

## Enhancing Intercultural Communication Competence: Immersive Experience with Language and Culture through Participation and Action Learning in Context

**Ping Yang**

School of Humanities and Communication Arts, Western Sydney University, Parramatta, NSW, Australia

---

This chapter focuses on how international students in study abroad programs enhance their intercultural communication competence by gaining insights into the Chinese language and culture through participation and action learning (PAL) in the destination countries while facing some challenges. This place-based experiential learning allows the students to contact the language and participate in cultural events, immerse themselves in authentic language and cultural environments of the Chinese context. Employing a qualitative approach, the researcher collected authentic YouTube clips as a video dataset. The videos depict various daily activities in and beyond the Chinese university campuses, showcasing the language and cultural immersion that international students experienced in their host country. The audio data were coded and analysed via NVivo 14, and the video data were coded and analysed via ELAN. Using intercultural communication competence theory (Yang, 2018, 2025), the researcher interpreted and discussed the emerging themes in terms of participants' intercultural verbal and nonverbal communication experience. It was found that international students studying in China benefit from an immersive learning experience in China, thus leading to improved intercultural verbal and nonverbal communication competence in an authentic setting. Though their general learning experience is positive, they face some challenges, such as a language barrier and cultural shock. This project is significant as it contributes to research on place-based study abroad programmes and the development of intercultural (verbal and nonverbal) communication competence through participation and action learning in authentic settings.

**Keywords:** Intercultural communication, verbal communication, nonverbal communication

### Biography:

PING YANG received his PhD from Macquarie University. Dr Yang is a Senior Lecturer in Linguistics at Western Sydney University. His teaching, research, HDR supervision and publishing areas include intercultural verbal communication, intercultural nonverbal communication, cultural linguistics, socio-semiotics, educational linguistics, TESOL teacher education, and translation studies. He is the associate editor of Current Trends in Translation Teaching and Learning E (WOS), SAGE Open (Humanities; Scopus, SSCI), and Humanities and Social Sciences Communications (Scopus, SSCI, AHCI). He has peer-reviewed manuscripts for many international journals and book manuscripts for Routledge and Springer Nature. He is an editorial board member of Australian Review of Applied Linguistics.

<https://www.webofscience.com/wos/author/record/G-1338-2015>

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3646-438X>

<https://researchers.westernsydney.edu.au/en/persons/ping-yang>