food, and Western Ambience based upon personal observation and the contents of travel brochures. The last item was phrased as “ease of access to western food” in the English-language questionnaires. Chinese and western tourists were asked to use the numbers 1 to 7 to put these seven attraction groups in order of their importance for visiting Yangshuo, with 1 being the most important and 7 being the least. Unfortunately, there were some missing answers and some misunderstandings of the task. Some respondents assigned numerical values to the attractions rather than putting them in order. Missing values were eliminated from the analysis (zeros were not included in the calculation of means and standard deviations) and

the other scores were included in the calculations of frequencies and medians. Medians for both Chinese and western tourists are provided in Table 4.4. There were more missing values among Chinese respondents.

Table 4.4: Medians of Attractions

	Ethnic Minority	Rural Scenery	Shopping	Natural Scenery	Western Styles	Outdoor Activities	Local Food
Western Tourists	5	2	6	1	6	3	4
Chinese Tourists	4	4	4	2	4	5	4

The median scores for each attraction indicate a central score in the rankings, with a similar number of observations that are both above and below it. As shown in Table 4.4, Chinese tourists have showed similar level of interest on each attraction, while western tourists' answers are more diverse. Western tourists also more frequently chose the higher ranks for natural and rural scenery, as well as outdoor activities, while results from Chinese tourists are more widely distributed. For example, 22% of Chinese participants ranked Rural Scenery as 1, while 21% also ranked it as 5. Thus, they are divergent in their interest in this attraction. However, higher frequencies are showed in Natural Scenery and Western Styles, 32% and 20% Chinese tourists ranked as first place – seems a bit odd – the mode for western tourists for natural scenery is 1.

In general, western tourists provided similar rankings across different attractions whereas Chinese tourists were more discriminating in their rankings. The attraction of Yangshuo is closely linked to its geographical features and rural lifestyle. Ease of access to

western food and shopping are the least attractive to Western tourists, whereas western ambience significantly attracted Chinese tourists. Therefore, Yangshuo's western-style cafes and bars, as well as the number of foreigners in Yangshuo, have become an important reason for Chinese tourists to visit Yangshuo. Yangshuo is also famous for its natural setting which provides opportunities for many outdoor activities, such as rock climbing, mountain biking and kayaking. Rock climbing in Yangshuo, along with its reputation among climbers from all over the world, has increased sharply over the past decade. Nevertheless, outdoor activities did not seem to attract Chinese tourists but were very attractive to Western tourists. Outdoor sports tourism and adventure tourism are new initiatives in the tourism development plan in Yangshuo as well as for the larger Guilin area of which it is a part (Liu, Wu & Li, 2008). However, they will likely cater to a small niche market due to the high cost and lack of interest among Chinese tourists.

Table 4.5: Results of Mann-Whitney U Test Grouped by Western and Chinese Culture

	Ethnicity	Rural Scenery	Shopping	Natural Scenery	Western Ambience	Outdoor Activities	Local Food
Mann-Whitney U	3965.000	3036.000	1893.500	2515.500	1899.500	2604.500	4027.000
Wilcoxon W	8151.000	7986.000	5988.500	7366.500	5904.500	7455.500	8032.000
Z	-1.106	-4.173	-6.775	-5.517	-6.678	-4.914	-.803
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.269	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.422

The above observations can be explored further statistically (Table 4.5). The descriptive statistics show that the level of kurtosis and skewness of some of these seven items are not distributed normally. Therefore a nonparametric test, Mann Whitney U Test, was used to test for significant differences in attraction rankings of the two independent

groups of domestic and international visitors. The Z-values and p-values indicate that, except for Ethnicity and Local Food, Chinese and western tourists have significantly different perspectives on the attractions of Yangshuo. The negative Z-values in all variables show that the means of the attractions rankings made by western tourists were lower than those of the Chinese respondents, indicating higher values attached to the reasons for visiting Yangshuo by western tourists.

Most of the tourist activities in Yangshuo reflect the attractions that have been identified above. However, these activities are usually undertaken during the day. The famous sound and light show, Impression Sanjie Liu, is one activity that takes place at night, when more than a thousand people perform on the Li River in a nightly show that lasts two hours.

Bars and nightclubs offer other nightlife opportunities in Yangshuo. Many big cities in China have a bar district or bar street and some small touristic towns, such as Yangshou, have started to follow this trend. Yangshuo's renowned West Street is now often called West Bar Street, or just Bar Street, by Chinese tourists. Bars in big cities exhibit a variety of types or themes so that the bar market is complex. However, on the basis of observation, bars in Yangshuo can be grouped into two types: quiet and loud. The former are western bars and the latter are nightclubs. Many western bars are also restaurants or cafes which offer both western and Chinese food, along with other activities such as pool tables and foosball. Nightclubs are very crowded in Yangshuo. They are similar in size to bars but have a different appearance. They provide very loud music and expensive drinks, and some have dancing or singing performances to entertain customers.

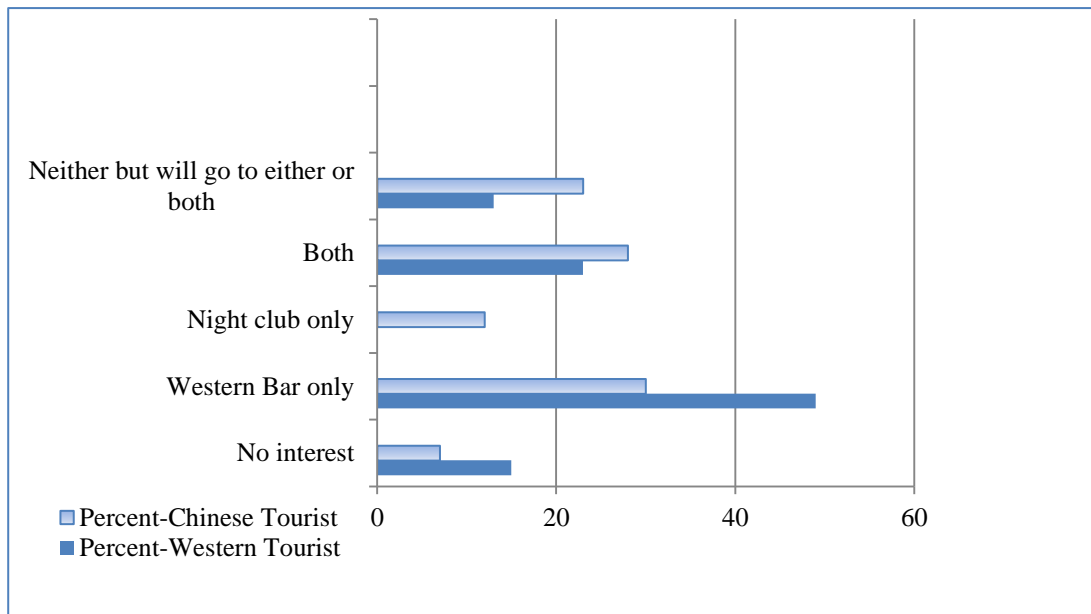


Figure 4.2: Bar Patronage by Tourists (Actual or Planned)

Figure 4.2 shows the kinds of bars in Yangshuo that Chinese and western tourists have been to or intend to visit. In general, western tourists go to western bars more than nightclubs. Most of western tourists only go to western bars but some have been to both. Chinese tourists are interested in both western bars and nightclubs, while western tourists have less interest in nightclubs. Nightclubs usually attract a younger clientele and are a relatively new and fashionable form of nightlife among young Chinese in cities. They can now be found in tourist towns like Yangshuo. Bars and nightclubs offer nightlife experiences in Yangshuo that complement the day-time activities and can be considered to be an extension of them. However, the purposes of Chinese and western tourists who go out at night can be very different due to the different drinking and bar cultures. However, this point was not explored in the questionnaire but it will be examined later in the thesis.

4.3 Tourists' Views of Yangshuo

Western tourists were asked whether the number of foreigners in Yangshuo had a positive or negative impact on their view of the place. This question is open-ended, answers were categorized as Positive, Negative, Both, and Neutral. More than a quarter (29%) considered this to be positive, or at least felt that the positives outweighed the negatives impacts. Almost half (49%) of respondents emphasized the negative impacts, whereas 14% recognized both negative and positive impacts, and the remaining 8% were neutral or expressed no opinion. According to western respondents, positive aspects included better accommodation, English-speaking services, easy communication, and enjoyable interactions with other tourists. The number of foreign tourists also confirmed that Yangshuo was worth visiting. Some respondents took a broader view and considered that the positive aspects included bringing money into the local community and improving their quality of life. Negative impacts were mostly related to the loss of authenticity of Yangshuo as a rural Chinese town. One tourist wrote that "locals are trying very hard to westernize this place but it is not what tourists want." Crowding and noisy of nightclubs were also viewed negatively. However, most tourists held the view that these problems were less to do with the number of foreign tourists and more with the overall number of tourists. Some also indicated that being among Chinese people would make the experience more authentic.

Chinese tourists' views of Yangshuo were examined by asking whether the impressions of Yangshuo matched their expectations. A quarter (24%) claimed that Yangshuo was different from what they expected, but 76% indicated that Yangshuo matched their expectations. However, the veracity of the results is doubtful because the question was

open-ended and respondents were asked to describe briefly their impressions of Yangshuo if it matched their expectations. Alternatively, if it did not match their expectations, they were required to write a few words on their expectations and actual impression. Reluctance to complete the questionnaire when approached may have been linked to a decision to select the easiest answer. Nevertheless, there were many serious answers. The differences between tourists' expectations and impressions in fact were not all negative. Some of the negative evaluations, such as over-commoditization, homogeneity and lack of cultural uniqueness relate to the issue of authenticity. Other negative comments included crowdedness and a poor level of service. Most of Chinese tourists perceived Yangshuo as very relaxing and beautiful. The large number of foreigners was viewed positively and local people were deemed to be very friendly and welcoming. One female tourist described Yangshuo as "exotic", while a male tourist expressed that "they offer convenience to foreigners everywhere in Yangshuo but it looks like it belongs to the Chinese". The amount of foreigners was generally seen as a positive attribute by Chinese tourists and some described Yangshuo as a place of cultural communication, a combination of western and eastern cultures, enhancing cultural understanding and broadening horizons. Yangshuo was viewed as being a Chinese town in a rural area but also as a centre of mixed culture. The mixed culture of Yangshuo was not only referred to as western and Chinese, but also as modern culture and rural culture, and tourist culture and local culture.

Chinese and western tourists have different opinions on how Yangshuo looks and how it should be as a tourist destination. These opinions provide a context for understanding intercultural interaction and communication in Yangshuo.

4.4 Intercultural Interaction and Communication and in Yangshuo

Half (51%) of the Chinese tourists said that they had had conversations with foreigners in Yangshuo, whereas the great majority (83%) had conversations with Chinese people. Most tourists described the occasions when these conversations occurred. For Chinese tourists, most of the conversations with foreigners took place in bars where the interviews occurred. Some respondents were students from private English-training centres in Yangshuo who went out to look for foreigners to practice English. Other locations, such as restaurants, hotels, shops and parks, are also places that provide similar opportunities. Chinese tourists also mentioned having conversations with foreigners during their cycling and hiking trips to the countryside. Shared transportation, such as the bus ride and cruise trip from Guilin, also provided opportunities for such conversations. Other notable instances of conversations occurred when Chinese tourists were providing help to foreign tourists with translation or directions.

Western tourists' answers suggest that they had more conversations with Chinese people. This finding is understandable for, as was frequently indicated, it was inevitable that they would need to communicate with Chinese people since they were travelling in China. Most of the conversations occurred in business settings, such as restaurants, hotels or hostels and shops, as well as with taxi drivers, street vendors, and waitresses. There were also situations

such as bargaining and asking for help when foreign tourists were obliged to initiate conversations. Foreign tourists also had many conversations with students who tried to practice English or with children who were at summer English camps in Yangshuo. In contrast, the Chinese mostly initiated conversations because of their need to sell products or to practice English. Although simple “hellos” were not full conversations, tourists did list them in their answers and referred to these situations as “polite talk”. Bars did appear as important locations for conversations but it was unclear from the questionnaires whether the conversations were mostly held with Chinese customers or with bar-tenders. Several tourists mentioned their conversations and other interactions with Chinese customers in bars, such as playing drinking games.

The language barrier and lack of opportunities were suggested as being the major reasons why foreign tourists did not communicate much with Chinese people: “I don’t speak Chinese, they don’t speak English”, “there is a real communication problem, but if you want to (communicate), you can”. A few of those who had not had conversations with Chinese in Yangshuo had just arrived that day but they expressed their willingness to initiate conversations with Chinese people during their stay.

In contrast, half (49%) of Chinese respondents had not had a conversation with foreigners in Yangshuo. A third (31.4%) of these had never had a conversation with a foreigner. They were interested in having such conversations and intended to but were frustrated there was a language barrier. Almost a third (29.4%) had no interest in such conversations while almost as many (27.5%) indicated a lack of opportunity. Therefore, over

half of those who had not conversed with a foreigner had an interest in doing so but language appeared to be the biggest barrier. Lack of opportunity may have been related to the limited time spent in Yangshuo, the busy schedules of tourists, cultural differences in communication styles, and a variety of other factors. Some said that there were other reasons but failed to explain them. Such reasons included discriminatory opinions regarding foreigners.

Table 4.6: Conversations and Bars

Bars/Clubs Conversation		No Interest	Western bar	Night club	Both	Neither but will go to either one or both	Total
		No	5 71.4%	14 46.7%	7 58.3%	7 25.0%	18 78.3%
Yes	2 28.6%	16 53.3%	5 41.7%	21 75.0%	5 21.7%	49 49.0%	
Total		7	30	12	28	23	100
%		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chinese respondents were equally divided between those who did (51%) and did not (49%) have conversations with foreigners. Therefore, it was decided to explore whether conversing with foreigners was related to other factors such as choice of bars, travel mode, photo-taking with foreigners, gender and age. Chi-square tests were used to examine whether significant relationships occurred in association with these variables. Although no statistically significant relationship between interest in communicating with foreigners and gender, possibly due to the small size of the sample, the number of female Chinese tourists who intended to have such conversations was as twice that of male tourists. Nor were

statistically significant relationships found with age, or the composition of the travel group. It was expected that the latter would be important since tourists might have less chance to talk to strangers if they were traveling with friends or family, or with a tour group. However, the results do not support this hypothesis. The only two variables that related significantly to the likelihood of having conversations were tourists' patronage of bars and photo-taking with foreigners. Those who went to bars or nightclubs had more conversations than those who did not. Table 4.6 shows the number and percentages of respondents who went to bars or clubs grouped by whether they had conversation with foreigners. The results suggest that bars are important settings for intercultural interactions and communication. This finding is also supported by responses to open-ended questions. Relationship between taking photos with foreigners and having conversations will be examined in the next part of this chapter along with other analyses of photo-taking behaviour.

The Interaction of Photo-taking:

Although verbal conversations require the possession of language skills, interactions regarding photo-taking do not require a high level of communication ability and may resonate with a larger group of respondents. Tourists' photo-taking behaviour has been researched from many social-psychological perspectives. The gaze of tourists upon locals has been seen as an indicator of power relationships between the tourist photographer and the local photographee (Urry, 1990) but the reverse gaze of locals upon tourist photographers can result in embarrassment and other social emotions (Gillespie, 2006). However, the situation in China might be different from that in the west for foreign tourists

usually become the focus in the centre of photos, along with locals, and are photographed by domestic tourists. Most (78%) western respondents indicated that they were photographed by Chinese people in Yangshuo and about 60% of their Chinese photographers asked for permission to take such pictures. However, half (52%) of western respondents claimed that fewer such photos were taken in Yangshuo than in other places in China they had been to, such as Beijing and Shanghai. Those who took photo with foreigners were usually Chinese tourists rather than local residents.

Western respondents' feelings about being photographed by Chinese people varied: almost half of those with such experiences did not feel bothered or annoyed; some western tourists regarded it as "funny", "adorable" or "cute" and interpreted it as being "part of the culture". Some respondents felt strange or uncomfortable about the practice, with expressions such as "weird", "confused about the obsession", "I am like a monkey in the zoo" and "Am I a celebrity?". A few western tourists indicated that it was rude and irritating, especially when Chinese people did not ask for permission. Although many western tourists were open to being photographed, prior requesting of permission was preferred.

Three-quarters (74%) of western respondents claimed that they took pictures of Chinese people in Yangshuo, mostly to capture the culture and traditional lifestyle, such as of farmers working in the fields, interesting people and costumes, etc. Some tourists indicated "I asked for permission" in their answers even though the question was not asked, suggesting an awareness of privacy issues which is a more widely recognized social norm in many developed countries. However, it was a different situation when Chinese farmers were

captured in photos as part of the countryside scenery. In discussion with a few farmers about this issue on a cycling trip in the countryside, it was found that some of them did not mind being photographed and that they often said “hello” to tourists, but some older ones refused to be photographed because they were not comfortable with this.

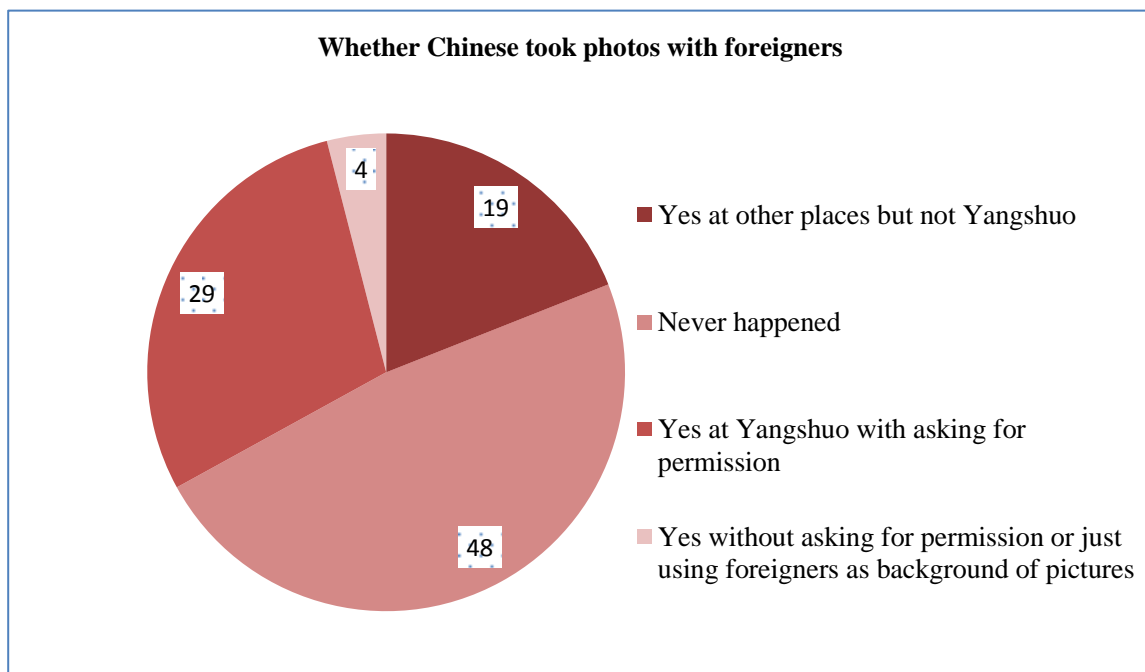


Figure 4.3: Whether Chinese Took Photos with Foreigners

Yangshuo’s foreign visitors have certainly become part of its scenery to Chinese tourists, just as the farmers are part of the landscape appreciated by western visitors. However, data obtained from Chinese respondents presents a somewhat different story. About one half of the Chinese respondents claimed that they never took pictures with foreigners. Only 29% of respondents took such photos. Nevertheless, more than half of the respondents answered the next question which ask about reasons for taking photos with foreigners if it occurred (the confusion might have been caused by the lack of tense in Chinese grammar). “If” can also imply a future action, therefore the question could have been understood as if they did take

photos with foreigners or would do so in the future, what would be the reasons for this. The responses to this question also showed that although half of the respondents had not taken photos with foreigners, they were willing to do so in the future.

Table 4.7: Reasons for Taking Photos with Foreigners*

Why Chinese take picture with foreigners?	Responses(N)	Percent	Percent of Cases
Seldom see any foreigners at my place I am curious	6	4.9%	6.8%
I only take pictures with good-looking foreigners	9	7.3%	10.2%
I have no opportunity to talk with them, taking picture is a kind of interaction	12	9.8%	13.6%
Photos are souvenirs for my trip, I will show my family and friends the pictures with foreigner	33	26.8%	37.5%
I have had conversations with them so taking picture is to record the memory	46	37.4%	52.3%
Other reason	17	13.8%	19.3%
Total	123	100.0%	139.8%

*Multiple responses were possible for this question.

Most of the Chinese respondents were young adults. This generation, specifically the 80s generation in China, have probably been the most influenced by western culture through music, movies and the mass media. They grew up when China was newly opened to the outside world. Therefore, it is understandable that they do not consider foreigners to be as novel as the older generation does. Instead, Table 4.7 shows the highest ranked reason for taking photos with foreigners as the result of proper interaction and communication. It is also suggests the functions of sharing and recollecting travel

experiences through photography. Those who took photos with foreigners considered it to be a part of the travel experience and would share the photos with others.

The link between taking photos and having a conversation with foreigners seems to be obvious, but taking photos did not necessarily ensure that a conversation would occur. However, those who claimed never to have taken a photo with foreigners in Yangshuo were less likely to have had a conversation with them (Table 4.8). Only few respondents indicated that taking photos was an occasion on which they conversed with foreigners. Therefore, taking photos with foreigners was often the outcome of a conversation rather than a precursor. This interpretation is supported by the data in Table 4.7.

Table 4.8: Conversation and Photos

Photos Conversation		Yes at other places but not Yangshuo	Never happened	Yes at Yangshuo with asking for permission	Yes without asking for permission
		No	% within Whether Chinese take photo with foreigners 10 52.6%	38 79.2%	1 3.4%
Yes	% within Whether Chinese take photo with foreigners 9 47.4%	10 20.8%	28 96.6%	2 50.0%	
Total		19 100.0%	48 100.0%	29 100.0%	4 100.0%

4.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented analytical results and interpretation of quantitative data. Results have indicated the differences of western and Chinese tourists on reason of visiting Yangshuo and perception of Yangshuo as a tourist destination, that the major attractions to both Chinese and western tourists are natural and rural scenery, western style and ambience is a unique attraction to Chinese tourists as outdoor activity to western tourists. Yangshuo

has successfully built its image as a multicultural town, crowdedness and loss of authenticity became main concern by tourists. Western bars are visited or planned to visit by most of the respondents, but western tourists have less interested in nightclubs than Chinese.

Chinese have reported a reasonable amount of intercultural conversation with foreigners, while western tourists have mostly commercial exchange with Chinese in Yangshuo. Non-commercial exchange often took place in bars. Western bars are witnessing casual conversation and social interaction between Chinese and western customers. Photo-taking also appeared to be an important type of interaction between Chinese tourists and western tourists, but the situation in Yangshuo may be different from big cities. Many young tourists who are able to speak English took photo-taking as a way to record memory after conversing with foreigners, while older people may only request photo for souvenir.

Detailed results of the role of bars and bars as context of intercultural communication and interaction will be presented in the next chapter. From participant observation, conversational interviews, and bar videos, the grouping of bar patrons, process and content, difficulties and outcomes of intercultural communication and interaction in bars will be addressed.

Chapter 5: Findings of Qualitative Data

This chapter presents the analytical results from observation notes, informal interviews, conversations and videos. Most of the conversations happened in bars. My informants include a variety of people, which are categorized as five groups. I will firstly introduce the different groups from whom I gained information, their motives for going to bars, and the communications and interactions that occurred between different groups. However, the informants also addressed their communications and interactions that took place in places other than bars. Therefore, these situations are also included in the results. The barriers, outcomes and effects of the interactions on different groups will be addressed.

5.1 Bar Patrons and Their Motives for Going to Bars

As explained earlier, five main groups are of interest in this study in Yangshuo: western tourists, Chinese tourists, local Chinese, local westerners and Chinese students. The categorization is based on their purposes for being in Yangshuo as gained from observation and interaction with people in Yangshuo. Although the initial purpose for this research was to examine the communication and interaction between western tourists and Chinese tourists, the situation in Yangshuo proved to be much more complex. Therefore, local westerners and other groups of Chinese who were communicated and interacted with western tourists in bars were included.

Most western bars in Yangshuo serve both Chinese and western food, and Chinese and western drinks, to attract more customers. In addition to providing food and drink for customers, they usually have unique and attractive names and inner decorations, Chinese

and western chess and other games, and background English music. Compared to the nightclubs on West Street, with neon lights and loud music but very small spaces, western bars more closely resemble pubs in the west. My notes described the situation as follows:

People usually don't mind being approached by others or starting conversations in bars, like how I initiated conversations with the tourists in the bar. But western tourists may talk more with other tourists, instead of locals. The other two groups here, students and foreign teachers, are actually making Yangshuo different from other tourist destinations in China. ... Yangshuo's bars provide space for people to relax and it is a taste of western flavour for Chinese tourists. Pool tables and games provide the chance to play and have fun at night when people are traveling, although many Chinese people choose to relax in clubs which are more expensive and loud. (Observation note July 18th)

5.1.1 The westerners at western bars

Western tourists are people who spend a relatively short time in Yangshuo. They include both independent and group tourists. In general, backpackers are the main tourist type. Group tourists tend to be older and have less free time to arrange their own activities. Therefore, most of the westerners that go to bars are independent travelers. Most tourists stay from several days up to two weeks in Yangshuo but some, especially young tourists, may spend one month or even longer. They become English teachers, volunteer or engage in learning Mandarin Chinese, Kung Fu and other cultural exchange programs. They usually consider themselves as traveling in China, despite the fact they may do some work to support their travels. There were other westerners, who were known and called "local foreigners" (本地老外), some of whom had lived in Yangshuo for several years or had settled down there. Those who had lived in Yangshuo for over three months were categorized as residents insofar they considered themselves as living and working in

Yangshuo instead of traveling. As Hughie, an Irish man who taught in Yangshuo's middle school for eight months, said:

There are foreigners who live in Yangshuo; there are foreigners who are tourists. There are Chinese who live here, there are foreigners who live in Yangshuo and I feel like a local, and you are not a local, because you do not live in Yangshuo, even though you are Chinese, it is your country, but this is my town (Hughie, July 29th).

However, the distinction between western tourists and local westerners is ambiguous.

Their identity shifts with the context, especially in conversations. Local westerners regard themselves as local when it comes to issues in Yangshuo but they also travel in other places in China. Therefore, in their travel experiences they identify themselves as western tourists.

Westerners are generally more familiar with bars than the Chinese, but tourists and local westerners have different reasons for going to bars. Local westerners usually have their own frequently-visited and preferred bars in Yangshuo, while tourists often select bars by recommendations from their hotel/hostel staff or guidebook or by observation. Although the reasons for selecting particular bars are not the same, the reasons for going to bars, especially at night, share more commonalities.

There are three main reasons that westerners reported going out to bars in Yangshuo. The two primary reasons were social and recreational. To satisfy their social and recreational needs when tourists are away from home, they pass time and seek leisure activities and interactional opportunities in bars. The third reason is to maintain a connection to western culture. Western bars provide a place to carry out western leisure

activities which enhances personal and exchange values with others. This cultural connection can be linked with the social and recreational dimensions, but it occurs within an inter-cultural context. It also applies strongly to those with cultural confusion or culture shock who seek a western setting to ease the tension of being in a different culture. However, people who go to bars in the daytime may have different motives, such as to use wireless internet, have a meal, read or write a journal. I mostly talked with people in bars in the evening; therefore, the additional reasons will not be pursued further.

To have fun and to pass time

Western bars offer both Chinese and western drinks, but westerners have a different drinking culture from the Chinese. They see drinking as a way to relax. But for tourists, going out in Yangshuo is different from going out where they work or study. Kate, an Australian lady who lives and works in Hong Kong, told me:

Everyone works very, very hard and lives in a very small space. It is easier to go out and spend some time with friends than just go home and stay in your small place. You don't really know people here. At home you are going to see someone, to meet friends ... here just go out (Kate, July 19th).

Several bars provide games, such as beer pong, pool and many drinking games. Many people use these to enjoy themselves and relax. An owner of a hostel bar which is famous for its beer pong competition said that she is a 'fun person' and she likes to have fun; therefore, she tried to create more fun in her bar. She also organizes many fun activities in and around Yangshuo in the daytime for the guests in her hostel. The evening in the bar seems to complement the daytime activities. Some western tourists, mainly younger ones,

try out nightclubs on West Street but most westerners do not prefer nightclubs, which were also called Chinese bars.

There is not much to do here (in Yangshuo), we stayed for five days here, drinking (at night) and sleeping the whole morning. There are other bars. Other bars are just dancing, they are not so friendly. There they have all the promotional establishments, here is more friendly (Diego, July 24th).

I think on holiday you should experience everything but some people just want to experience daytime and go to bed. As an Irish man, I think to myself, there's always the night as well (Dermot, August 5th).

Those who live in Yangshuo visit particular bars frequently and spend much of their leisure time there. Some bar owners are westerners; they have settled in Yangshuo and spent most of their time in bars with their friends. Other local westerners, most of whom are English teachers, are usually friends with the bar owner and staff. They get discounts when they consume in the bars. Most of the games they play in bars are western, such as poker, board games and quizzes. If they have Chinese friends, they may also play some Chinese card games, which are popular among most Chinese.

To socialize and exchange with others

Most western tourists said they came to bars to interact with others. Some may drink and talk with their friends and some may talk to strangers. The social interactions happen between westerners, and between westerners and Chinese. Those who travel by themselves are more likely to be involved in interactions in the bar: meeting new people is sometimes inevitable when traveling alone. Bars provide a setting for social interactions for tourists, especially for those feel socially insecure when traveling in a different culture. However,

different bars create different environments: at certain bars, there were many more interactions than in other. From my observation, small bars with an actual bar and with a closer space between tables seemed to facilitate more interactions. Moreover, bars with games provide chances for active interactions as well for games reduce interpersonal tension between strangers and add provide a lively atmosphere in the bar. There are a limited number of types of western bars in Yangshuo and the only ones should be categorized as pubs are the rooftop bars attached to hostels which are the featured bars in Yangshuo. The dormitory rooms in hostels allow strangers to live together and build trust with each other, and the hostel bars intensify the understanding and sharing among people keep away the street vendors and prevent disturbances.

Western tourists see bars as places to interact with others and to get to know where to go and what to do. Most of tourists talk about traveling in China. They share their experiences and give travel suggestions. The social function of western bars provides a sense of belonging to western tourists and to local westerners. It also provides chances for people to share their own travel experiences with others. Bars are a place to get travel information from others, including information about hostels and cafes. In contrast, Chinese bars failed to provide a quiet and friendly environment, but they target Chinese people rather than foreigners. Social interaction between westerners will be discussed further in the following section, where it will be compared with the interactions between westerners and Chinese.

Preference for western bars

Many informants made comparisons between western bars and Chinese nightclubs in Yangshuo, and emphasized their preference for western bars. The preference is likely based on their level of comfort for interaction in these bars, particularly for most independent tourists. Some tourists, especially those with higher culture confusion, see western bars as mediators or an escape from the “strange” China. The nightclubs on West Street offer pole dancing, neon lights, expensive drinks, loud disco music, and are full of Chinese people and most western tourists feel less comfortable in these places. Drinks are much cheaper in the western bars: local beer is 10RMB (Can\$1.50). The bars are cheap for those with western values. Furthermore, for some tourists, the number of westerners in Yangshuo and the western bars helps to reduce the anxiety of being immersed in a different culture. Westerners are more familiar than most Chinese people with bars, as places to socialize and drink, and they choose to relax in a western environment while they are in a rural Chinese town. Most of the western tourists with whom I conversed explained that they chose western bars because of their preferred leisure style and chose bars on the basis of the number of western customers in the bar.

I am at Lucy’s place. She is friends with a lot of local foreigners in Yangshuo. Her foreign friends usually get 20% discount. When they came in, she wanted them to sit near the door or at the tables outside, so the tourists walking by can easily see them. This is a very useful way to attract customers, because when they are not familiar with the place, they are more likely to pick where more foreigners go. But the place needs to be good itself to maintain return customers (Observation note July 31st).

We came here to find a quiet place and have a beer. I have to be honest, it has mostly foreign people, westerners. On main street the bars are full of Chinese people. (Dermot, August 5th)

Although Dermot was traveling in Yangshuo with a tour group, he seemed to be more confused about China than he might have been had he traveled independently. Being at the bar certainly gave him comfort from the stress of trying to understand and adjust to the novel situations. He had had no previous experiences with developing countries and, therefore, had a hard time traveling in China. The existence of western bars reflects the desirability of a western setting for western tourists in Yangshuo. However, this does not seem to have a significant influence on western tourists' images of Yangshuo. Rather, it is an important component of the Chinese tourists' images of Yangshuo. The preferences for western establishments did not only come from westerners for Chinese visitors also showed immense interests in the exotic settings.

5.1.2 The Chinese at Western Bars

I categorized the Chinese at western bars into three groups: local Chinese, Chinese students who were studying English in Yangshuo and Chinese tourists. Chinese people who work in the bars as waitresses, bartenders and managers are regarded as local Chinese. The bars are primarily workplaces for them. Thus, the term 'local Chinese' in this research refer to those live and work in Yangshuo, permanently or temporarily. The number of English schools and training centres in Yangshuo has increased over the last two decades and the students of those schools have become a major market for many recreational facilities. Chinese tourists also go to western bars, although they seem to be more interested in night clubs.

I went to an Australian bar today and helped the girls call in customers by the street. Most western bars in Yangshuo have a stand with a menu in front of their door.

One or two waitresses would stand by the street and say “Hello”, “Happy hour, local beer 8 yuan” or “Shepherd’s pie” to the westerners who passed by. It is interesting to see how Chinese tourists are so curious about this bar. It has a unique name and distinctive outside decoration. They took pictures, stared, and stopped at the stand and read the menu, but those who really wanted to come in and eat actually would not look at the menu. Later in the night, the club opposite to this bar became brightly lit. A girl with mini skirt came out and called for people to come into the club, it apparently worked pretty well (Observation note, July 19th).

Students are the major Chinese customers in western bars. Most of them are under 30.

Some are from universities or high schools. They only come in the summer. Some have already graduated or worked and have come to improve their English to enhance their career prospects. Such students go to western bars regularly, mainly to practice English.

Bars provide chances for them to practice what they have learned in classrooms with native English speakers. They also see bars as places to relax and they like to play drinking games in bars. Some students go to nightclubs and KTVs to dance or sing to reduce stress as well.

However, some of them do not like the nightclubs because the quality of those in Yangshuo cannot compare with those in the big cities. Both nightclubs and bars in Yangshuo, in fact, are not cheap to many Chinese. Therefore, some students regard the spending of money in bars as the price of opportunities to practice English. Murphy, a Chinese student in Yangshuo, when asked “Do you only come to bars to practice English”, responded with surprise: “Of course, why else would I come? It is very expensive here”.

Another student, Peter, saw bars more positively and did not worry about prices:

There are two advantages of coming to bars, one is for relaxation. Nowadays, young people like to relax in bars. In Yangshuo there is no better way to relax than drinking and chatting in bars. Yangshuo has a small town centre and no scenic spots open at night. Comparatively, going to bars is better than staying in my room. At the same time, I can talk to foreigners and improve my oral English - this is to use the English words I learned (Peter, August 6th). 来酒

吧有两个好处，一个是放松的，现在年轻人喜欢去酒吧放松一下，在阳朔没有比去酒吧更好的放松方式了，聊天喝酒啊，阳朔这么小的县城，晚上都没有景点，相比之下去酒吧总比待在房间里强吧。在放松的同时还可以找老外聊天，提高口语，跟老外聊天就是把学到的单词用出去。

However, because of the limited purchasing power of students, not every western bar in Yangshuo welcomes them. Most of the nightclubs in Yangshuo have minimum purchase requirements and although the requirements of some western bars are lower, they appear to keep students away. The bars that welcome students are friendlier and, therefore, they attract more western customers. The students come to talk with westerners and, therefore, an interactional environment is formed, which, from my observation, is an asset to the bar. The bars that give students discounts are the most popular among them, and also popular among westerners. Because students in Yangshuo usually stay for more than a month and they make friends easily with classmates, they usually go out with a few other students. Their choice of bars is often based upon a group decision. Some of them are friends with foreign teachers and other foreigners and they go to bars together. However, such Chinese students only talk or practice with their foreign friends in bars and do not approach strangers. Generally, bars with a quiet environment, reasonable price, friendly staff and western customers are visited the most by students. Their main purpose, or initial purpose, is to practice English, but spending leisure time and enjoying themselves is another purpose and often the purposes intertwine.

Chinese tourists also go to western bars. Most of them are young adults or university students. Some of the older ones who go to western bars have previous experience with foreigners or have been abroad. The younger customers usually have an interest in western

styles. Their main purpose of going to western bars is to try western food and experience western ambience. The younger Chinese generations see the western world from TV shows, movies and western brands, but most of them do not have the opportunity to go abroad. The expensive western food on the menu, western decorations with national flags of other countries hanging on wall, and tall westerners dining at the next table, can intrigue some Chinese tourists. Although Chinese tourists want a western experience, they seldom interact with westerners in the bar. Therefore, I did not interview many Chinese tourists; rather, I observed their behaviour when they went into a bar. Western bars, also, are not affordable to everyone. Only a very small proportion of Chinese tourists go to western bars. The majority of Chinese tourists have another way to get an experience with foreigners: photography. Hughie, a local westerner, said:

The only Chinese you see in these bars are tourists. They simply come to try western food, do what westerners do. There is a little love affair between Chinese and everything western. They just love to try. If they have money, they come in and try it. If they don't, they stand outside and take pictures - they go to a Chinese establishment, which is just a restaurant (Hughie, July 31st).

Chinese people drink beer with their meals. There is a Chinese drinking culture that is associated with a set of complex social and interpersonal dynamics. Most people keep this traditional drinking culture, but some try the western bars and even nightclubs, as new settings for drinking and socializing. Chinese and westerners behave differently in bars. JC, a barmaid in Yangshuo, said:

It is still related to culture. Chinese come to bars only to sit at their own tables. If I come in by myself, I would not join other tables, I would think why would I join them, I don't know them. But the foreigners are different; they would come in, say hi or hello, who they are, where they are from, "may I sit here", and just start chatting. 还是跟文化有关, 中国人泡吧一小桌的,

坐那，我单独进来了，我绝对不会加入他们，我就觉得，又不认识我干嘛要加入他们，他们不一样，来了就嗨你好，我谁谁谁我从哪里来，可以坐这吗，就开始聊了(JC, August 7th).

Chinese people are generally more reserved about talking with strangers in bars. It can be very stressful to initiate a conversation with strangers. Without the need and motivation to socialize with foreigners in English, many Chinese had no intention to interact with westerners in western bars. However, they would be driven to interact by an interest in taking photos of or with foreigners. The taking of photos emerged frequently in my informal interviews with westerners; it will be discussed later in detail as a major type of interaction between Chinese tourists and western tourists.

Most of the Chinese customers of western bars are students and tourists, and only a few local residents were seen in the bars. Some of them were from Yangshuo and some were newcomers who lived around Yangshuo. Those who came to western bars usually had a connection with the bar or with foreigners. Jelly, who had lived in Yangshuo for two years and operated an English school in another city, frequently visited a western bar. He was a friend of some foreigners in Yangshuo and sometimes they came together. Blue was a Chinese teacher at a training centre in Yangshuo. She had many foreign students. She was also friends with Jelly and they were playing pool in the bar before I approached them.

I think this bar is good. It is relaxing. Depends on personality, I don't like loud bars with intense music. I like light background music. Friends from all around the world are here. I can meet new friends. I think it's good.我觉得很好，这个酒吧比较休闲，根据个人性格吧，我不喜欢吵闹的酒吧，有激烈的音乐的地方，我不喜欢，就喜欢有一点淡淡的背景音乐，来自世界各地的朋友都在这，可以认识新朋友，我觉得挺好的 (Jelly, 27, July 18th).

I don't come here often. Usually I would not choose to come here by myself. They dragged me here, hehe, I like staying at home. 我不是很经常来，通常我一个人是不会选择来这里的，是被他们拉来的，呵呵我喜欢宅在家里面吧 (Blue, 25, July 18th).

Jelly and Blue were both well-educated and worked in the field of language training. They had many foreign contacts. They considered going out to western bars as a way to relax and interact with friends.

Other locals who go to bars are either young students from Yangshuo who study in other cities and who go out to play games in western bars when they are home for summer, or those with connections with bar owners, i.e. friends or relatives. I talked with the family of my landlady, some local tour guides, hostel owners and people in local restaurants in Yangshuo, and found that only some of the younger ones went out in the evening and they preferred nightclubs. Some of them also consider going out to nightclubs as a strategy to build up business network and find business partners. However, most locals in Yangshuo had never stepped into a nightclub or bar. At a rooftop bar I met several local people from Yangshuo. One of them was the bar owner's cousin. They were playing dice games and asked me to join them. Hong, one of them, worked as sales attendant at a souvenir shop on West Street.

If you don't play dice games at a bar, it cannot be called a bar. No fun. There are a lot of foreigners in this bar but our English is bad, it is such a shame. It is more fun than those loud bars. We go there too, all of them, Cavalier, Boys & Girls, Lan, but we normally don't dance there. The tourists normally go crazy there. 这里如果不玩这个的话不叫酒吧，没意思，这里很多老外，但是外语不行啊，太惭愧了。这里比较那些闹的好玩，我们也去别的酒吧，都去，骑士啊，男孩女孩啊，兰桂坊啊，我们去那里玩一般的不跳舞，一般都是外地人比较疯狂，旅游的那种 (Hong, 18, July 20th).

Only the local Chinese who work in the tourism industry or English schools have much contact with westerners. The younger generations goes to nightclubs and bars to spend leisure time as well, although they are aware that most of the establishments were aimed at tourists. Chinese who work in bars are categorized as local Chinese, although a few staff may not be local people of Yangshuo but have come from elsewhere to invest or to look for a job in tourism. They observe people in the bars and communicate and interact with them. Some western bar owners, often around 30 years old, speak fluent English, manage and work in their bars, and are friends with many local westerners.

Almost all servers in western bars in Yangshuo are young girls. Most of the local waitresses and barmaids had graduated from middle school or high school and some university students from outside of Yangshuo also worked there in the summer. Therefore, the turnover is rapid. Local girls want to go out and work in the big cities in the south. Although some may stay in the bar and work for a relatively long time, others leave as soon as they find better options in big cities. These managers and waitresses were also important informants in this research. I built friendships with some of them during my stay in Yangshuo. Chinese waitresses communicated and interacted with westerners on a daily basis and, thus, were research subjects, and their stories and experiences in bars supplemented my own observations.

In summary, the five groups of participants were present in bars for different reasons. Thus, the communication and interaction between these groups were for different purposes and in different styles. Each group can be regarded as a node in a network diagram. The

conversations and interactions in different styles form the channels between these nodes, and the purposes and motives for communicating and interacting explain the information exchanges. Western tourists, Chinese students and local Chinese were the major participants in my interviews and conversations in Yangshuo and they constitute the main nodes in this communication network.

5.2 The “hellos”, Staring and the Chinese Characters

Although many western tourists engaged in conversations, more tourists did not have any conversation with Chinese people, even those who went out to bars at night. In addition to business-related exchanges, some of the former had casual conversations with Chinese people in bars, hostels, trains and during their trips to the countryside of Yangshuo. Therefore, the following part of this chapter begins with a summary concerning western tourists' experiences of “getting around” China with almost no knowledge of the language, and the challenges and the barriers that prevent them from interacting further with Chinese people.

The biggest barrier, and a barrier that could not be overcome by most of the international tourists traveling in China, is the language. The language barrier sometimes prevents tourists from communicating about their basic needs, such as getting transportation and directions. In Yangshuo, it is easier for western tourists to communicate than in many big cities. This is so because most tourism workers are able to speak English enough to complete business transactions and give recommendations. However, in some big cities, the level of English in the hospitality industry and public transportation is not

strong. Language problems may be seen as part of the travel experience. However, the stress that is generated by communication difficulties and failures can result in frustration and even culture shock. Those who have some basic knowledge of Chinese probably have better experiences.

I think from the west. I have traveled in Europe, Central America. This, here, for a westerner, it is completely foreign. Truly, I can't even try to read. You know the game, with two pictures, mostly the same and you are trying to figure out what is missing. I feel like the same. When I was looking at my guidebook and trying to match the characters at the train station, it is so sad but I can't connect. I really really want to. I speak a little Spanish, a little Italian, but here I tried so hard I can't even say "Where is the toilet". People look at you like "I want to help you but I don't know what you want". It is so sad, to the point I feel like I am getting less out of my trip than I would. If I had taken two months ahead of time and learned some of the language, it would have been better. It is very hard to have that cultural connection. It is hard to understand. I feel like I am an observer, more than anything (Nate from U.S, July 19th).

Shanghai is quite difficult - no one speaks a word of English. In the train station anyway, it was weird. I just had my '*Lonely Planet*' phrase book and showed him the characters. Eventually we got somewhere. But Beijing was fine. After I got here I did a Chinese course for a month, so I am ok with buying tickets and stuff like that in Chinese, which is very handy. I can buy tickets and order fried rice (Phil from U.K, August 6th).

Language is the connection between tourists and their destinations. Language barriers are also an indicator of cultural distance. Many westerners, like Nate, are merely observers of China. Their guide books are culture brokers and provide them with vital assistance. Some Spanish people that I spoke with called '*Lonely Planet*' their "travel bible". Even though Yangshuo has a relatively high number of English speakers, which makes basic communication convenient, many westerners did not have conversations with Chinese, but they all indicated their intention to try. There were many discussions about the language during my conversations with them. Some tourists perceived the communication barrier to result from their limited knowledge of Chinese. Chinese is generally considered to be a

difficult language and some western tourists portray English as a universal language.

However, even among those who speak some English, many Chinese people are too shy to speak English or afraid of making mistakes.

Diego talked about when they were in Shanghai, when they ordered five rice but only were served three, so they asked the waiter, in English, where were the other two. The waiter gave them a note later written in English, “Sorry we are making rice, they will be ready soon”. He wondered why the waiter would not say it: it is very strange, Chinese are too shy to speak (Observation note, July 22nd).

However, Chinese with limited English may feel more comfortable reading and writing than speaking for they rarely get much instruction or opportunity to speak.

Western tourists perceived Chinese people as being generally friendly and welcoming which partially eased feelings of insecurity when traveling in an unfamiliar culture. But the staring, pointing and laughing from Chinese people made most of western tourists uncomfortable. These actions are regarded as being impolite in many cultures but Chinese people, especially from small towns and rural areas, are very curious about foreigners. The situation in Yangshuo, in fact, is better than in many other places in China: because of the number of western tourists, residents are used to the presence of foreigners and there is less staring, pointing and laughing. There are more “hellos” as residents try to be welcoming. However, the vendors in Yangshuo often start their pushy selling with a “hello” as well. Therefore, western tourists build a mental shield to avoid disturbance and protect themselves from falling into tourist traps.

I talked with Erik and Ida from Sweden at a bar tonight. They were sitting at the corner of the bar and drinking. I went to them and asked if I could talk to them for a while. Erik asked, are

you trying to sell anything? , Of course I did not, so they let me sit down at the table and we had a long and pleasant chat (Observation note, July 16th).

At the train station, somebody came to me and said “Be careful, be careful”. I don’t know why. Sometimes I don’t know what they mean because I don’t understand the language. They have this laugh. I don’t know if they are making fun of me. I always look a little bit cool and don’t talk too much to them because I don’t know what they want. Only here, maybe they want me to go to a tour. I don’t know. But I feel safe here (Christine, August 6th).

The experiences of tourists vary but those with more travel experiences and more time traveling would take their time getting to know the place and culture. Most western tourists I spoke with did not have any culture shock; rather there was simple confusion and feeling of novelty. Only a few of them claimed that they could not bear the stress when they first arrived in China, but Yangshuo gave them relief and comfort. One tourist even said of Yangshuo, “This is not China”. Yangshuo is a combination of China and the west, but the west only exists in the tourist centre.

Western tourists have different motivations and expectations of their trip, and these determine their attitude to interact with Chinese people and other tourists on their trip. Those who have limited time on a vacation in Yangshuo or travel with a tour group with tight schedule seldom think of interacting with others. Their purpose is to relax and follow the itinerary. Most of the western tourists are on a long and expensive trip, therefore they have high expectations. Backpackers travel with a tight budget but they also tend to meet new people on their trip. These tourists have the intention to interact with others, do not place limits on who the others might be, and get the most out of the trip in this way.

In short, for those western tourists who have the intention to communicate and interact with Chinese people, language is a major barrier that prevents them from initiating

conversations. The confusion and feeling of insecurity from being in a different culture also distances western tourists from having actual conversations with Chinese people. Lastly, some tourists do not have the intention to communicate and interact with Chinese people or other tourists mostly due to their tight schedule and expectation of the trip. Thus, it is understandable that although many did have conversation with Chinese in bars, the westerners were usually approached by Chinese individuals instead of initiating the conversation. Certainly, people from different continents communicated hundreds of years ago, in spite of the cultural differences and language problems. The channels that connect westerners and Chinese in Yangshuo are formed from the actual conversations and interactions that people have. They reflect cultural differences and lead to changes.

5.3 Intercultural Situations, Conversations and Perceptions

Western tourists and local westerners in Yangshuo have the most conversations with Chinese students and local Chinese. Only local westerners are friends or acquaintances with the students and Yangshuo locals, and their interaction occur within the social circle that they have built in Yangshuo. Western tourists' interactions are with strangers. Students approach westerners to practice English. Chinese tourists do not have many conversations with westerners in bars, but they are interested in taking photos and westerners usually have interactions with Chinese tourists on the train. Some local residents are friends with local westerners and those work in bars have direct interactions with westerners, both tourists and locals. The nature of interactions between different groups is different: they vary in how they communicate and interact, the topics they communicate about and the

outcomes, how they perceive others in those interactions, and whether changes occur as a result of these interactions. These topics will be discussed based on my participation in discussions and my observation in Yangshuo.

5.3.1 A “Win-Win” Situation – Chinese Students and Western Tourists

There were two Chinese young men and a Chinese girl talking with a western guy at the table. The western guy, James, is from UK. He was talking with the Chinese girl, Michelle. The Chinese are all students at an English training centre here. They met James yesterday and came back again to the bar today to talk to each other. Michelle gave James a gift; he’s leaving tomorrow so Michelle wanted to give him a souvenir. James was very happy to take it and opened it; it was two straw made-dolls, very traditional and interesting. Before Michelle left, James wanted a photo with her, so I took one for them. He thinks Michelle is very beautiful and sweet. Later, one of the Chinese boys, John, was trying to talk about Justin Bieber with James, but James did not know who he is. John said he is a U.S pop singer. I corrected him: he is Canadian (Observation note July 22nd).

Students have their own motivation to communicate with westerners in bars, to practice English; therefore, they have the drive that pushes them to start talking to foreigners. They are taught at the training centres in Yangshuo to be honest on their purposes when they approach foreigners. So they usually start with the same line, “Excuse me, can I practice English with you?”. They start with questions like “Where are you from?”, “How long have you been in Yangshuo?”, “Where else have you been in China?”, etc. Although tourists may dread being asked the same questions by many students, they are the repertoire when interacting with a stranger, especially in a tourist destination. Most of the topics that students talk about with westerners are related to attractions in Yangshuo or China.

Mostly we talked about attractions in China, what places are interesting, while some other places are not worth visiting, food, places in Yangshuo, and I also asked about foreigners and how the situations in their countries are different from China. Sometimes we also talked about

politics, history, etc. 最多就是聊中国景点，哪里好玩哪里不好玩，食物啊，阳朔的一些地方，然后就是问一下老外他们国家的那些情况跟中国有什么不同啊，有时候还聊一下政治啊，历史啊（Peter, August 6th）

The students were interested in the foreign countries as well. Students and western tourists exchanged information on tourist destinations, culture, history and social situations in both China and the western countries. They also share personal information and experiences, such as education, occupation, hobbies and family. In the summer of 2010 when the FIFA World Cup was held in South Africa, football was another big topic, as well as many other sports.

The quality of a conversation largely depended on the student's level of spoken English. For those who came to Yangshuo to practice, the conversations usually progressed slowly and were simple in content. Sometimes miscommunication occurred and certain topics were likely skipped by both parties.

I am sick of seeing foreigners now. It was the same sentences I spoke every day. It is hard to talk greater depth. I know it is necessary to start with the basics: so far it is always these few things we talk around. 老外现在看到都烦了，也就是那几句话，每天都几句话，要是搞深一点的就聊不起来，也是首先先聊这些才能进一步聊，绕来绕去还是这些（Murphy, July 19th）.

When I spent more time with the students whom became my friends in Yangshuo, I discovered that most of the time I was giving English tips, or helping them with English words and phrases. Their eagerness to learning is driven by the usefulness of the language, not necessarily by their interest. But language is a crucial part of a culture and some younger students (such as John who was mentioned at the beginning of this section) were interested in American pop singers, movies. Most of the students watch English TV series

to study English; therefore, they are familiar with many popular TV shows in the U.S. and the U.K. Many topics they initiated with westerners were also related to western culture. Chinese students were looking for things that might resonate with westerners. As a matter of fact, traditional Chinese culture may not be practiced by the younger generations. Some residents in Yangshuo, who have witnessed many interactions between students and westerners, showed concern regarding how the students worshipped western culture and underestimated the importance of preserving Chinese culture.

Many westerners teach in Yangshuo. They have made friends with their Chinese students and other Chinese people in Yangshuo. However, western tourists did not have high expectations regarding friendship and they were aware that when traveling it may be easy to meet people but hard to make long-term friends. Most of the Chinese students would like to stay in touch with some of the tourists that they meet. Female students find it easier to make friends with foreigners, but they are usually shy and will not initiate conversations in bars. As a result, there are more male students in bars trying to approach foreigners; female students seldom go out by themselves. Peter and Murphy were studying in Yangshuo for four months. They were not big fans of foreigners and were not interested in western culture, but they were learning English for their future career prospects and, since China has been open to the world and speaking good English has become an asset. In contrast, the females showed more interests in westerners. Flora, a 24-year old studying English in Yangshuo for a month, told me:

You know, Yangshuo has a lot of one-night stands, lots of them, seriously. Because I am Chinese so I will tell you there is a joke: the three So's about Chinese girls in Yangshuo - so young, so beautiful, so easy. It is very popular in Yangshuo. They are also students here. I don't know how to tell. Some girls pretend they are traditional, but they are not. You know exotic? It is very attractive, both to foreigners and to Chinese. Chinese think foreigners are very strong, sexy, you know, Chinese guys are not like that. So maybe they are just attracted to each other (Flora, July 20th).

Peter, 27, had a different perspective. He disliked western guys because he was upset that foreign guys like Chinese girls but foreign girls do not like Chinese guys, or at least not in the same way. However, he thought many Chinese girls went out with foreigners to practice their English. Because people come and go in Yangshuo, they did not take the relationship seriously.

Everyone may want "exotic love" in heart. I will not reject this kind of relationship if there is a chance. It is just dating, not getting married or anything. I think in Yangshuo, most of us want to practice English, not for marriage, only to try it out. 每个人心里可能都想异国恋，要是给我一个异国恋我也不排斥啊，恋爱而已啊，又不结婚。我觉得在阳朔来讲，大部分还是想练英语，也不是想结婚什么的，也就是尝试一下而已 (Peter, August 6th).

I discussed this matter with waitresses in the bars. They told me that some local girls and girls from places near Yangshuo came to bars to look for foreigners. They would "throw themselves at foreigners". However, most of the Chinese girls who came to the bars were not like that. Some of them were extremely conservative. Flora admitted she became more open after having had more contacts with foreigners and going to bars more. Before I left Yangshuo, I heard that she was going out with an English teacher in Yangshuo. Some western tourists would not have minded having love affairs on their trip, especially guys. Phil, a 23-year old from UK, said he did not like English girls; he thought Chinese girls are very pretty and he would not mind going out with one. The existence of western bars in

Yangshuo, with the influence of alcohol and mutual interactions, tends to lead to more love affairs, particularly exotic ones.

Love affairs turned out to be one attraction of Yangshuo among domestic tourists, but it is difficult to find out how they occurred in bars and in Yangshuo. Perhaps Yangshuo does have a romantic atmosphere, like many tourist destinations in other parts of the world. But most of the Chinese students had a very strong focus of practicing English. They had motivations to approach foreigners; however, it was not instrumental, for they did not prepare questions or topics, but simply interacted. The line of practicing English can be an ice breaker to start a conversation. It does not constrain communication and interaction, nor were the students or tourists bothered by cultural differences. I call it a win-win situation: students practiced their English and western tourists had chances to interact with Chinese people, instead of being mere observers. Students are usually willing to help western tourists: they give recommendations on where to go in Yangshuo, accompany tourists cycling to the countryside, helping them to buy tickets, etc. Moreover, depending on tourists' expectations of their experience in China, those who seek authentic experiences and travel with interests in Chinese culture usually have more questions. In fact, the Chinese they interact with are crucial in providing answers to their questions. Karl, 24, from Holland, taught English in Yangshuo for a month, and particularly enjoyed talking with his Chinese students:

I like to talk to Chinese people. Many people who come here are students. They want to improve their English and I always like to help people. And they can give good recommendations about China, where to go and what to do. Many times I have questions, I

talk to people to learn more. Because people from Europe, they think just like me. Some of the Chinese people, they think really different. Sometimes it is cool to have ideas and sometimes I see things so crazy I don't understand. I can ask them "What is this? Why do they do this?" and I can learn more myself (July, 20th).

Kirsty, an Australian lady who lived in Hong Kong, told me that she thought about how interesting it is that Chinese want to know about how foreigners think of China: they asked questions like whether they like it or not. Positive answers from this kind of interaction gave the Chinese students confidence and pride in their country. Negative points were also discussed, such as societal problems, government dictatorship and corruption. What the students wanted to find out from westerners reflected their negotiation of identity as hosts in Yangshuo. It also implied that Chinese gained cultural recognition from westerners. Although their conversations were mostly simple, western tourists may have been more cautious with sensitive topics. Some of the Chinese students did not intend to avoid those and they were open about how they saw their own country.

The information that the young students provided mattered to western tourists for the Chinese life they heard about was from personal experience and feelings, rather than the mass media. However, some Chinese considered it unnecessary to discuss the country's problems with foreigners. Jelly, owner of an English training centre in another city and who had western friends in Yangshuo and lived there for two years, explained his concern:

A lot of Chinese people like to complain about negative things to foreigners. I think it is a very bad habit. Since I have been here I never heard any foreigner complain about their countries, but we Chinese always talk about this is bad or that is bad to outsiders. It is like in a family. If a couple has problem they solve it at home but don't want to let everyone know. I think we should not complain to foreigners. The foreigners normally tend to avoid sensitive problems. Because they are in another country, they don't want to discuss what is not good about this country.... A lot of students complain about the Chinese government, living, city construction,

education, technology and culture. They complain about everything. It seems to leave a bad impression on foreigners, that Chinese live with complaints all the time. 很多中国人喜欢在外国人面前抱怨中国什么什么东西不好，我觉得这是一种非常不好的习惯，我在这里这么久，还从来没有人说自己国家不好的，但是我们中国人老是对外面的人说我们这不好那不好，就像一个家庭一样，夫妻有问题在家里解决，不要对外面说，我认为不应该跟外国人抱怨。外国人一般都比较喜欢回避一些敏感的问题，因为他毕竟是在别的国家，通常都不太愿意讨论其他国家什么不好的地方。……很多学生抱怨中国的政府不好啊，生活的不好啊，城市的建设啊，还有教育啊，科技啊，文化啊，甚至方方面面都在抱怨，好像给外国人感觉非常不好，他们就觉得中国人怎么老是天天在抱怨中生活。(July 16th)

Jelly seemed to be convinced that western tourists did not want to discuss sensitive problems of China, because they were trying to be friendly and polite, and they were traveling so they did not want to be surrounded by negative ideas.

During my time in Yangshuo, I had many discussions with western tourists about sensitive problems of China. The flow of conversations led to the topics and I tried to be objective rather than defensive on the matters. Some westerners I spoke with considered discussing China's problems as showing concern about the country. Because they were in China, it was more common to talk about China than their own countries which Chinese people did not know much about. Hughie, from Ireland, said "If I am talking with a Chinese in Ireland, I would talk about the problems of Ireland too". While the "face" and image of China, which influence what to say and what it is better not say to "outsiders", was a concern of Chinese, the westerners were more open, but not impetuous, in sensitive discussions.

Western tourists in Yangshuo do not mind being approached by students although occasionally, they might get annoyed if it happens too often in one night. Most of them are friendly and patient. The effects of these interactions between western tourists and Chinese

students are often more significant to the students. Tourists only stay in Yangshuo for a short period of time and will only be approached by students if they go to a bar.

Nevertheless, these interactions provided opportunities for western tourists to mitigate their cultural confusion, share their own culture and experiences with the younger Chinese generation, and obtain travel information and recommendations. Chinese students, as well as Chinese residents in Yangshuo, stay a longer period of time in Yangshuo and sometimes have frequent contact with westerners. The effects of the interactions build over time. Bean, 26, studied English in Yangshuo for two months. She said she learned more than just

English:

Practicing English is also cultural communication. Chatting with the foreigners also helps me learn a lot of things. Before I came to Yangshuo, I really did not know many things. Now at least I get to know more countries. Before I only knew China. Now I know more countries. Before I felt they are so far away and so amazing. Now I feel they are not too much different from us, all friendly and willing to talk with you, at least from all those I practiced with. None rejected me. Maybe they feel annoyed sometimes. There are too many students here, a dozen students came to them every day. They usually would not reject. Sometimes they may reject politely. 练英语其实也是一种文化交流了，跟他们聊也可以学到很多东西，像我来这里之前真的是什么都不了解，现在一来很多国家都知道了，至少是知道的国家多了，以前就知道中国，现在就知道了很多国家，以前就觉得他们很遥远很神奇哦，现在就觉得跟我们也差不多，都很友好，他们都很愿意跟你交谈的，至少我找那么多人练，他们都没有拒绝过。可能有的人烦了，这里学生多嘛，一天十几个人围着你，走了一批又来了，他会很礼貌的拒绝你，但是一般都不会拒绝 (August, 3rd).

The learning experience applies to both Chinese students and western tourists in Yangshuo. Western tourists were traveling and learning, which includes observing and interacting along their trip. Students learn about the west from both their classes and their interaction with foreigners. The perceptions of the other culture do not come from one source and the outcomes are not enforced by one act. Nonetheless, the interactions assist

people to learn and exchange information. For western tourists, exchange and socializing with students in bars, most importantly, helps them obtain travel information in China. For the students, interacting with foreigners broadens their horizon and expands their knowledge. Some students admitted they became more open but many others only focused on English improvement. The western tourists were usually not proactive in interacting with Chinese, but they valued the experience of speaking with Chinese people during their trip. The interactions initiated by the Chinese took place in a relaxing social and intercultural setting, and became part of the western tourists' experience in Yangshuo.

5.3.2 The Fun and the Changes - Locals and Western tourists

Very few local Chinese residents go to bars in Yangshuo. Those who live outside of the traveler centre or do not have a tourism-related occupation seldom have any contact with tourists or with tourist facilities. Many young residents showed an interest in nightclubs but western bars do not interest them. Like many western tourists in Yangshuo, Chinese residents and Chinese tourists are observers as well. Many residents have observed foreigners for many years and they are familiar with them, especially those working in the hospitality industry. They are not as curious as Chinese tourists. The presence of local westerners in Yangshuo influences their views of westerners and western culture. The quality and content of conversation between local Chinese and local westerners also depends on the level of English that local Chinese speak and their relationship with westerners.

Locals who work in bars have daily contact with both western tourists and local westerners. Some locals are friends with westerners; their interactions are usually personal, they exchange stories and discuss social and personal events. Local westerners are also acquaintances with many bar managers and waitresses and their interactions have become a social routine when they go to a bar. Local westerners have their own social circles. Those who had settled down did not have many contacts with strangers and, if they did, they were with western tourists. They offered travel advice and gave recommendations to western tourists. Because of their familiarity with bars and the relaxing environment, westerners in bars interact easily with each other, while the Chinese tend to stay with their own friends. Hughie, a local westerner, explained why he did not interact with Chinese people in bars:

I have no problem talking to a Chinese person; it doesn't matter. There is always communication. What I need is only an entry point, a common topic for a conversation or something to begin a conversation about. I can't socialize with them. It is easier with a foreigner, because a foreign traveler is very open, a lot more open than they are at home, so you can suggest things that you should go see. You can help them out. They are very open. It is a lot harder to begin a conversation with a Chinese person. There could be a communication barrier that you don't know about. Is your Chinese good enough for them to understand? Is their English good enough for you? Then a lot of Chinese come to a bar for a different reason. They are not here to socialize with new people. They are here to socialize with their current friends. ... We go to meet people, they go to eat food and have a good time. It could be the same if we were at home. I normally go to a bar with someone if I go. (Hughie, July 31st)

Sandy from Switzerland, an English teacher in Yangshuo, explained that she approached Chinese in bars to practice her Chinese, but she had unpleasant experiences with Chinese men, so she became very careful and cautious with talking to them. Another young woman from Australia, who at the time was traveling in Yangshuo and taught English in a school

in Guangdong province, told me a similar story about Chinese men that harassed her in a nightclub.

Even so, both Hughie and Sandy were friends with many Chinese in Yangshuo: waitresses, bar managers and their colleagues at the school in which they taught. Compared to western tourists, local westerners were not so interested in culture anymore and they became sensitive in discussions of traditional matters with Chinese people. Moreover, it is more likely for western residents than western tourists to have negative experiences in China, due to their length of stay. The negative experiences make them more culturally sensitive, distanced and even defensive to the Chinese that they meet.

The local Chinese who became friends with westerners could speak a fair amount of English; in fact, they had different perceptions of western culture which also influenced their own behaviour. Conversational topics between local Chinese and their western friends varied, and depended on personal interest and connections with the westerners. For example, Blue, a Mandarin Chinese teacher in Yangshuo, said she discussed many cultural topics with her students, while Lei, a bartender, said they usually shared their days and interesting stories in bars. They said that their interactions were no different from those with Chinese friends.

The waitresses I had conversations with were from age 18 to 21. Most of them were local residents and high school graduates. Some of them were university students from other provinces doing summer work in Yangshuo. They communicated with both western

residents and tourists on a daily basis and had different experiences with westerners. They often gave travel suggestions to tourists and made small talk with westerners about personal topics. If the interactions between westerners and Chinese students are initiated to practice English by the students, the conversations between western customers and waitresses or managers were more casual and not purposive. Western customers also had questions about things that confused them in China.

A foreigner asked me why Chinese always do this (V-sign made by index finger and middle finger). He said it is impolite in his country. I said we always do it when we take pictures. It means victory, V. He said in his country if you do this it is disrespectful, like looking down on the person, so he asked me what this meant here. He said it is funny. I don't know a lot, I just told them what I know. 有个外国人问我中国人老是这样是什么意思(指做V字型手势), 说在国外是不礼貌的手势, 我说我们照相都喜欢这样, 表示赢的那个, V嘛, 他说在他们国家这样就是对别人不尊重, 有一种鄙视的什么感觉吧, 所以他问我这是什么意思, 他说很有趣, 我也不怎么知道, 我就是把我知道的告诉他们 (Lu, August 4th).

Most of the waitresses spoke limited English, which only allowed them to complete service transactions, answer customers' requests and ask simple questions like "Where are you from?". Some of them, such as college students, and those who particularly enjoyed talking with foreigners, spoke better English. The opportunity of waitresses to have casual conversations with foreigners in the bar was also determined by the atmosphere of the bar and the attitude of their manager. Usually they had more time to chat when the bar was less busy and when the manager was not around. Most of the waitresses I spoke with had worked in the bar for at least a month and an average of six months. When asked about their feelings about working in bars and having contact with foreigners, the waitresses all claimed that it is fun.

I don't speak a lot of English. I really want to communicate with them but I don't know how. It is hard to speak. I will take my time. I really really want to communicate. I think it is fun talking to them. I don't know how to explain, it just felt interesting. 我不会说很多英语嘛, 想跟他们交流但是不知道怎么说, 说不出来, 慢慢来吧。其实很想很想跟他们沟通, 觉得跟他们说话蛮好玩的, 说不上来, 就是感觉好玩 (Li, August 10th).

I think it is fun. Like some of them like to learn Chinese, I taught them. It is a lot of fun. Some of them told me where they have been to. They are very humorous and funny. 我觉得挺好玩的, 就像他们有的喜欢学中文, 我就教他们, 特别好玩, 有的是说他们去哪里玩啊, 超幽默, 超搞笑 (May, August 1st).

Sometimes the waitresses made friends with western tourists or teachers who stayed in Yangshuo for a few days or several months, but it was hard to keep the friendship when the westerners left. This situation was also faced by local residents who built friendships with westerners. However, But they generally had better computer skills or internet access than young waitresses and could maintain connections online. Some of them even had a Facebook account and were able to access Facebook even though it is banned in China. Therefore, the waitresses had a difficult time when their western friends left. May said:

It is very easy to make friends here, but they only stayed for a period of time and then left. It is not fun at all. Some may still stay in touch but not too much. The foreigners use MSN. We do not use it. It is actually sad. They will never come back. It is not possible to go and look for them either. It is depressing, very sad. 在这里交朋友最容易的, 但是都是待一段时间就走了, 一点都不开心, 有些有联系, 有也是很少, 外国人都用 msn 啊, 我们又不用那个, 其实很郁闷的, 走了也不可能再回来了, 你也不可能去找他们, 很郁闷的, 蛮伤心的 (May, August 1st) .

Some of the girls had feelings towards foreigners in Yangshuo, but they did not expect a relationship with them because they were aware of the cultural difference. Working in western bars also changed or renewed their perceptions about westerners and western culture. For the waitresses, the interactions exposed them to a variety of people from different countries and cultures, and their knowledge of the countries increased. JC, after

working two years in western bars, trained herself to identify nationality from western faces and English accents.

Comparatively, local Chinese who had more contact with westerners experienced more of western culture than the Chinese students. Having regular and continuous interaction with westerners resulted in changes in intercultural awareness and personal reflection, as reported by local residents. Three main themes summarize the outcome and influence of intercultural communication and interaction on local Chinese: intercultural awareness, recognition of individuality and assimilation of positive behaviours.

Intercultural Awareness

Foreigners always think of themselves, not other people. We say it is too selfish. I introduce them to share, to be harmony with others but they are always self-centered. That is definitely different (Lucy, August 2nd).

American teenagers are arrogant. Americans are relatively picky, like to nitpick and older French people are kind. 美国小孩很狂妄，美国人比较挑剔，胡找茬，法国的老人比较和善 (Lei, July 29th).

Local Chinese claimed that exposure in an intercultural environment and western atmosphere increase their knowledge of western countries, customs and many other facts and introduced them to the personality and behaviour of westerners. From interacting with westerners, those Chinese who had never been outside of China experienced westerners from many countries with different cultures. The understanding of western culture brought awareness of cultural and personal differences, and the acceptance of others. Most of the local informants could only express the cultural differences in examples, such as westerners split cost on meals, focus on individual development, etc. However, the

understanding of the other culture is not a one way process. It also invites a comparison between western and Chinese culture, and reflects the Chinese mentality of preserving our own culture in an age of rapid economic development.

The level of intercultural awareness varies among the local informants. Those who are friends with westerners, have better language and communication skills, and have more knowledge of both cultures, tend to report higher intercultural awareness. Stereotypes also appeared in the informants' perception of westerners. The westerners in Yangshuo are mostly tourists; therefore, the characteristics of tourists were also generalized as representatives of all western people. Also, the micro-culture of Chinese tourists and western tourists were also compared, e.g. it was thought that western tourists value novel experiences more of and travel independently but Chinese tend to travel in groups and like taking photos of themselves, etc.

From observing Chinese interacting with westerners in Yangshuo, some locals have begun to be concerned that China has become too westernized. Many people, especially young people, blindly worship western styles. Jelly, was aware that many Chinese students in Yangshuo considered western style "cool" and had no interest in preserving traditional Chinese culture, while Koreans and Japanese have preserved their cultural heritage better. Also, when asked questions about China, Blue, for example, had discussed Chinese philosophy with her western friends and discovered that they knew more about it than she did. She felt obliged to read more and improve her knowledge of Confucius and Taoism.

Thus, some Chinese were faced with the challenge of understanding and inheriting traditional culture.

The awareness of cultural differences helped Chinese bar owners to succeed in their business in Yangshuo, where they targeted western tourists and offered what their customers wanted. Bar culture originated in the west and understanding what western customers demanded from a western bar in Yangshuo was at the core of their success. From the waitresses and bar workers in Yangshuo and my observations, all the busy western bars had relatively outgoing workers who would joke with customers or were active in interacting.

Recognition of Individuality

The construction of national or regional stereotypes was inevitable but not emphasized. There are many existing stereotypes of westerners, particularly white people in Chinese society, including that they are wealthy, have few parental responsibilities and loose family ties, bad at math, etc. For locals in Yangshuo, through interacting with western individuals, some stereotypes have been reduced. Many of the informants showed their recognition of individuality over cultural stereotypes. They portrayed westerners more as individuals rather according to their culture or national background. The situation in Yangshuo, where westerners and Chinese both found a place to fit in, not only helped local people to understand the effects of globalization and that the world is becoming a global

village, but also strengthened the appreciation of the individual's personality, qualities, behaviour and experiences.

Indeed China and the west are different. Individually everyone is different. Everyone has a different character. You can't say all the foreigners are the same, people from this country are like this, people from that country are like that. Some even say Chinese are like this or that. Those who like to talk this way are talking without thinking. 确实中西方不一样，凭自己，每个人自己的个性都不一样，不能说外国人都一样，这个国家人怎么怎么样，那个国家认怎么怎么样，还有些人说中国人怎么怎么样，喜欢这么说的没通过大脑想 (Lei, July 29th).

Some local Chinese also showed their appreciation and admiration of some westerners.

Manners and politeness were mostly referred to by waitresses. Because the customers usually have a privileged place in the hospitality industry, especially in China, people in the serving positions sometimes are not well respected. Therefore, being treated politely and respectfully by most of the western customers was appreciated by bar workers.

Western tourists' courage and bravery, devotion to traveling, positive attitude, and enjoyment of life were found admirable by many local informants.

I have seen many people who live here, are very creative, like those foreigners. A lot of them are backpackers without much money, but they dare to travel abroad. They work and travel at the same time if they don't have money. They go around and get to know different cultures, ... I really admire them. 过来这边看到这里住的很多人，都是非常有想法的，像外国人嘛，很多人都是很穷的，背包族，但是他们敢出来旅游，没有钱也敢到处走，没有很多钱就一边打工一边旅游，到处了解不同的文化，..... 真的很佩服他们 (Helen, July 18th).

Another local informant, Jelly, said he admired the attitude to life of many westerners:

It is their view of life. I think they seem to think less of money than we Chinese. Maybe most of the foreigners I know are backpackers or tourists, I think they don't value money as much. They are more free in life and do not have many material expectations,... for example we may do jobs we don't like to survive, or do things we don't like. I think they have more freedom. They won't go against their will or true mind. I think this is something I admire in western culture. 就是说那种生活观吧，我觉得他们好像对钱

看的没有像我们国人那么重，也许我接触的人多数是旅游者或者背包客，我觉得他们对钱看的不是那么重，他们对待生活也是比较随意，要求也没那么多，..... 比如为了生存我们会做一些自己不喜欢做的工作，或者是做不喜欢做的事情，我觉得他们就很随意，不会违背自己的心愿和真实的思想，我觉得这是我很欣赏的一种西方文化 (July 16th).

Most of the informants have the perception that westerners, at least western tourists, are less materialistic than most Chinese people. Some of them started to reflect on their own view of life. The young locals have seen and heard of many options other than finishing school, having a job, buying an apartment, getting married, and having children as a life path. They have seen British high school graduates traveling for their gap year, Canadian volunteers taking one year off college to teach English in China, young people from Holland learning Kung Fu in Yangshuo, and so forth. The energy and enthusiasm shown by the westerners that local young people interact with helped them to view the world and their own life pluralistically. Jelly adopted the lifestyle in Yangshuo and considered:

The ultimate goal for life is a sense of happiness, no matter for Chinese or foreigners. But I think sometimes in the pursuit of happiness we may think having a house or a car is happiness. We may forget an emotional need, or what we truly want for ourselves in life ... before I worked for work, worked for making a living. I never thought about what I truly want for myself ... now I really love the atmosphere here. I love the relaxing lifestyle. This is a genuine lifestyle. 最终目标就是一种幸福感，不管是我们国人还是外国人。但是有时候我觉得我们在追求幸福的过程中，可能认为有房有车就是幸福，可能会忽略一种情感的需要，或者是对自身的一些，真正自己想追求的东西，...之前我一直都是为了工作而工作，为了生活而工作，从来没有想过自己真实想要的东西，...我非常喜欢这里的氛围，非常喜欢这里的生活，非常的休闲，这才是真正的一种生活 (July, 16th).

The recognition of individual qualities and characteristics came from their understanding of western tourists. Locals were aware that what they saw from tourists could not truly represent the west. However, it caused them to reflect how, in general,

Chinese have more restraints in life. Being in bars and interacting with different people, however, is not limited to meetings with westerners. Some of the informants mentioned the results of interacting with different Chinese as well; it is also a process of learning from individual Chinese, although in western bars, the chance of interacting with other Chinese is significantly less than with foreigners.

Assimilation of positive behaviour

Compare to the locals aged around 30, the young waitresses were less reflective on attitudes to life. Yangshuo's working environment is quite relaxing, but some young waitresses established their own goals and were more active in pursuing them compared to others. A bar manager, Helen, 25, told me about her ideas of marketing the bar to attract more western customers. May, a waitress, 18, was doing a university program by correspondence and learning English with a private tutor in her spare time. However, some other young waitresses were content with their current situation and a stable life, and were less involved in a process of self-exploration and looking for higher achievement.

A common outcome reported by waitresses was the improvement of manners and politeness resulting from having daily communication with westerners. They were positively influenced by the powerful words "thank you" western customers said to them every time they served something. They started being polite as well. Some waitresses also

claimed they have become more outgoing, being influenced by the positive and active attitude of westerners.

I have become more independent, more confident, I have met a lot of foreigners and I think now I behave like them. I don't speak very loud and am polite to people (Lucy, August 2nd).

I think the foreigners are really polite. I used to just leave after I finished my food, but they always say thank you. They even thanked me when I gave them a bowl, so now I say thank you to others more. I think it is easy to be assimilated, but this is a good thing, being polite is good.我觉得他们好讲礼貌，以前我去吃东西我吃完就走了，像他们，给什么碗啊都谢谢谢谢，说好多遍谢谢，搞得我去干嘛干嘛我也跟别人说谢谢，呵呵，我觉得很容易被同化，不过这个也不错，有礼貌挺好的 (Michelle, July 15th).

Being polite to people also gave some waitresses more self-satisfaction. They considered it a good change and a personal improvement. Because most, though not all, of the western customers at bars in Yangshuo were polite, their behaviour implicitly influenced the waitresses through their interactions.

5.3.3 Photos and the Paparazzi – Western tourists and Chinese tourists

Chinese tourists did not appear in western bars very often. Furthermore, Chinese and westerners have different purposes for being in bars and there are often language barriers. Therefore, I did not observe many interactions between Chinese tourists and westerners in bars. Those who speak English well enough for conversations usually feel that it is rude to approach westerners. Some may be shy and others may not be interested. However, games and activities in bars can bring more interactions between western and Chinese customers. Also, conversations may be held pertaining to the amount of English the Chinese speak.

They have a pool table in the bar. There were two Chinese guys and a Chinese girl playing and, later, a white girl from a group of westerners joined them, so one of the Chinese guys played against her. The Chinese girl seemed to speak fluent English so they were talking. The Chinese guy playing with her did not talk too much; he just smiled and said one or two words once in a

while. Another Chinese guy stood by the table and watched the whole time without talking (Observation note, July 16th).

Though a few interactions were observed in bars, as reported from western tourists, most of the interactions they had with Chinese tourists were on trains, buses or tours to Yangshuo's countryside and when Chinese tourists requested photos. Train is the most common transportation in China, with its fair price, speed and level of comfort. Sharing food, playing cards and chatting with strangers on the train is very common among Chinese passengers. A train ride and, sometimes, a long-distance bus ride provide an proper environment for social interaction with strangers, and the presence of a foreigner may be a source of excitement a in the carriage of a train. Although the Chinese people that western tourists spoke with on trains were not all tourists, trains appeared to be an interesting setting for independent western tourists to interact with Chinese people.

Nate, a backpacker from U.S, found that many Chinese on the train spoke English, and they offered him beers and cigarettes, which he thought was awesome. On the other hand, Christine felt uncomfortable when a girl on the train offered her an egg to eat. In fact, interacting with Chinese on the train seemed to be a more authentic experience than that in a western bar. It is also very intimate because of the limited space that one person can have on a train, which can be unpleasant for westerners.

When I was in the train, I had a lower sleeper. When I woke up there were two people sitting on my bed and they were sitting close to me. I didn't feel comfortable. I paid for the bed but what could I do. I think in Sweden we have small population, but China is big, more people, so people are used to sharing things. (Erik, July 16th)

Another major type of interaction is the photo request from Chinese tourists. This happened less in Yangshuo than in big cities, such as Beijing or Shanghai. In Yangshuo, Chinese tourists often took photos of westerners sitting in western bars. But those that came into the bars I visited claimed that they did not intend to take photos of westerners. Chen, a university student traveling in Yangshuo by herself, said she was interested in taking photos of westerners reading at bars:

I think foreigners are good-looking. Like when they were sitting outside of the bar and reading, I think the mood was artistic and elegant, but it is impolite to take photos of them. I wanted to but I did not. 我觉得外国人长的蛮好看的，就说看他们坐在外面看书，我觉得那个意境很好，很优雅，很小资，但是我觉得那样去拍人家不礼貌，我想但是没有这样做 (August 6th).

Most of the Chinese at bars were young people, or those were interested in western food, music or games. They considered impolite to approach westerners and they did not think it is necessary to take photos with westerners. Although what was reported by western tourists on photo-requests did not match the statements from young people at the bars in Yangshuo, being approached for photos happened significantly throughout western tourists' trips in China. It seemed to be the only type of interaction that Chinese tourists and westerners have.

The communication between Chinese tourists and western tourists about photo-taking was direct and simple. When language problems occurred, hand gestures, signs, and facial expression were used to convey the request. Being approached for photos is understandable to most westerners, except a few. Some local westerners considered it unpleasant because they had to go through it frequently. Some of the western tourists also showed their

frustration about Chinese sneaking around and trying to take photos of them. Those who took photos secretly without asking for permission were sometimes referred to by westerners as “paparazzi”. Sandy told her stories as follows:

The pictures you get a lot, all the time. Like me and my friend got stopped 30 times in one day when we went to the expo in Shanghai. People walked down to us and “picture picture”. It happens everywhere we go in China. Either they ask for permission, “Can I take a picture with you?”, or you see them stand in the corner take picture of you. It is all right if they ask first... I have been in this situation, when I was sitting down, I had people standing in a circle around me, and taking pictures. I was reading a book. I had a good time. It was only guys, Chinese guys, for five minutes and they didn't say anything, not even in Chinese: no “hello, do you understand me, can you speak?”, nothing in English. They were just sneaking around and taking pictures. I didn't like that. Sometimes it is quite funny. You can see people taking pictures of you, so you took picture of Chinese people taking picture of you. So proves the point: if you can have a picture of me, I am going to have a picture of you. They got embarrassed. It is quite funny. You also got teenage girls giggling up and down, “Can I can I, picture picture, me and you”. They were so nervous and excited. They were like really cute. Sometimes they tried really hard to explain in English that they wanted a picture, that's really cute (August 2nd).

Some of the westerners did not feel comfortable when they were photographed without being asked for permission. But some also said they took photos of Chinese people without asking for permission, so it is understandable. When tourists gazed upon the Chinese, who were acting interestingly or wearing something different, they took photos. Tourists photographing is part of the tacit tourist behaviour. Interestingly, when western tourists considered some Chinese people as attractions, they themselves became attractions to a larger population of Chinese. The attention western tourists got during their trip might not have been expected but it did not negatively influence most of their experiences.

Most westerners did not feel bothered by the photo requests: they felt amused and interested, some felt confused, but some considered it a chance to interact with Chinese

people. Although many Chinese people from big cities did not feel curious about foreigners anymore, there are more people who have never seen a foreigner in their lives.

There are two kinds of people taking picture of you: some just take the picture, some come and ask you “Can I take a picture?” and they say something like “You are so beautiful”. It is so nice. They are really nice. They are always like “You are so tall, how tall are you?” It is funny. When I was at the terra cotta army, I was standing there and they were more interested in me than the terra cotta warriors, and I don’t know why, because they were there for the terra cotta army (Christine, August 6th).

Some Chinese people, depending upon their language skills, would ask simple questions, like country of origin and length of stay, about the foreigners they took photos with. Therefore, requesting a photo with foreigners can also be an ice-breaker for further conversation. It also gives an impression of friendliness to the western tourists; the sense of being a “celebrity” was formed through the act of the “paparazzi”.

A few western tourists particularly enjoyed the spotlight of the “paparazzi”; in fact, female westerners and those with better or more exotic looks, tended to get more photos taken by Chinese. Detailed preferences of Chinese for selecting westerners to take photo with remain unclear because the photos were less frequently taken in Yangshuo. Young people in bars claimed that they would only take photos with westerners if they had conversations, to take photos for memory. Only a few interactions between westerners and Chinese tourists were observed in bars, because Chinese tourists are more interested in night clubs than western bars, but Yangshuo continues to attract Chinese tourists with its western atmosphere.

5.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter focused on the role of bars to five groups of participants: western tourists, local westerners, Chinese students, Chinese tourists and local Chinese; the interactional situation between western and Chinese groups; purposes of interaction; and problems and outcomes from individual experiences. The communication between western tourists and Chinese students and between western tourists and local Chinese were observed to be the most frequent in bars and, therefore, were emphasized. Bars are contexts of language exchange for Chinese students. Westerners and a small number of local Chinese exchanged travel experiences and make recommendations, and are involved in cultural communication and social interaction. They were sources of western experiences and supplementary evening activities for Chinese tourists.

A diagram (Figure 5.1) was created to portray the results obtained from the analysis of the qualitative data. As a conclusion to this chapter, it portrays the five groups in one main context, bars. Western tourists are the centre of the intercultural interaction and communication in bars. They are linked by different styles and types of interaction with other informant groups. Mainly, western tourists at bars were approached by Chinese students to practice their English and also by local Chinese, possibly those working in bars, to provide services. But the conversational topics in bars, between western tourists and Chinese students, and local Chinese and local westerners were similar. In summary, a communicational and interactional network was formed among western tourist, Chinese student, local westerners, and local Chinese in bars. Social exchange of personal

information, sharing of travel information and travel experiences, and culture-related communications and discussions were the main themes of their communication and conversational interaction. However, the local westerners and Chinese who interacted in bars were friends or acquaintances; therefore their interactions were more casual and personal.

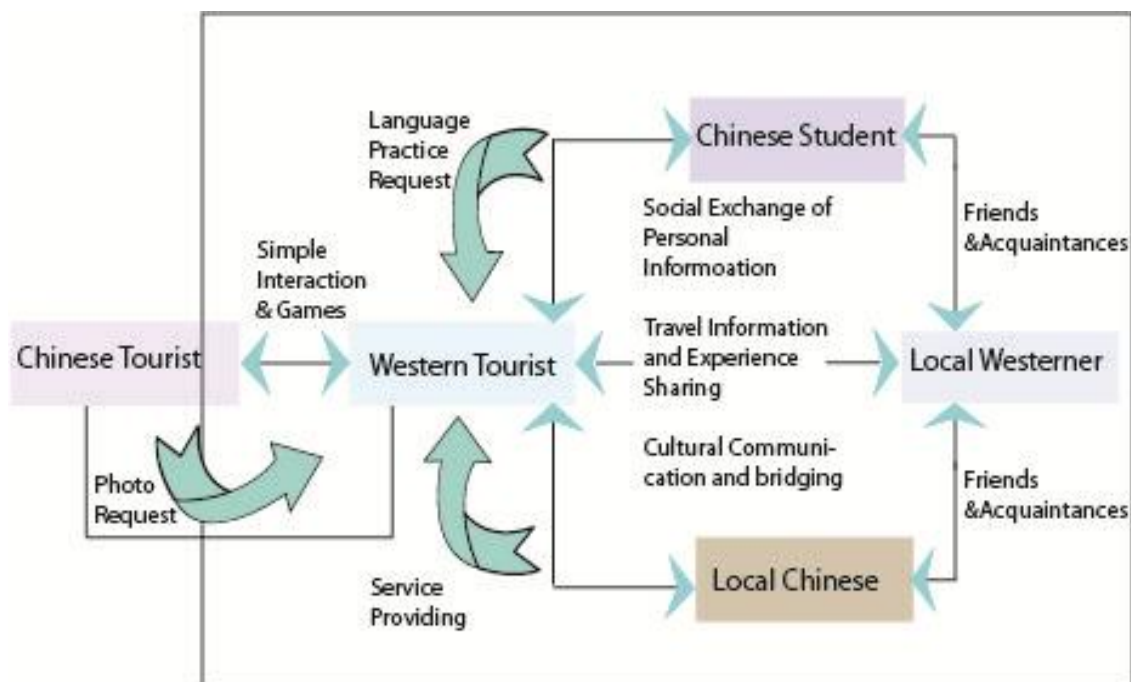


Figure 5.1: Intercultural and social interactions among five groups of participants

The main communication barrier for western tourists is language, because most of the western tourists in Yangshuo are independent travelers and guidebooks are crucial in assisting their trip in China. However, service providers have higher English skills in Yangshuo, and language is not a notable barrier for service communication. Getting directions is fairly difficult for many tourists but is seen as adventurous. Another major communication barrier for western tourists is the uncertainty and anxiety of being in a

different culture. The feeling of insecurity and the need for self-protection reduce their motivation to communicate with Chinese. Language deficiency is also a major barrier for the Chinese who are interested in communicating with westerners. Lack of language skills is not the only thing that prevents further communication and interaction, the fear of making mistakes, the concerns of unwanted disturbance and the shyness of many Chinese also appears to restrain them from initiating conversations in bars.

Many interactions that occur in bars are simple and superficial, but they provide chances for people from different cultures to mingle and exchange information. For western tourists, these interactions play an important role in receiving travel suggestions and recommendations, adjusting to the travel environment and eliminating culture confusion. Chinese students focused on the improvement of their English skills as outcomes of those interactions, while local residents are influenced more by the culture and individuality of westerners through interaction and observation. They build intercultural awareness and assimilate certain positive behaviours.

Although Chinese tourists are seldom seen interacting verbally with westerners in bars, many westerners have interactions with Chinese tourists outside of bars, mainly on trains and for the purposes of photo-taking. The curiosity of Chinese regarding western appearances does not bother most western tourists, although asking for permission was more acceptable than sneaking around and taking photos. However, some young Chinese tourists at western bars in Yangshuo claim they are not curious about westerners anymore and they would only request to take photos with the westerners that they had conversation

with. Results from qualitative data and quantitative data are complementing, detailed qualitative results further explained the intercultural situations in bars and motives for both culture groups to communicate and the difficulties they endure.

Chapter 6 Discussion

6.1 Verification of Validity

The validity of data and interpretation is an important aspect of any research project. Taking an interpretivist standpoint, it is necessary to ensure that the results of the investigation are more than a subjective interpretation of the experiences of and by the author. Several steps were taken to ensure the appropriateness of interpretations. First of all, observation notes and research memos recorded a process of gradually understanding the situation in the bars of Yangshuo and the community in which they are located. In some cases, the divergence of results from initial expectations was indicated. Secondly, in addition to the author's own observations and participation, the information base contains the observations and experiences of many bar workers, including their understanding of interactional situations between western and Chinese customers. In addition, many discussions on the research subject took place with informants and are part of the data. Therefore, the findings and interpretation of the research subject reflect the insights of a variety of people from different perspectives. Moreover, the combination of personal observation, doing ethnography and questionnaire surveys provides both methodological and data triangulation. Results gained from both quantitative and qualitative approaches were found to be coherent.

Lastly, from a theoretical perspective, resonance was sought between the research findings with theories from different academic fields, such as social psychology, cultural anthropology, intercultural communication, as well as from tourism research. This research

project, in fact, represents both a practical application and test of many theories. Further discussions on theoretical and practical aspects and implications are presented in the following parts of this chapter.

6.2 Academic Implications of Intercultural Communication and Interaction in Bars

As presented in findings, though bars have created a social environment for people from different cultures to interact, the interaction between Chinese and westerners was fairly limited. Western tourists tend to interact more with other western tourists to obtain travel information and to socialize. The reasonable amount of Chinese who had interacted with westerners was mostly Chinese students and locals who had formal or informal connection with westerners. Chinese students often initiate conversations to practicing English, but not all such students were sufficiently confident or willing to spend money in bars to speak to foreigners. Intercultural communication in bars was generally purposive, repetitive and superficial. Therefore, the researcher's expectations concerning the frequency of intercultural situations in western bars in Yangshuo were not supported and such events were less common than was anticipated.

The main barrier is language skill. Language is the premise for communication. Although English is portrayed as a global language, only younger generations in China are mandated in English education, most of them still find it rather difficult. Chinese, similarly, is also reported as extremely difficult for non-native speakers. However, as impacted by globalization and internationalization, increasing interest and desire for English learning is seen by more and more Chinese students and young professionals. Yangshuo's English

schools are visible traits for this trend. Therefore, language barriers will likely to be eliminated. While language was endured by both western and Chinese participants as the biggest obstacle, Chinese participants considered it is rude and intrusive to initiate conversations with foreigners. Western tourists seldom initiate conversations with Chinese customers in bars, because of the anxiety and safety concern common to many international tourists (Reisinger & Mavonda, 2005). Some may have previous experience with pushy vendors, illegal tour guides and even tourist traps; they have built a mental shield to avoid danger and unwanted inconvenience. The interaction and communication with locals or Chinese tourists were seen less of local westerners than western tourists, which is also unexpected. Local westerners reported a lack of incentive and motivation in conversing with Chinese in bars.

Residents mostly initiate contact with international tourists in Yangshuo for business purposes. International tourists were commonly seeking information, knowledge and romantic pleasure (Jiang, 2005). This research revealed that many western tourists preferred to communicate with Chinese tourists rather than local residents, because of the disturbances and annoyance generated from the commercial intentions of local people. Communications and interactions that occurred in bars were not deemed to be commercial exchanges, but were regarded as being personal and cultural exchanges. Non-commercial exchanges were more welcome than commercial ones by western tourists. Communication barriers were well recognized, but intentions to interact were expressed by both Chinese

and western tourists, they expected social interaction in a casual manner, opposing to commercial exchange.

The content and effectiveness of intercultural communication depended largely on participants' knowledge on the common conversation topics, previous intercultural experience, personality and interpersonal skills. For those locals, Chinese tourists, and westerners who had meaningful interactions or built friendship with each other, an increase on culture understanding of the other culture was expressed, but the majority of tourists and locals are merely observers, whom were exposed under the gazes and reversed gazes (Urry, 1990, 1992; Gillespie, 2006).

Intercultural phenomenon in Yangshuo is dynamic, the existence of western bars and the social situations they facilitate are major forces in evolving and constructing such phenomenon. Many existing social theories and intercultural communication theories can be applied to explain such phenomenon, in adjunction with previous and related tourism studies. The role of social capital and networking in small-scale, diverse tourism community, and difference in cultural individualism-collectivism and self-construal will be discussed as followed, in leading to a generalization of intercultural tourist-host relation and effective intercultural communication in Yangshuo.

6.2.1 Social Capital and Social Networking in Travel

The homophily principle considers that human beings, in situations of free-choice, tend to interact with those with similar attributes, such as beliefs, values, education, occupation, and many other characteristics (Rogers & Bhowmik, 1970). This has been the

core principle in communication and relational studies and practices. The situation in Yangshuo provided evidence that western tourists often chose to interact with other western tourists. Their social identity at the time, as a western traveler, an outsider of China, is homophilious. The homophily allowed western tourists to enhance their knowledge as tourists and supported their adherence to a common identity. But the relationship between homophily, heterophily and effective communication is complex and may be different in different situations (Rogers & Bhowmik, 1970). It also explains the effort of Chinese participants who sought and emphasized homophilious characteristics with western tourists, through common interests in American TV series, movies, sports, music and student status, in order to achieve effective communication and meaningful interaction. The homophily principle is also important in maintaining cultural heterogeneity in cultural differentiation (Centola et al., 2008) for it supports the separation of different others from themselves.

The homophily principle is also applied in the construction of social network and social ties (McPherson, Smith-lovin & Cook, 2001). With increasing mobility, socializing on the way has become important in traveling, especially for independent travelers and backpackers. Although, the goal of building social ties and networks is not strongly indicated in this research, meeting new people is an important aspect of travel for many tourists. Western tourists create a familiar cultural setting in bars, through social interaction, drinking and experience-sharing with other tourists. Moreover, western bars may have restricted access to local residents; a threshold is formed by the price of the product which exceeds the affordability of many local people. Therefore, from the perspectives of western

tourists, bar-visiting and the social opportunities they offer for interaction with other westerners can be seen as a means of controlling and managing their cultural confusion (Hottola, 2005).

Hottola (2005), writing about India, identified public space of temporary western dominance as one type of “meta-space” where western backpackers control their exposure to a different culture. The Yangshuo case demonstrates the existence and importance of such spaces for reducing cultural confusion. In recent years, Yangshuo’s bar street has expanded and, as western tourists continually seek new spaces, such bars can now be found on the side streets as well as the main street. Conversely, the creation of meta-spaces is also revealed in the fact that many western tourists were more reluctant to go to a bar dominated by Chinese customers, even if it is a western bar. However, the presence of some Chinese did not result in rejection of a western bar. In fact, interaction was welcomed in most of the situations, indicating that intercultural communication and interaction with Chinese in bars is a means of adapting to the destination culture that is adopted by western tourists.

Another concept, social capital, can be used to explain the lack of communication between Chinese and westerners in bars. Social capital has been defined as “features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit” (Putnam, 1995, p. 66). Putnam also pointed out that in an ethnically or racially diverse community, the social capital, in the particular form of trust between neighbours, seems lower. He referred to this as the constrict theory (Putnam, 2007). Yangshuo can be considered a global village, which is racially and ethnically

diverse, and where the diversity has been heightened by the large number of international and domestic tourists. The level of trust between tourists and hosts, between tourists and even between ethnically different residents, can be low. Putnam's constrict theory explains the erosion or "bridging" of social capital in such diverse communities (Putman, 2007). The construction of social capital is not the main theme of this project, but intercultural communication is social in nature and this is influenced by cultural attributes.

Aspects of social capital that arise in this study are trust, assistance and the companionship built between independent travelers, and between tourists and hosts, who were previously unfamiliar with each other. The relaxing environment in bars provides equalizes the status of their clients, providing social security for western tourists who seek and build harmonious relationships with each other. Also, a network is established between tourists and hosts who provide and receive help and travel assistance. The intention of western tourists to interact with Chinese customers in bars may be held back by language problems and a lack of social capital to facilitate such interactions, whereas interaction with other western tourists and certain hosts is a small step in the construction of social network in travel and pursuit of mutual benefits. However, constructing and bridging social capital across culture could be a future goal for western bar managers in Yangshuo, as an important component of the tourist experience that will enhance the well-being of tourists and the local community. The bars need to convey healthy and plural messages indicating the significance of leisure, social interaction and cultural diversity.

6.2.2 Differences in Cultural Individualism-Collectivism and Self-construal

Westerners and Chinese have showed their understandings of the other culture, but the differences were reflected from discussion on social and cultural matters, as well as in their communication and interaction behaviour. Low-context communication elaborates explicit and direct messaging, accordingly, high-context communication represents implicit and indirect style of communication (Hall, 1976, cited in Gudykunst et al., 1996). Both styles are used in cultural individualism and collectivism, but individualists tend to be predominant in low-context communication and collectivists high-context communication (Gudykunst et al., 1996). Intercultural situations researched in this study can be categorized as low-context. They were mostly between strangers and short-term acquaintances, language barriers also prevent many collectivistic Chinese participants from expressing themselves implicitly.

A frequently discussed topic with Chinese and western participants is names, English names in particular. It is hard not to notice, most of the Chinese who communicate with westerners has an English name. Names are often the first personal information exchanged in a social situation. In fact, the 1980s generation of Chinese, who have studied mostly since junior middle school, Grade 7 in the North American school calendar, were taught to adopt an English name. English names were given by teachers or by students themselves. English names are not legitimate; they are nick names, and a tool to study English. For most of the waitresses in Yangshuo, their English names were chosen to fit into the work environment, but their English names are used mostly when they interact with western

customers, whereas Chinese students used their English names to fully represent their identity in Yangshuo. English names have become the “real name” among Chinese students; most of them do not know their friends or classmates’ Chinese names.

The main reason that Chinese use English names when communicate with westerners, is of being polite and for westerners’ convenience. They explained that English names are easier to pronounce and remember than Chinese names, they tend to spare the possible embarrassment of westerners when their pronunciation of the Chinese name is inaccurate. The adoption of English names shows the collectivism in Chinese culture and interdependent self-construal. Several Chinese mentioned that a few westerners who have previous knowledge of Chinese and are interested in the language may ask their Chinese names. Some of the westerners explained they prefer making effort to pronounce a Chinese name. Independent self-construal supports the expression of individual identity without consideration of the others. Similar situations with different results are when westerners give themselves Chinese names when they studied Chinese, can often shorten the cultural distance immediately. Some western tourists told the stories of them speaking simple Chinese to shop keepers and being appreciated and admired by them.

Another difference in culture reflected is the continuously materialized and modernized Chinese culture, also indirectly showed by young Chinese’s interest on western product. Because of the superficial nature of most of the conversations in bars, the reflection was generalized mainly from my interaction, which is more in-depth, with the participants. When I introduced my study and my role as a Chinese graduate student in a

Canadian university, most of the western informants asked questions related to my thesis, my life and experience in Canada, what is the difference between living in China and in Canada; while Chinese informants showed extreme concerns of my future career plan, they asked questions like what jobs I can work on after I graduate. On the other side, the social stress among young Chinese is quite high. Most of them came to Yangshuo to study English for job-seeking and better career.

Cultural differences were reflected in both the content and style of communication, but long-term intercultural acquaintances in Yangshuo have a more personal and individualized relationships. Casual interactions between strangers have stronger focus on culture recognition. Face theory was challenged and appeared to be the most common difference between western and Chinese research subjects, though in leisure-related decision, Asians were likely to anticipate this in discussions which generally enhanced self-esteem and cultural pride (Ap, 2004). Some young people appeared to be cynical about social issues in China, whereas others thought that discussing such problems was disgraceful and unpatriotic.

6.2.3 Intercultural Tourist-Host Relation in Yangshuo

The lack of patronage of Chinese tourists in bars suggests that most intercultural situations in bars are interactions between western tourists and local residents. Chinese students could be categorized as either tourists or hosts. However, in this contest, their characteristics lean towards those of local residents, because of their long-term stay in

Yangshuo and their familiarity with Yangshuo's tourist attractions, as identified from the content of their conversations with western tourists.

In Yoo and Sohn's exploration of the structure and meaning of Korean outbound tourists' intercultural interactions with host people, they summarized five limitations of intercultural tourist-host relationships: inequality, temporality, personal limitations, unexpectedness and insecurity (Yoo & Sohn, 2005). However, in the western bars in Yangshuo, the interaction and communication appeared to be less restricted. In contrast, Jiang (2005) categorized the contact between international tourists and hosts in Yangshuo as long-term, in-depth, spontaneous, equal and without spatial or temporal restriction. Nevertheless, the interactions and communications in bars that were observed in the present study indicated that tourist-host contacts were predominantly short-term and superficial; only long-term western tourists or local westerners were more likely to build deep or lasting relationships with local residents.

The English skills of residents in Yangshuo are widely overestimated. Yangshuo is stereotyped as a place where "everyone on West Street speaks fluent English" (Chen, 2009). However, this is not the case and few can communicate well beyond their familiar business routines. Nevertheless, the English skills of private entrepreneurs and workers in the tourism industry are generally higher than in other tourist destinations, even in the larger cities in China. Yangshuo's restaurants and stores mostly have bilingual signs and price tags, and this language environment has made Yangshuo very approachable to western tourists. Yangshuo has fostered positive and harmonious tourist-host relationships,

even intimate friendships, love affairs and lasting romantic relationships, due to the relatively high cultural compatibility and cultural drift in Yangshuo (Jiang, 2005). Chris Ryan's (1991) tourist-friend continuum in recreational tourism can be applied to the situation between long-term tourists and hosts in Yangshuo. Ryan developed a continuum that illustrates the development of the feeling of being a tourist, a traveler, to a guest and a friend, to local hosts; he also pointed out that social relationship and friendship formed with locals become the main reason of revisiting a destination (Ryan, 1991). Most of the western tourists I interviewed in bars, in the categorization of Ryan, are in fact more of travelers and guests, whose general behavior and interest built upon engaging experiences, different from instrumental tourists.

Love affairs and other romantic relationships between tourists and locals have been widely researched, mostly were referred to as sex tourism particularly in coastal destinations and developing nations (Cabezas, 2004; Bauer, 2008). It reveals a special form of encounter between tourist and locals. By 2003, there were over 100 cases of inter-racial marriage in Yangshuo (Zhang, 2003). Bars and nightclubs also helped to construct an image conducive to the generation of love affairs. Therefore, Yangshuo has become a destination of those Chinese, particularly females, who seek to marry a foreigner. The phenomenon has yet to be explored thoroughly, but it has changed the character of the place, and may be an outcome of tourism.

Long-term contact between hosts and western tourists in bars has resulted in self-development and self-reflection of the hosts, the majority of whom are female. Wijers

(2010) investigated identity changes of waitresses and female students in Yangshuo that could be attributed to globalization. In this research, young waitresses were shown to have a high level of intercultural awareness and communication competence. Some of them had become bi-cultural and took novel stances in intercultural situations. Some locals also frequented western bars, tried western food and activities, due to the demonstration effect of westerners' behaviour. Local awareness was also raised of the challenge of preserving traditional culture. Though most of the locals who interacted with western tourists were the ones worked at bars, they possessed a large social network among both tourists and hosts. Interaction and communication between culturally different tourists and hosts required the negotiation of social and cultural roles (Yoo&Sohn, 2005; Jaworski et al., 2003) and could contribute to changes in perception and identity.

6.2.4 Intercultural Learning and Effective Intercultural Communication in Tourism

The results of this research suggest some positive outcomes of the intercultural communication and interaction that occur in western bars in China, both to Chinese and western participants. The improvement of cultural understanding is an important outcome of such communication and interaction. Both tourists and locals acknowledged the existence of culture differences in their communication processes and the outcomes were said to be mind-opening and horizon-broadening experiences. Cultural understanding is often regarded as being one of the important results of intercultural communicants in tourism. However, this is easy to over-emphasize because the contacts are limited in

number and duration and conversations are further limited in their depth by limited language abilities.

Stereotypes were drawn upon by both the western and Chinese interviewees, but they also claimed to have an awareness of stereotyping. Though stereotyping can lead to prejudice and racism, sometimes it can be useful in guiding short-term tourist-host interactions (Reisinger, 2009). The contact hypothesis, which suggests that a reduction of rooted irrational individual cultural prejudice occurs from frequent interpersonal contact (Forbes, 2004), was not completely supported in the case of Yangshuo. Moreover, rooted conflict between China and the powerful West did not have any significant impact on participants' perception of each other in this case, nor the communication and interaction deteriorated interpersonal relationships. Stereotypes and prejudices exist among both tourists and hosts as groups and are not merely individualistic, and they result from a combination of many social, historical and political factors, contacts between individual tourists and hosts may improve cultural learning and understanding, but do not ensure the mitigation of prejudices and conflicts. It is easy to expect too much from fleeting contacts between individuals who do not possess a common language. It is even possible that negative experiences may reinforce negative stereotypes although little evidence for this was found in this research.

The main content of these communications was local tourist information for western backpackers, whom often refused to hire tour guides, preferring to seek assistance from guide books, such as "Lonely Planet", and other tourists that they interacted with, such as

those they met in bars and hostels. Their travel decision making also partially relied on such information, which implies the importance of word-of-mouth promotion of tourism products (Murphy, 2001). However, guidebooks still appear to be the most vital information source for backpackers. Chinese people in bars also provide travel information, mostly on local sights and routes, and provide specific help on bike rental, transportation and tickets, whereas other tourists may offer information on travel throughout China and other destinations world-wide. Though it is difficult to know whether travel information and suggestions were acted upon, the potential marketing value of word-of-mouth recommendations is supported and, more importantly for this research, provides evidence that intercultural communication and exchange has taken place. Thus, Chinese participants and local westerners in western bars, acted as culture brokers and intermediaries. In fact, those with profound intercultural understanding and language skills can serve as bridges between westerner and Chinese, their role can be enhanced in practice.

According to Steiner and Reisinger (2004), it is almost impossible to reach common ground and truly communicate in intercultural communication. Most of the time, tourists and hosts conduct idle talk. They proposed the reconceptualization of intercultural communication to encourage tourists and host to embrace their difference and behave genuinely i.e. true to their own culture. However, tourists' expectations and motivations to communicate with others vary, and culture is also influenced by many other forces. As such, it is difficult to give instructions or to control individual communication preferences. The Yangshuo case shows that interaction between people of different cultures does occur

in a tourism setting although it is less frequent than many might expect and often superficial. However, it has the potential to increase. An open atmosphere is a premise for such communication and interaction and this appears to exist in Yangshuo where there is tolerance of different cultural styles and, indeed, this is one of the attractions.

Cultural tourists do seek personal interactions and intimate relationships and with hosts, although sometimes such interactions are commodified (Conran, 2006). Personal interaction can be significant and meaningful in constructing a tourist's experience and gaining a working knowledge of a culture. Although in Yangshuo discernable changes were not identified in westerners' perceptions of China and Chinese people, in part because most of them did not have an impression of China before their trip, they were aware of the unreliability of the mass media, they reported new insights and a continued interest on the country. Many tourists expected to have opportunities to have face-to-face contact with Chinese people. Therefore, casual communication and interactions between Chinese and westerners in bars should be encouraged. Tolerance of ambiguity and self-monitoring are important to reduce anxiety and uncertainty in intercultural interaction and to enhance competence in intercultural communication (Miller & Samp, 2007). There is no clear goal for intercultural situations in western bars and ambiguity is usually accepted and tolerated. Self-monitoring requires not only having sufficient language ability, but also being open and mindful of the situation.

Nonetheless, culture is constantly evolving. It is important to find strategies to facilitate intercultural communication through easy interaction and casual exchange of

information. CMM (Coordinated Management of Meaning) theory (Pearce & Cronen, 1980) has been used to enhance many intercultural communication situations. The main goal of CMM is to provide guidelines to promote constructive communication (Pearce, 2005). CMM in intercultural communication between strangers in tourism can be facilitated through greater prior knowledge of the other culture and mindfulness of the social situation in which communication is occurring.

Another major theory AUM (Anxiety and Uncertainty Management), first proposed by Gudykunst (1985), can be used to understand intercultural communication among strangers. However, in the case of Yangshuo, western tourists did not show much anxiety in their communication with Chinese people. On the contrary, the Chinese usually experienced more anxiety. Therefore, AUM theory, which was mentioned earlier in the literature review, can be adopted in reverse to reduce a host's anxiety and uncertainty when facing western tourists. For example, stereotypes can be used to gain information on culturally different others and ease stress.

Kim (2008) used the phrase "intercultural personhood" to argue that human being should hold on to both individuality and universality, and that: "...cross-borrowing of identities is not an act of 'surrendering' one's personal and cultural integrity, but an act of respect for cultural differences that leaves neither the lender nor the borrower deprived" (p. 367). Because of the multi-cultural situation tourists and hosts face in international tourism, a focus on "intercultural personhood" can also be a solution to the exaggeration of culture differences and communication barriers. Many communication theories can be modified

and applied to tourism education and development, in order to achieve authentic and effective intercultural communication, and to provide harmonious, multi-directional and reciprocal intercultural tourist-host interaction.

6.3 Practical Implication: Creating the Authentic Bar Experience

6.3.1 The Role of Western Bars Summary

Bars in China are portrayed as being fashionable and interesting to Chinese people, especially young people in urban areas. They represent an ability to consume and even an alternative leisure style (Zheng, 2007). While bars are important socially in the west, Chinese people tend to socialize in more intimate environments, such as KTV rooms, private rooms in restaurants, or at home. Bars are also the fruits of globalization and westernization. The appearance of bars, more specifically, nightclubs, in Yangshuo and in other tourist towns in China, such as Dali, Lijiang and Fenghuang, in fact, meet Chinese tourists' desires to explore and experience new things in a destination. The number of western bars in Yangshuo also parallels an increasing number of western travelers. Both westerners and Chinese people who go to bars in Yangshuo are seeking an authentic bar experience as part of their travel experience, although the interpretation of authenticity may be influenced by culture and many other factors.

The existence of bars in tourist towns can also be explained from an economic perspective, though Chinese scholars have tended to focus on the culture of bars in tourist towns. For instance, bar culture has become a significant attraction of many ancient towns to domestic tourists. Similar, yet different from Yangshuo, the nightclubs in Lijiang attract

more domestic tourists, while incorporating the traditional Na'xi dancing, folklore and music as features, whereas the nightclubs in Yangshuo seem to lack such cultural elements. The culture of bars is complex and varies from bar to bar because of their different styles and targeted market segment. Although they influence tourists' images and residents' perceptions, both nightclubs and western bars are responses to economic opportunity. While nightclubs in Yangshuo have brought excitement, ecstasy and boisterous nights, western bars have proved to be more elegant and socially significant to western tourists.

Yangshuo appears to have experienced a similar phenomenon to that reported in Long's (2009, 2010) study of tourist bar sensations in Dali Old Town, Yunnan, China. Western bars in Dali satisfy the needs for relaxation and cultural exchange of both domestic and international tourists. The seeking of thrills and of one-night-stand appears to be less significant (Long, 2010). Foreigner Street in Dali, like West Street in Yangshuo, was the original bar street in a tourist towns in China, yet has now become a crowded tourist centre. However, with the expansion of bar street, many western tourists have moved away from the main street to look for quietness, while bars on so-called "Foreigner Street" and "West Street" have become inundated by Chinese tourists and local young people. The development of bars has influenced destination culture directly and indirectly as an impact of tourism (Long, 2009). Therefore, the sharing of space in bars, along with many other public spaces and resources in a destination, is an outcome of tourism in the local community.

While in Lijiang, local Naxi people reclaimed space occupied by tourists by using them for leisure activities, such as visiting western food outlets and cafes (Su & Tao, 2008). However, local people in Yangshuo did not seem to frequent western bars as a reconstruction of their cultural identity. High costs, lack of interest, and preference for collective leisure to be enjoyed in private spaces, along with cultural differences, are the major barriers to the use of bars by locals. Many residents who were interviewed in bars were not originally from Yangshuo but came from the surrounding regions around. This suggested that local residents are not yet targeted as a market for western bars. However, as people return with the experience of living in large cities and the younger generation has growing purchasing power, the bars have great potential to becoming major spaces of consumption for local residents, facilitating greater intercultural communication and changes among both locals and tourists. Because leisure style preferences differ between western and Asian cultures (Ap, 2004), both cultural groups will need to adjust.

Nightclubs and bars in Yangshuo, in part, have a common Chinese clientele that is mostly comprised of young people, as revealed by the questionnaire surveys. However, the Chinese interviewed in western bars claimed that they had no interest in nightclubs. One main reason for this result is that only a few Chinese tourists were interviewed in bars and they tended to be from larger cities, implying a relatively high purchasing power and familiarity with bars and nightclubs. Western tourists' interest in nightclubs was particularly low. Nightclubs do not facilitate sufficient social interaction and intercultural communication to meet their desires. At the same time, they impact on the image of bar

street negatively and bring social problems related to drug use, violence, and prostitution.

Maintenance of a balance between economic growth and social security is important to the local community. Therefore, tourism developers and local entrepreneurs need to better understand the bar phenomenon along with its economic potential, in order to manage their spatial distribution and the socio-cultural changes that can occur from tourist-resident interaction (Long, 2009).

In terms of the experience of tourists, bars attached to hostels held higher importance than other western bars. Roof-top hostel bars have become a new form of western bar in Yangshuo. They facilitate the most intercultural interaction and communication, especially between tourists who are staying at the same hostel. Many other western bars that line the streets, while providing easy access to tourists, also provide more opportunities for street vendors who cause much discomfort to many customers. The roof-top bars efficiently prevent the unwanted harassment of street vendors.

For western residents, certain bars have become their “usual spots” where they drink, chat, watch TV or play games with both friends and strangers. They are third places in the community, providing leisure and recreational functions that can facilitate inter-racial interaction and reduce inter-racial conflicts (Shinew et al., 2004). They also contribute to the quality of life of the community (Jeffreys et al., 2009). In western communities, bars are third places in which provide social belongingness and cultural resonance to local residents who may spend a significant amount of time and much of their social life in bars, in addition to work and home. But, as mentioned previously, bars are not yet third places

for the majority of local Chinese residents, for few patronize them and those who do frequent bars do so primarily for relaxation.

6.3.2 What is the Authentic Bar Experience? Necessities and Strategies

From the perspective of culture communication, bars provide spaces and opportunities for social interaction. The facilitation of casual conversation and interaction is part of an authentic bar experience. It is also linked with the environment and atmosphere that a bar provides. The popularity and reputation of a bar is connected to the expectations of its customers and the role it plays in the community. Western bars in Yangshuo were not all successful in attracting customers. Although this is not a marketing research study, it was evident that the amount of social interaction in a bar assists in promotion and is also an indicator of business success. Westerners, the major patrons, use the bars in Yangshuo for drinking and socializing; and similar expectations are held by Chinese students who are another major group of bar patron. It is important for business success for bar operators to address the needs of customers and to adopt friendly marketing approaches.

Some Chinese tourists and students complained about the poor service of some western bars, that service provided to western customers exceeds that to them, interestingly, waitresses of some bars also complained how poorly they were treated by some Chinese customers while western customers showed more respect. It contains a social hierarchy and injustice in the Chinese society, servers may consider inferior and suffer discrimination from customers. Maintaining consistent and high-quality service is always the most important in the hospitality industry, western bars in Yangshuo present a western style to

customers in its product, and they should also encourage equal service and mutual respect from both staff and customers.

Since western bars are imported from a different culture, they have a high level of flexibility and creativity in presenting unique styles and characteristics. But the combination with local culture, ethnic culture, and traditional Chinese culture appears to be inadequate in western bars in Yangshuo. Many tourists, both western and Chinese, notified the cultural homogeneity and commoditization in Yangshuo, it is impossible yet impractical to reduce the amount of business, but certain modification can be used to create an authentic image of Yangshuo as a Chinese town in nature. In another word, localize western bars and present them pluralistically. An Australian bar may need to be imposing Australian image, but a Chinese owned western bar, can be of a non-western theme. Globalization obviously has had its impact on Yangshuo, but glocalization, might be a new trend.

Facilitating intercultural communication and interaction in Yangshuo can help forming social capital in the local and tourist community. By providing opportunities of culture understanding and personal development, social interactions are part of the authentic bar experience. Promotion on Chinese students, training of staff to be more active in serving and interacting, creating shared spaces other than private tables, and adjusting the effect of light and music can be proper strategies to better facilitate interactions. Bar staff, in most of the situations bar owners or managers, can be important in bridging westerners and Chinese for they have better language and social skills. Therefore, staff can

also be trained to bridge customers from different cultures. Activities to encourage interaction and participation can be invented, such as introducing western and Chinese games, quizzes on different cultures, theme nights can be created for such promotion. To reduce the anxiety and embarrassment of initiating conversations with strangers, bar staff can serve as a connection and a social broker. The authentic bar experience is aimed on tourists as well as locals in Yangshuo, but the involvement of Chinese tourists seem to be having larger potential comparing to local residents.

6.3.3 Improving Interactions between Chinese tourists and Western tourist in Bars

Some Chinese tourists have become paparazzi who take photos of western tourists, but Yangshuo has witnessed less photo-taking, possibly because of the multi-cultural environment and the large number of western tourists visiting. Since the majority of Chinese tourists in Yangshuo were between age 18 and 40 (Jiang, 2005), they are also well-educated. When they take such photographs, they do it as a reminder of an actual conversation with foreigners, unlike Chinese tourists in other cities who may use a photo request to initiate a short conversation. Independent Chinese tourists in Yangshuo have the largest interest and opportunity to communicate with westerners for package tourists have their time organized and group members to converse with.

Casual conversations between tourists and between tourists and hosts did take place within tourism settings and in a relaxing environment, such as bars. Conversations were initiated between Chinese and westerners in bars with the exchange of travel and personal information, such as general inquiries concerning nationality, occupation, travel

companionship and family situations. Chinese students' requests for language practice and Chinese tourists' requests for photos were also used as ice-breakers. Further verbal interactions covered a wide range of topics, but were superficial and repetitive between western tourists and Chinese due to language insufficiency. Because of different socializing styles and purposes, when westerners socialized with each other, there seemed to be less intensity and anxiety, and almost anything could become an ice-breaker to start a conversation. On the other hand, the Chinese seemed to be shy and more limited in conversational topics.

No major communication difficulties were observed within these simple interactional situations. The western tourist group in this study was mainly comprised of backpackers and independent travelers, and meeting new people was often a major reason for adopting this travel style (Murphy, 2001). It seems that it is socially more important and more acceptable to interact with strangers when one is on the move, but such behavior maybe unconventional at home.

The bar culture and western ambience on West Street are main attractions of Yangshuo to domestic tourists in China (Yang, Bai & Su, 2007), even though most may not actually enter the bars. However, the Chinese experience western bars differently than westerners. Chinese tourists consider it to be disturbing and impolite to chat with strangers in bars, and the lack of confidence in language skills also prevents them from initiating conversations. However, basic communication and interaction between western tourists and Chinese in bars can be facilitated. The main obstacle for many Chinese tourists and

locals is the entry point. Chinese tourists could be encouraged to be open to conversations in bars, in order to get the most out of their trip and to have an authenticated bar experience in Yangshuo.

The promotion of authentic bar experiences that has occurred in Yangshuo may be relevant to other tourist towns in China. Bar streets are spaces that are shared by locals and tourists. Balancing the use of those spaces to facilitate interaction, reduce social problems and improve the experience of both tourists and locals, and benefit the destination remains the task of tourism developers.

6.4 Chapter Summary

The phenomena of intercultural communication and interaction in bars in Yangshuo can be of empirical implication to some social as well as intercultural theories. Homophily principle explains western tourists' behaviour of interacting with other westerners in bars than with Chinese. The lack of social capital, in the forms of meaningful and constructive social networking, is also a possible reason. Cultural differences and differences in self-construal were reflected in the communication and interaction between Chinese and westerners. Generally speaking, Yangshuo has constructed harmonious tourist-host relationship; those who had casual and meaningful contact with foreigners become culture brokers in intercultural communication. Under the strong influence of globalization and cultural drift, Yangshuo needs to reconstruct its image to maintain the attraction to tourists, and to assure its social security and cultural identity.

Bars in Yangshuo have the potential to attract more Chinese tourists and local residents, as well as facilitate more intercultural communication and interaction and provide authentic bar experiences to customers. Chinese tourists in Yangshuo, mostly young adults, are ceasing to photographing foreigners and are choosing to interact more directly with foreigners. This is facilitated by enhancement of English language skills that is occurring throughout China. Chinese people who interact with western tourists in bars, as well as local westerners, serve as culture brokers in Yangshuo as they assist tourists with information and guidance. Bars can incorporate strategies to create authentic experience for customers by enhancing its service, providing interactive activities, etc. Yangshuo has successfully built a compound culture and a tolerant environment for intercultural communication, and has fostered constructive intercultural tourist-host relationships. The changes that have resulted in the identities and lifestyles of local people are mostly positive. However, communication theories could be used to develop further effective communication strategies in tourism.

Chapter 7 Conclusion

The goal of this project has been to explore intercultural communication and interaction in bars in Yangshuo, China. Since bars originated from the west and were imported to China after the country's economic revolution in the late 1970s, they have appeared in tourist towns as well as big cities to provide leisure space and activities as Chinese people have gained higher and higher affordability and leisure needs. As bars have significant social and recreational functions, this project investigates the role of bars in a developing touristic setting. With a preliminary focus on the communication and interaction of customers and bar hosts from different cultures, conversational interviews, video recordings and observation notes were used to capture the actual intercultural situations, informants' motivation for visiting bars, and perception of Chinese and western culture. Questionnaire surveys were conducted with western and Chinese tourists in particular, to gain information on their experiences with intercultural communication and bars in Yangshuo.

Bars result from the interaction of supply and demand: they are part of the attraction of Yangshuo and meet the demands of tourists. They have become part of the image of Yangshuo and are a space that is shared space between tourists and locals. The contact between international tourists and local hosts occurs in a commercial setting and has many constraints (Jiang, 2003; Yoo & Sohn, 2004). Nevertheless, western bars provide opportunities for human contact through meaningful intercultural and interpersonal communication and interaction, and an authentic bar experience. Moreover, interacting

with other tourists and hosts in a relaxed environment can help western tourists to release the stresses of culture confusion.

Communicants face a language barrier and this barrier is the main source of anxiety associated with international travel. Guidebooks, mainly “Lonely Planet” for backpackers, are crucial in reducing the barrier. It is unlikely that international tourists will take the time to learn a completely different and difficult language for their visit in China, but cultural preparation can be helpful. Travel involves interacting with new places and people, and the interaction of hosts and guests influences the lives of both. As a multi-cultural town and major tourist destination in southern China, Yangshuo is successful in providing bar culture as a tourist attraction. This has encouraged the drifting and reformation of culture, but more work needs to be done to ensure that culture drift does not undermine the cultural uniqueness and harmonious social relationships of Yangshuo.

Yangshuo has followed the global trend of acknowledging culture differences and embracing varied cultures but the degree of culture homogeneity is also high, especially in the travel centre. Enhanced cultural communication between tourists and hosts could open both groups to greater intercultural experiences. Western tourists show a stronger interest in traditional Chinese culture and activities than the Chinese. The promotion of effective intercultural communication in tourism requires the appreciation of cultural diversity and the building of a non-judgmental and respectful citizenry.

This project has investigated intercultural communication between western and Chinese people in western bars in Yangshuo in order to fill gaps in the literature. Few researchers in China have addressed the “tourist bar” phenomenon (Long, 2010) and there has been a lack of attention given to actual situations of intercultural communication in tourism. While the outcomes of interactions between hosts and guests have been widely acknowledged and the implications for one or the other have been widely researched, as in impact studies, there is very little research on the actual interaction itself. This thesis addresses this void.

This project contributes to the understanding of tourism as a set of relational and transforming activities, which comprises social interaction among different groups of people. Cultural factors and social factors were both examined in the conversational situations. By combining intercultural communication theories and social theories with tourism practices, this project opens tourism study to a wider range of academic disciplines. Though Yangshuo is a unique case in China and even worldwide, effective intercultural communication that respects cultural diversity and sensitivities should be encouraged in tourist destinations. Maintaining cultural uniqueness and heterogeneity under numerous impacts from different forces while achieving effective intercultural communication is rather difficult, but many practical and solid intercultural theories are ready to be modified and applied to tourism practices.

The significance of social and recreational spaces in a tourism setting in terms of constructing informal networks of travelers and locals is also addressed. To apply the

research project practically, I propose the promotion of authentic bar experiences in tourist towns in China. Bars are important social spaces and their role in improving intercultural communication and interaction can be enhanced by implementing strategies that bridge communication gaps and barriers. The promotion of authentic bar experiences can be of important marketing value for entrepreneurs.

Research Opportunities:

This research concentrated upon independent travelers and backpackers. However, group tourists could also be bar patrons because many organized tour groups allow time for unscheduled activities. Group tourists may participate in intercultural communication and interaction differently from independent tourists. The adaptation of communication strategies in international tourism settings also needs to be examined systematically. Such research could help international tourism developers, service providers, local communities and tourist communities to better facilitate communication.

Future studies on bar streets and tourist bars in China could focus on the glocalization of those spaces. The western bars in Yangshuo did not have many local features, as the main attraction in Yangshuo is its natural resources. Towns such as Dali, Lijiang and Fenghuang have ethnic and racial uniqueness which attracts tourists with greater likelihood of incorporating distinctive elements of culture and local features in bars and other public spaces. Gender is also an issue in intercultural communication and tourism employment in Yangshuo. In this case, Chinese participants were predominantly female while western

participants were largely male. Gender preferences in intercultural communication could be explored further.

Moreover, a specific form of tourist-host relationship, love affairs, could be another research opportunity. Love affairs are one of the attractions of towns like Yangshuo: they influence the image of the destinations, tourist expectations and even local residents' attitudes towards tourists and their own community development.

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Appendix A: Questionnaire Survey for Western and Chinese Tourists

This questionnaire is designed to assist the research of my master's thesis on intercultural communication and interaction in tourism. Please take a moment to fill in my questionnaire. Thank you.

English:

1. Please put your reasons for visiting Yangshuo in order of preference (1 being the most important, 7 the least important)

Ethnic Minority ____ See rural China ____ Shopping ____ Natural Scenery ____
Ease of access to Western food/drink ____ Outdoor activities ____ Local Food ____

2. Do you think the amount of foreigners has a positive or negative impact on your view of Yangshuo? _____
_____.

3. Have you been to the following places:

Western bars ____ Nightclubs ____ Neither but I will go to a western bar ____
Neither but I will go to a night club ____ Neither and I don't intend to go ____.

4. A) Have you held conversation with any Chinese here in Yangshuo? Where and how was this conversation initiated?

B) If no do you think it is because of: Communication problems, lack of opportunity, just no interest or other? _____

5. A) Have any Chinese taken a picture with/of you? _____

B) Do you think this happens more or less in Yangshuo? _____

C) Did the person ask permission to take the photo? _____

D) How do you feel about the Chinese photographing Foreigners?
_____.

6. Have you taken any photos of Chinese people? Why? _____

7. How are you traveling? _____

a) Independently b) With friends or family c) In a tour group d) Visiting people in China

8. Your Gender: Male ____ Female ____

9. Your Nationality: _____

10. Your Age: 18-25 ____ 26-40 ____ 40+ ____

11. How long have you stayed in Yangshuo? _____

Thank you again and have a nice trip.

Chinese:

1 请将以下的“阳朔特色”按照对您的吸引力排序（1-7,1 为吸引力最强,7 为吸引力最弱）

Please put your reasons for visiting Yangshuo in order of preference (1-7, 1 being the most important, 7 the least important)

少数民族风情 Ethnic Minority_____ 田园风情和农家乐 Rural Scenery and Lifestyle_____

西街泡吧购物 Shopping and bars_____ 喀斯特自然风光 Natural Scenery_____ 西餐及洋人风情

Western Food and Ambience_____ 攀岩及户外拓展 Rock Climbing and Outdoor Activities

阳朔特色美食 Local Food_____

2 您来阳朔之后对于阳朔的印象与来之前一致吗

Have your impression of Yangshuo matched your expectations of it?

如一致：请简单概括一下您对阳朔的印象 If so please briefly describe your impression of Yangshuo_____

如不一致：请分别简单概括一下您之前和现在对于阳朔的印象 If not please briefly describe your expectations before you came here and your impression now _____

3 您去过阳朔的酒吧吗 Have you been to the bars in Yangshuo_____

闹吧 Nightclub_____ 静吧/西餐吧 Western Bar/Cafe_____ 都没去过但是有兴趣去闹吧 Neither but I intend to go to a nightclub_____ 都没去过但是有兴趣去静吧 Neither but I intend to go to a western bar_____ 没有兴趣 No interest_____

4 您在阳朔有没有和外国人交谈过 Have you had conversations with foreigners in Yangshuo_____

有，请说明次数和场合：If yes, how many times briefly and what are the occasions?

没有，原因是___ If no, what is the reason a 想交谈但是有语言障碍 Language barrier

b 有意向但是没有遇到机会 Lack of opportunity

c 对于和外国人交谈不感兴趣 No interest d

其他：Other:_____

5 您在阳朔有和外国人合影吗？Have you taken pictures with foreigners in Yangshuo_____

A 在阳朔没有，在别的地方有合影 At other places but not Yangshuo

B 从来没有过 Never happened

C 经人同意后有合影 Yes at Yangshuo with asking for permissions

D 未经人同意，有以外国人作为背景的照片 Yes without asking for permission or just use foreigners as background of pictures

6 如果和外国人有合影或者照片，请问您跟外国人合影的意图是什么（多选）If you had pictures with foreigners or had taken picture of foreigners what are the reasons? (Multiple choice)___

A 很少见到外国人，觉得很新鲜 Seldom see any foreigners where I live, interesting to see all

the foreigners

B 只和好看的外国人合影 I only take pictures with good-looking foreigners

C 没有机会和外国人交谈，留影也是一种互动 I have no opportunity to talk with them, taking picture is a kind of interaction

D 是旅游的一种纪念，会给亲朋好友展示照片 Photos are souvenirs from my trip, I will show my family and friends the pictures with foreigner

E 和外国人有交谈，留影是互相留作纪念 I have had conversations with them so taking picture is to record the memory

F 其他: Other reasons _____

7 您在阳朔的旅游形式是 How do you travel____ A 自助或自驾群体游(≥ 2)Independently with family or friends B 自助单人游 Independently C 跟团游 With a tour group D 探亲访友游 Visiting people here

8 您的性别: Gender 男 male____ 女 female____

9 您的年龄: Age 18-25____ 26-40____ 40 以上____

10 您来阳朔的天数: How long have you been in Yangshuo

非常感谢您的合作，祝您旅行愉快!

Appendix B: Letter for Bar Owner

University of Waterloo

Date

Dear manager of (insert bar name):

This letter is a request to conduct a research study in your bar as part of my Master's degree in the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies at the University of Waterloo under the supervision of Professor Geoffrey Wall from Department of Geography and Environmental Management, University of Waterloo, Canada. I would like to provide you with more information about this project.

As tourism has become an important industry in many countries, it has accelerated the communication between people, cultures, and nations. How people communicate with their hosts/guests when they are engaging in tourism is influenced by many cultural as well as personal factors. To a foreign tourist, the experience of talking to a local is part of his/her travel experience; it might change his/her attitude towards the destination and previous understanding of the culture visited. While this kind of contact might result in something different for local people. In the case of Yangshuo, there are more and more bars here which have provided spaces for tourists as well as local people to communicate and interact with each other. I am requesting permission from you to conduct my research in the bar. I will not bother customers and staff. I hope to stay in your bar from July 13th to August 15th every day at the time your bar operates.

There are people from different cultural backgrounds gathering here every day in your bar, including foreigners who are traveling in a culturally different destination, Yangshuo, Chinese tourists who are attracted by foreigners, bars and scenery here, and even people who live around here and work here. People are having inter/cross cultural communication and interaction here, but the nature and role of this type of communication and interaction varies. The purpose of this study is to investigate the nature and role of intercultural communication and interaction between western tourists and Chinese tourists and between western tourists and local Chinese residents in Yangshuo, specifically in the bar.

This study will explore the role of this bar in intercultural communication, including how people from different cultural backgrounds perceive this bar and what activities they choose to do here, and why. It will also examine what people talk about and how they communicate and the factors that influence communication and interaction such as language competence, travel motivations, occupation, cultural/ethnic/national backgrounds. Moreover, the outcomes of intercultural communication, such as attitude change and cultural understanding, from the individuals'

perspectives, will also be investigated. I will be observing customers and staff in the bar. I will conduct informal interviews with staff and customers, with their permission, about their own experiences talking with foreigners/Chinese people. I hope to video record some of those interactions between staff and customers and between customers when permissions obtained.

This study is expected to provide empirical evidence to intercultural communication theories, and to give planning suggestions to tourism developers, planners and tour operator. It will also give suggestions to the development of bars and other “third places” in tourist centers.

Participation in this study is voluntary. An interview with a staff member or customer will last approximately 30 minutes. It will be conducted at a time convenient to them. For staff this would be before or after their work time.

All information provided will be completely confidential. Participants’ names will not appear in any thesis or report resulting from this study, however, with permission from a participant, anonymous quotations may be used. Data collected during this study will be retained for 2 years at the University of Waterloo. Only researchers associated with this project will have access. All electronic data on the student researcher’s personal computer will be password protected for security of the information. There are no known or anticipated risks to participate in this study. After 2 years, the audio-recordings, paper records, and electronic data will be confidentially erased and destroyed.

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact me at 13488688010 or by email at 123zhou@uwaterloo.ca. You can also contact my supervisor, Professor Geoff Wall at 00-1-519-888-4567 ext. 33609 or email gwall@uwaterloo.ca.

I would like to assure you that this study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. If you have any comments or concerns about this study, please contact Dr. Susan Sykes of this office at 00-1-519-888-4567 Ext. 36005 or ssykes@uwaterloo.ca.

I very much look forward to speaking with you and thank you in advance for your assistance in this project.

Yours Sincerely,

Lingxu Zhou

Appendix C: Information Letter and Consent Form

INFORMATION LETTER:

University of Waterloo

Date

Dear Customer and Staff of (*insert bar name*):

This letter is an invitation to consider participating in a study I am conducting as part of my Master's degree in the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies at the University of Waterloo under the supervision of Professor Geoffrey Wall from Department of Geography and Environmental Management, University of Waterloo, Canada. I would like to provide you with more information about this project and what your involvement would entail if you decide to take part.

As tourism has become an important industry in many countries, it has accelerated the communication between people, cultures, and nations. How people communicate with their hosts/guests when they are engaging in tourism is influenced by many cultural as well as personal factors. To a foreign tourist, the experience of talking to a local is part of his/her travel experience; it might change his/her attitude towards the destination and previous understanding of the culture visited. While this kind of contact might result in something different for local people. In the case of Yangshuo, there are more and more bars here which have provided spaces for tourists as well as local people to communicate and interact with each other.

There are people from different cultural backgrounds gathering here every day in this bar, including foreigners who are traveling in a culturally different destination, Yangshuo, Chinese tourists who are attracted by foreigners, bars and scenery here, and even people who live around here and work here. People are having inter/cross cultural communication and interaction here, but the nature and role of this type of communication and interaction varies. The purpose of this study is to investigate the nature and role of intercultural communication and interaction between western tourists and Chinese tourists and between western tourists and local Chinese residents in Yangshuo, specifically in the bar.

This study will explore the role of this bar in intercultural communication, including how people from different cultural backgrounds perceive it and what activities they choose to do here and why. It will also examine what people talk about and how they communicate and the factors that influence communication and interaction such as language competence, travel motivations, occupation, cultural/ethnic/national backgrounds. Moreover, the outcomes of intercultural communication, such as attitude change and cultural understanding, from the individuals'

perspectives, will also be investigated. I will be observing interactions and will conduct informal interviews. I hope to video record some of those interactions between staff and customers and between customers, with their permissions.

This study is expected to provide empirical evidence to intercultural communication theories, and to give planning suggestions to tourism developers, planners and tour operator. It will also give suggestions to the development of bars and other “third places” in tourist centers.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Informal interviews will last approximately 30 minutes, hopefully at the time when you are spending time in this bar, and in your preferred language (English or Mandarin Chinese), or before or after work if you are staff. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so wish during the course of the interview. Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences. With your permission, I will audio-record the interview and later transcribe the recording. However, should you prefer, I will make handwritten notes during the interview only.

Shortly after the interview has been completed, I will send you a copy of the transcript or my notes to give you an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of our conversation and to add or clarify any points that you wish. Also, if you are a tourist, I will send you an electronic version of the transcript if you are willing to receive the transcript by email and provide your email address. All information you provide will be completely confidential. Your name will not appear in any thesis or report resulting from this study, however, with your permission anonymous quotations may be used. Data collected during this study will be retained for 2 years at University of Waterloo. Only researchers associated with this project will have access. All electronic data will contain no personal identifiers. They will be kept only on the student researcher’s personal computer and will be password protected for security of the information. There are no known or anticipated risks to you as a participant in this study. After 2 years, the audio-recordings, paper records, and electronic data will be confidentially erased and destroyed.

If you have any questions regarding this study, or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact me at 13488688010 or by email at 123zhou@uwaterloo.ca. You can also contact my supervisor, Professor Geoff Wall at 00-1-519-888-4567 ext. 33609 or email gwall@uwaterloo.ca.

I would like to assure you that this study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. However, the final decision about participation is yours. If you have any comments or concerns resulting from your participation in this study, please contact Dr. Susan Sykes of this office at 00-1-519-888-4567 Ext. 36005 or ssykes@uwaterloo.ca.

I very much look forward to speaking with you and thank you in advance for your assistance in this project.

Yours Sincerely,

Lingxu Zhou

CONSENT FORM:

I have read the information presented in the information letter about a study being conducted by Lingxu Zhou of the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies at the University of Waterloo under the supervision of Dr. Geoff Wall, Department of Geography and Environmental Management, University of Waterloo, Canada. I have had the opportunity to ask any questions related to this study, to receive satisfactory answers to my questions, and any additional details I wanted.

I am aware that I have the option of allowing my interview to be audio recorded to ensure an accurate recording of my responses.

I am also aware that excerpts from the interview may be included in the thesis and/or publications to come from this research, with the understanding that the quotations will be anonymous.

I was informed that I may withdraw my consent at any time without penalty by advising the researcher.

This project has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. I was informed that if I have any comments or concerns resulting from my participation in this study, I may contact the Director Susan Sykes, Office of Research Ethics at 00-1-519-888-4567 ext. 36005 or ssykes@uwaterloo.ca.

With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

YES NO

I agree to have my interview audio recorded.

YES NO

I agree to the use of anonymous quotations in any thesis or publication that comes of this research.

YES NO

Participant Name: _____ (Please print)

Participant Signature: _____

Witness Name: _____ (Please print)

Witness Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix D: Recruitment Script for Interviews

I: Interviewer P: Potential Participant (Customers in the bar)

I: Excuse me, do you have a moment? I am from University of Waterloo, Canada, and I am researching about intercultural communication in this bar, so I am looking for participants for my research.

P: Ok, can I have some information about the research?

I: It is about intercultural communication and interaction between people from different cultural backgrounds here in Yangshuo, such as Chinese having conversations with foreigners in this bar. Do you have any experiences talking with foreigners (or Chinese) here or do you come to this bar to interact with foreigners (or Chinese)?

P: No (Say thank you and look for another participant)

P: Yes I do, what do you need me for?

I: That's great.

I am conducting informal interviews with participants in the bar. Simply speaking, it is just talking with you about your experiences of interacting with foreigners (or Chinese). The chatting would hope to last about half an hour, but the length of time is flexible too, and would be arranged for a time convenient to you. Involvement in this interview is entirely voluntary and there are no known or anticipated risks to participation in this study. The questions are quite general, for example, tell me a story about when you talk with a foreigner here and what did you talk about. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions you do not wish to answer and may terminate the interview at any time.

With your permission, the interview will be audio-recorded to facilitate collection of information, and later transcribed for analysis. All information you provide will be considered confidential. The data collected will be kept in a secure location and disposed of in 2 years' time.

I would like to assure you that this study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. With your permission, I would like to provide you a hard copy of an information letter which has all of these details along with contact names and numbers on it to help assist you in making a decision about your participation in this study. If you decide to participate we can start

from here or you can come back later to leave a message for me at this bar indicating date and time convenient to you. Here is the information letter for you to keep.

P: I will think about it and let you know. (Or Ok we can start now).

I: Thank you very much.

Appendix E: Guiding Questions of Interviews

Western Customers:

- a. Is this your first time in China/Yangshuo? What do you think of China and Chinese people?
- b. What do you think of Yangshuo?
- c. Did you usually go to bars where you are from? What do you think it is different between bars at home and bars in Yangshuo?
- d. Have you talked with any Chinese people here (Chinese tourists, workers, and other residents)? Can you tell me when, where and what happened?
- e. What did you talk about? Did you talk in English or Mandarin?
- f. (If mandarin) When and where did you learn Mandarin?
- a. Did you have any difficulties communicating with them? If so what are the difficulties?
- g. (In terms of service encounters) What do you think of their communication skills?
- h. Have your perceptions towards Chinese culture changed after you talk more with Chinese people? How?
- i. Would you want more of these kinds of contact with Chinese people when you are traveling in China?
- j. Have you built connections with any of these people (you conversed with)? Will these connections remain when you go back to your country?
- k. Have you experienced culture shock in China? How do you feel?

Chinese Customers:

- a. Do you often come to this bar? How often do you come here and what do you do here?
- b. What do you think of western culture? How do you obtain information of western culture?
- c. Have you talked with foreigners in this bar or in Yangshuo in general? Can you tell me any stories about your interactions with foreigners? When, where and what happened?
- d. What do you think of interacting with foreigners?
- e. Did you usually approach them or do they talk to you first?
- f. Did you have any difficulties communicating with them? If so what are the difficulties?
- g. Have your perceptions towards western culture changed after you had an opportunity to talk with foreigners? How? What do you think are different of foreigners?
- h. Have you built connections with any of these people? Will these connections with them remain?
- i. In general, would you like to talk to foreigners more in Yangshuo?
- j. Are there any changes on you personally after you have frequent contact with foreigners?

Bar Workers:

- a. Have you talked with foreigners before you worked here?
- b. (If yes) When was it and what did you talk about?
- c. How frequent do you have western customers? How frequent do you talk to them at work?
- d. Can you tell me any stories about your interactions with foreigners at work? When, where and what happened?
- e. Did you talk in English? When and where did you learn English?
- f. Did you have any difficulties communicating with them? If so what are the difficulties?
- g. What do you think of western culture now? What do you think are the differences between western customers and Chinese customers?
- h. Have you built connections with any of these people? Will these connections with them remain when they leave here?
- i. How frequent do you have local customers from Yangshuo?
- j. Do the western customers and Chinese customers interact in your bar? Usually how do they start? Can you share your observations with me?