

Mixed Methods Research on the Intercultural Sensitivity of Summer Program Participants; Comparison of US Participants and Korean Language Partners

Soyoung Jeong

Ph.D., Office of International Affairs, Chungbuk National Univ., Korea
E-mail syjeong0531@cbnu.ac.kr

Abstract

This study was conducted as part of a summer Korean language and culture program at a university in Korea, aimed at examining the changes in intercultural sensitivity among American students who participated in the program, as well as the Korean students who served as their language partners. The research utilized a mixed-method approach combining qualitative and quantitative analysis. To derive research findings, pre- and post-program Intercultural Sensitivity Scale surveys were administered to participating students and semi-structured interview data were collected from a randomly selected group of six students. The research findings indicated that among a total of twenty-seven students including both American and Korean students, significant changes in intercultural sensitivity were observed in the domain of Interaction Engagement. Furthermore, fourteen American students showed significant changes in their Interaction Confidence, while the Korean students who participated as language partners did not exhibit significant changes in the five subdomains of intercultural sensitivity.

Keywords: *Intercultural Sensitivity, Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS), Mixed Methods Research, Summer Program, Language Partner*

1. INTRODUCTION

Due to recent advancements in Korean popular culture, as well as social and economic progress, international standing of South Korea has been on the rise. Consequently, the Korean language, known as Hangeul, is gaining recognition worldwide as a foreign language for educational purposes. The changing landscape of Korean language education is driven by an increase in the number of learners, leading to the expansion of Korean language education as a means of social education [1].

Moreover, there is a growing need to expand Korean cultural education for international students who aspire to become global talents in Korean society in the era of globalization. This expansion aims to foster a mutual understanding through intercultural education, wherein students not only develop an attitude of respect for their own culture but also learn to harmoniously coexist with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. Therefore, an intercultural educational approach with a global and interdisciplinary perspective, focusing on enhancing students' global citizenship competencies, is crucial. This is because the ability to effectively communicate across cultures within diverse cultural environments is an essential competitive advantage in the

Manuscript received: October 12, 2023 / revised: October 25, 2023 / accepted: November 5, 2023

Corresponding Author: syjeong0531@cbnu.ac.kr

Tel:*** - **** - **** Fax: +82-43-264-2068

Ph.D., Office of International Affairs, Chungbuk National Univ., Korea

Copyright©2023 by The International Promotion Agency of Culture Technology. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0>)

global era [2]. The concept that promotes appropriate and effective behavior in intercultural communication is known as intercultural sensitivity [3]. This refers to the ability to develop positive emotions towards and an understanding and recognition of cultural differences. Intercultural sensitivity involves being sufficiently attuned to have an interest in and perceive cultural differences, as well as the willingness to modify one's behavior as a sign of respect towards individuals from different cultures. It is the sensitivity to cultural differences that enables individuals to navigate effectively within diverse cultural environments [4-5].

From this perspective, it was sought to be examined how students adapt to a new cultural environment. In this study, the transformations of intercultural sensitivities experienced by fourteen American college students, who took part in an eight-week intensive summer program on Korean language and culture in Korea, and their thirteen Korean college counterparts, who served as language partners and cultural exchange facilitators, were delved into. To explore these shifts in intercultural sensitivities, Creswell & Plano Clark's integrated research approach was adopted [6]. Qualitative research has traditionally found its application in the exploration of diverse phenomena such as linguistics and perceptual cognition, the dynamics of human relationships, and the intricate fabric of specific cultural domains, all of which require an in-depth exploration of the depths of human experiences and cultural nuances. Nonetheless, conducting qualitative research with a limited number of participants often presents challenges in terms of generalizing research outcomes [7]. Therefore, in this study, we aimed to harness the advantages of both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies by embracing the integrated research approach. This approach allowed us to conduct our research with efficacy and comprehensiveness, ensuring a more robust exploration of our research objectives [6].

This paper aims to examine the differences between participants from two different cultures and gain a deeper understanding of foreign college students and Korean college students' intercultural sensitivity through interviews and Intercultural Sensitivity Scale survey (hereafter ISS). The research questions for examining the changes in intercultural sensitivity before and after the eight-week program are as follows; 1) What is the impact of the eight-week intensive summer program on Korean language and culture in Korea on the intercultural sensitivity of participating students?, 2) Is there a difference in the changes of intercultural sensitivity between the US participants of the eight-week intensive summer program on Korean language and culture in Korea, and the Korean students who participated as their language partners?

2. INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY

Intercultural sensitivity is defined as the ability to develop a positive emotional response towards understanding and acknowledging cultural differences. It is seen as a capability that fosters appropriate and effective behavior in the context of intercultural communication. This sensitivity enables individuals to act appropriately in cross-cultural environments, as it allows them to discern and experience cultural distinctions [3, 5, 8].

Chen and Starosta (1996) formulated a model for intercultural communication competence that combines elements from both cross-cultural attitudes and behavioral skills models. According to their framework, intercultural communication competence comprises three core dimensions: intercultural awareness, intercultural sensitivity, and intercultural adroitness, each encompassing a set of constituent elements.

Intercultural awareness pertains to the cognitive aspect of intercultural communication competence, involving an individual's ability to comprehend the commonalities and disparities in the cultures of others. This dimension includes two primary components: self-awareness and cultural awareness. Intercultural sensitivity, representing the emotional dimension of intercultural communication competence, reflects an individual's emotional inclination to acknowledge, appreciate, and embrace cultural differences. This dimension consists of six elements: self-esteem, self-monitoring, empathy, open-mindedness, non-judgmental, and social relaxation. Intercultural adroitness encompasses the behavioral dimension of intercultural communication competence and focuses on an individual's capability to achieve communication goals when interacting with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. This dimension includes four key components: message proficiency, appropriate self-disclosure, behavioral flexibility, and interaction management [9].

One widely employed set of tool for validating such intercultural sensitivity is ISS developed by Chen and

Starosta (2000) comprising five distinct factors. These factors include engagement in interactions, respect for cultural differences, confidence in intercultural interactions, enjoyment of intercultural interactions, and attentiveness to intercultural exchanges [3].

The first section of the ISS is the domain of Interaction Involvement, which consists of seven questions. Within this domain, Chen and Starosta sought to measure individuals' levels of intercultural sensitivity by assessing their degree of participation in exchanges with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. The questions used to gauge Interaction Involvement are deriving pleasure from engaging with individuals from different cultural contexts, tending to withhold judgment until waiting a while to form impressions of someone from a culturally distinct background, approaching individuals from different cultural backgrounds with an open mind, exhibiting positive reactions toward culturally diverse individuals during interactions, tending to avoid situations that necessitate interacting with individuals who possess different cultural backgrounds, conveying level of understanding to culturally diverse individuals through verbal communication or actions, and finding enjoyment in the differences between myself and individuals from different cultural backgrounds. These inquiries aim to assess the extent to which individuals actively participate in and appreciate exchanges with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds, indicating their level of intercultural sensitivity.

The second domain, Cultural Difference Respect, pertains to the extent to which individuals respect their own culture as well as cultures different from their own. Cultural Difference Respect is measured through a total of six question items, which are believing that individuals from different cultural backgrounds are narrow-minded, not enjoying being in the company of individuals from different cultural backgrounds, respecting the values of individuals from different cultural backgrounds, respecting the behavioral patterns of individuals from different cultural backgrounds, resisting accepting the opinions of individuals from different cultural backgrounds, and believing that their culture is superior to the cultures of other countries. These questions aim to assess an individual's level of respect for cultural differences, highlighting their attitudes towards individuals from different cultural backgrounds and their willingness to embrace diverse viewpoints.

The third domain, Interaction Confidence, aims to measure individuals' self-assurance when engaging with people from different cultures. It consists of five question items, which are feeling confident about themselves when interacting with individuals from different cultural backgrounds, finding it extremely challenging to speak in front of individuals from different cultural backgrounds, knowing what to say when interacting with individuals from different cultural backgrounds, being as sociable as they want when interacting with individuals from different cultural backgrounds, and feeling confident when interacting with individuals from different cultural backgrounds. These questions seek to assess individuals' level of self-confidence during interactions with people from diverse cultural backgrounds, reflecting their comfort and assertiveness in cross-cultural communication.

The fourth domain, Interaction Enjoyment, measures individuals' inclination to enjoy and appreciate their interactions with people from different cultures. It comprises three question items, which are getting angry when interacting with individuals from different cultural backgrounds, feeling frustrated when being with individuals from different cultural backgrounds, and considering interactions with individuals from different cultural backgrounds as a waste of time. These questions aim to assess individuals' propensity to derive pleasure and satisfaction from engaging with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds, capturing their attitude towards cross-cultural interactions.

Lastly, Interaction Attentiveness refers to the degree to which an individual pays attention to individuals from different cultures during their interactions. It is measured through three question items and they are being observant when interacting with individuals from different cultural backgrounds, making an effort to gather as much information as possible when interacting with individuals from different cultural backgrounds, and being sensitive to subtle meanings of individuals from different cultural backgrounds during interactions. These questions seek to evaluate individuals' level of attentiveness and sensitivity to the nuanced meanings conveyed by individuals from different cultural backgrounds during cross-cultural interactions.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Participants

This study focuses on a group of fourteen American university students who participated in an intensive eight-week summer program, emphasizing Korean language and cultural immersion. The participants' majors consisted of 11 students from humanities and social sciences, 2 from arts, and 1 from engineering. Among them, there were 1 first-year student, 2 second-year students, 3 third-year students, 5 fourth-year students, and 3 graduate students. They received a total of 102 hours of intensive Korean language classes and 38 hours of Korean cultural experience program. The students also participated in a language partner program with Korean university students twice a week for two hours each session. Additionally, they took part in a homestay program with the university's faculty members, spanning two weekends.

Another group of participants are Korean university students joined as Korean language partners for American students in the summer program. These thirteen Korean university students were paired with their American counterparts in a 1:1 matching format for a duration of eight weeks. During this period, their primary responsibility was to assist the American students with their Korean language learning and engage in cultural exchange activities as ambassadors of Korean culture.

The interview participants consisted of a total of 6 individuals, including 3 American students and 3 Korean language partners, were randomly selected from the previously mentioned group of fourteen American participants and thirteen Korean language partners. Among the American participants, HT is a 3rd-year female college student of Vietnamese descent, and this was her first visit to Korea. CC, a male college sophomore, had previously visited Korea for approximately 3 weeks in 2021, invited by a Korean friend. ML, a female college freshman, had visited Korea for 7 weeks in 2021 and an additional 2 weeks in 2022. Among the Korean language partners, NK, who had been in the United States from middle school to high school and subsequently studied in Mexico for 2 years of college, is a third-year female college student. KB is a third-year male college student, and SJ is a fourth-year female college student.

3.2 Data Collection

For this study's quantitative research, pre and post program ISS survey were collected. Initially, ISS surveys were conducted with fourteen American students and thirteen Korean language partners on the first and last day of the eight-week program to assess intercultural sensitivity change. Regarding qualitative research, a random selection of 3 individuals from each group, totaling 6 participants, underwent semi-structured interviews lasting approximately 40 minutes each on the 8th week of the program. The data obtained from these interviews were transcribed and used for the purpose of this paper.

3.3 Data Analysis

This study intends to apply an explanatory design method within Creswell & Plano Clark's integrated research approach, which comprises the initial collection of quantitative data in the first phase, followed by the utilization of qualitative data to elucidate the findings obtained in the initial data collection phase [10].

The quantitative data analysis for 14 American students and 13 Korean students was conducted using R program version 4.3.0. Initially, to assess the consistency among sub-factors of intercultural sensitivity items in the survey, reliability testing was performed. To achieve this, the "alpha()" function from the "psych" package in the R program was employed.

Statistical testing was carried out to determine if the mean of responses for each sub-factors of intercultural sensitivity had increased after participating in the summer program compared to before. Prior to testing, due to the sample size of respondents being less than 30 for both pre-post (a total of 27 respondents) a normality test was conducted. This test was performed to confirm whether the assumption of normality, which is necessary for conducting the independent sample t-test, a parametric method used for mean comparison, was met.

The Shapiro-Wilk test from the R program's "stats" package was utilized for this purpose, with a significance level of 5% (or 10%), to determine whether the data satisfied the normality assumption. For data that met the

normality assumption, the parametric independent sample t-test was performed. For data that did not meet the normality assumption, the non-parametric Wilcoxon Rank Sum Test was conducted. Each of these tests was carried out using the "t.test()" and "wilcox.test()" functions from the "stats" package in the R program. These procedures were undertaken to analyze the data and determine the statistical significance of changes in sub-cultural sensitivity before and after participation in the international summer program.

To analyze the reliability of the intercultural sensitivity assessment scale for students before and after program participation, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated. The calculated alpha coefficient was greater than 0.7, indicating high internal consistency.

The qualitative data analysis process in this study involved systematically condensing the data to create an overarching framework or theme, following the method proposed by Miles & Huberman (1994). The transcribed interview content was assigned unique identifiers for each case. The interview data were meticulously reviewed multiple times to gain a deep understanding of the content, with key language underlined and researchers' thoughts recorded in the margins. This process was undertaken to code and gather participants' responses related to the five sub-domains of intercultural sensitivity under a common [10].

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Impact of the Summer Program of Korean Language and Culture on the Intercultural Sensitivity

Figure 1 displays a box plot illustrating the mean values of five subdomains of intercultural sensitivity: Interaction Engagement, Respect for Cultural Differences, Interaction Confidence, Interaction Enjoyment, and Interaction Attentiveness, for the entire group of 27 participating students in the program.

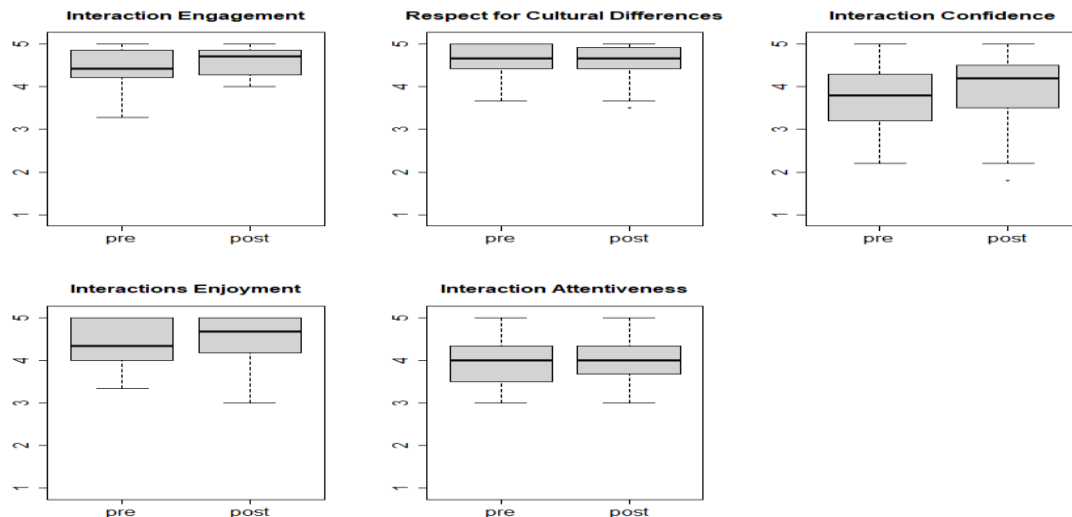


Figure 1. Changes in Subdomains of Participants' Intercultural Sensitivity: Box Plot

It appears that the median values of items related to Interaction Engagement, Interaction Confidence, and Interaction Enjoyment have increased after participation in the summer program when compared to before. To confirm whether the mean or median of the scales for Interaction Engagement, Interaction Confidence, and Interaction Enjoyment increased after participation in the program compared to before, independent sample *t*-tests or Wilcoxon Rank Sum tests were conducted.

The comparison of median for Interaction Engagement and Interaction Enjoyment before and after program

participation was conducted using independent sample *t*-tests, while the comparison of median values for Interaction Confidence before and after program participation was performed using the Wilcoxon Rank Sum test. The test results revealed that the *P*-value for Interaction Engagement was 0.081, which is smaller than 0.05 at a significance level of 5%. Therefore, it can be considered that the mean value for Interaction Engagement increased after program participation when compared to before.

The results of the interview analysis in terms of Interaction Engagement, US and Korean students' recognition and acceptance of other cultures, as well as an attitude of non-judgmental have changed. In particular, Korean language partners mentioned that they experienced the idea that living is the same for everyone and that we should approach people from different cultures with an open mind. Additionally, they made efforts to embrace American students as helpers, actively engaging them in communication and aligning with them as part of a community, a point consistent with the findings of Kang and Zhang's research [11].

And so I think this trip has definitely helps me be like, okay let me switch my approach to how I approach different people, and how I process them and give people a chance to actually be who they are without me having complete prejudice. Before that I tend to. After this program I never really avoided situations where I have to deal with culturally distinctive people. (US participant, ML)

I think before this trip I definitely was more hesitant but I think during this trip I've learned to kind of just embrace it and be like yeah obviously there's differences and I don't have to exclude myself from that. And that also means I can acknowledge the differences and be okay with the uncomfortability or be okay with being like this is maybe not my place or maybe this is something I can give other people space. I don't have to be there for everything. So just having just a different mindset when approaching that I think was the biggest difference. (US participant, ML)

When I met them, the first thing that struck me was that foreigners aren't really all that different. That's what's really important. So, this experience really surprised me. It's true, people everywhere are pretty much the same. I really felt that. It was a bit intimidating, you know? I used to think they'd be somehow different. (Korean language partner, SJ)

Oh wow, during this class, we all made an effort to show a sense of belonging like, "Hey, we're all friends here, we're all part of the same community." Even when we had meals, we'd say, "Let's eat together!" and suggest things like, "Why don't we pursue a career in singing together? Just the two of us." It's like, "Even if it's not because of this program, we're not just helping, but you're part of Korean society as a friend." We kind of emphasized these things a lot. (Korean language partner, NK)

Furthermore, participants found joy in discovering differences between themselves and individuals from different cultures through this summer program. Subsequently, they were experiencing a transformation that enabled them to approach foreigners without hesitation.

I've learned that the United States is home to a much greater diversity of cultures than I initially thought. In particular, I have a friend who, for religious reasons, doesn't eat pork, and I had never even considered this before. It never occurred to me that I could have friends like that. So, it's essential to be open to making friends with people who have such cultural and religious differences. I had never thought about this before, but it's fascinating and enjoyable to realize how important it is to respect and understand these cultural and religious aspects. It's really intriguing. (Korean language partner, SJ)

Even though Korea is one country but everybody here have a different approach to their own culture and I love to hear about that. So one would have different things a different mindset or different opinions on one culture point and my language partner will have a different thinking on the cultural point. And I really really like that. I became accept all the opinions of people from different cultures and I do not think that my culture is better than other. I think all cultures have good things and bad things and we should learn. (US participant, HT)

4.2 Differences of Intercultural Sensitivity Changes Between the US Participants of the Summer

Program of Korean Language and Culture, and the Korean Language Partners

4.2.1 US Participants

Figure 2 depicts a box plot illustrating the mean values of intercultural sensitivity subdomains: Interaction Engagement, Respect for Cultural Differences, Interaction Confidence, Interaction Enjoyment, and Interaction Attentiveness, for the 14 American students who participated in the summer program of Korean language and culture.

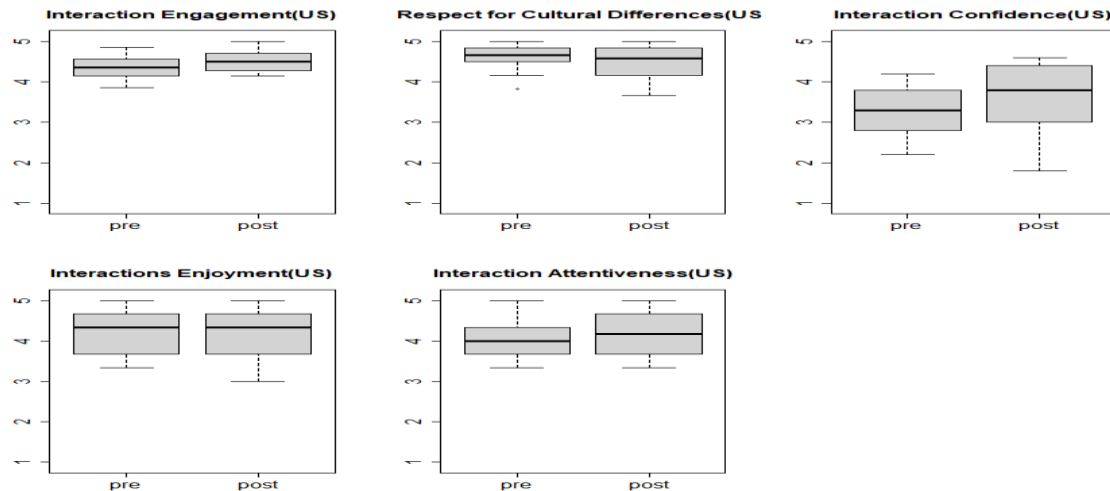


Figure 2. Changes in Subdomains of US Participants' Intercultural Sensitivity: Box Plot

It appears that the median values of items related to Interaction Engagement, Interaction Confidence, and Interaction Attentiveness have increased after program participation for American students when compared to before. In contrast, the median value for the item related to Respect for Cultural Difference decreased. Independent sample *t*-tests or Wilcoxon Rank Sum tests were conducted to determine whether the median of the scales for Interaction Engagement, Interaction Confidence, and Interaction Attentiveness increased after program participation compared to before.

In the case of Interaction Engagement, Interaction Confidence, and Interaction Attentiveness, the comparison of median values before and after program participation was carried out using the Wilcoxon Rank Sum test. According to the test results, for the sub-intercultural sensitivity of Interaction Confidence, at a 10% significance level, the *p*-value was 0.08, which is smaller than 0.1. Therefore, it can be considered that the mean of Interaction Confidence increased after program participation for American students compared to before their participation in the summer program.

The results of the interview analysis in terms of Interaction Confidence, US participants expressed some hesitation about using Korean before participating in the summer program, but through their interaction, especially with their language partner and teachers, they explained that their confidence in mutual interaction increased.

So before coming in here I already set my mind that I will be open minded to the culture because I want to learn more. However because I do not know much about Korean culture besides what I have learned in books, in textbooks and at the college. So at first I am a little hesitated when I talk to my language partner or the professor at the school. However by now I know that everybody is here to help us better with Korean. So I become very, very comfortable with all of my language partner and also with my teacher. (US participants, HT)

Participants also developed the knowledge, attitudes, and practical skills required to foster understanding, reduce biases, and recognize the value of cultural diversity, including their own culture, and the cultures of other countries. In this process, having an open mind towards different cultures is even more crucial than possessing accurate knowledge of other cultures. This is because an open mind towards other cultures is a prerequisite for engaging in diverse cultural interactions [12].

And if I do mess up to acknowledge that in the moment and be like oh I'm so so sorry I did not know or I did not mean it that way, but to obviously acknowledge like either hurt or damage that I've done in that moment. So, yeah, I feel like confidence necessarily isn't the right word. I feel like for that question specifically but I think it's kind of more like comfortability, if that makes sense or willingness to be vulnerable in that sense. (US participants, ML)

I think that this was the uncertainty for a lot of them because I think it really depends on kind of culture. But then in the end of the program I started thinking about Korean culture and I started to disagree with a lot of these things you know less sure of myself you know less confident you know less sure that I know what to say in the situations. So yeah I was a little bit more kind of second guessing myself. Now because of this program like oh is this the right thing to do? Like, oh, am I being too direct. (US participants, CC)

Because at least for me I tend to, if I feel unsure about a situation or I'm not sure how to interact, I tend to wait and look and see what the vibe is first, or see how people are reacting first to get a better understanding or feel for what the right approach to that situation would be. But now I don't I feel like nervous or uncomfortable just speaking myself I'm just, I'm more careful of what I say or what I do to make sure I'm not obviously being offensive or rude. (US participants, ML)

4.2.1 Korean Language Partners

Figure 3 illustrates a box plot depicting the mean values of five sub-cultural sensitivity items: Interaction Engagement, Respect for Cultural Differences, Interaction Confidence, Interaction Enjoyment, and Interaction Attentiveness, for the 13 Korean students who participated in the program.

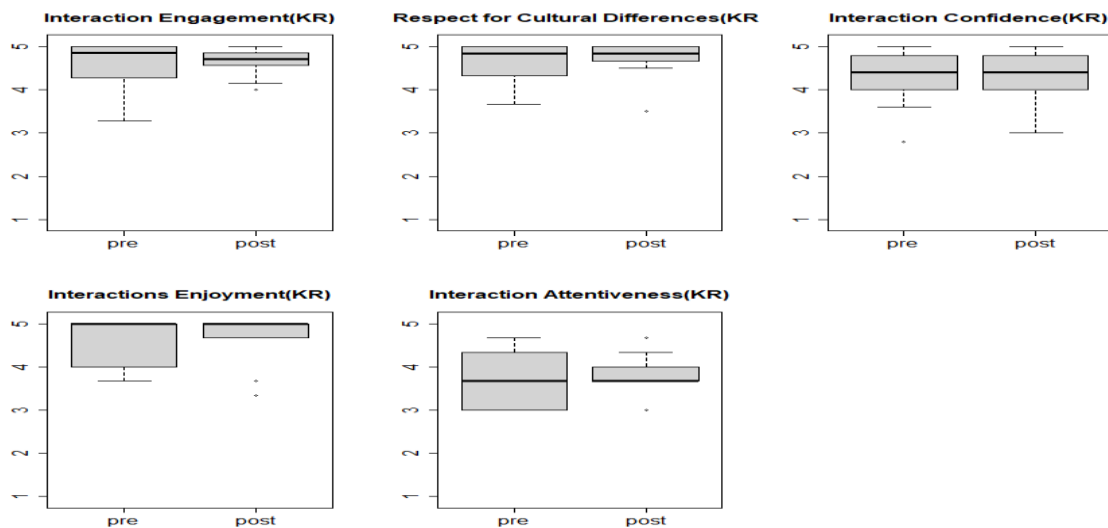


Figure 3. Changes in Subdomains of Korean Language Partners' Intercultural Sensitivity: Box Plot

It appears that there are no sub-intercultural sensitivities for Korean students who participated in the

International Summer Program where the median values increased after program participation when compared to before. However, when examining the graphs related to Interaction Engagement, Respect for Cultural Difference, Interaction Enjoyment, and Interaction Attentiveness, it is evident that, on the whole, a significant number of students showed a trend of higher scores after the program, with a few exceptions. To confirm whether the mean or median of the scales for Interaction Engagement, Respect for Cultural Difference, Interaction Enjoyment, and Interaction Attentiveness increased after program participation compared to before, independent sample *t*-tests or Wilcoxon Rank Sum tests were conducted.

The test results indicate that there are no sub-intercultural sensitivity items with *p*-values less than 0.05 at a 5% significance level. Therefore, we did not obtain statistical evidence to conclude that the mean for Korean students who participated in the International Summer Program increased after program participation when compared to before.

There were no statistically significant changes in intercultural sensitivity before and after the summer program. However, the results showing an increasing trend in mean or median of scales for Interaction Engagement, Respect for Cultural Difference, Interaction Enjoyment, and Interaction Attentiveness were consistent with the changes observed in the students' interview responses. Korean language partners reported an increase in their confidence in interaction after participating in the summer program, and also one Korean participant mentioned that they became more attentive in their interactions.

So, recently, there have been quite many people from Uzbekistan in Cheongju, you know. It used to be a bit challenging before. Nowadays, if I run into them at school, I can have a little chat. Once, I found a Uzbekistani woman come with her baby in stroller. So, I just approach them comfortably, compliment her cute baby, and had a conversation. I think I would have felt awkward and just passed by if it were me from before. (Korean language partner, SJ)

I also realized that it's challenging to please everyone. To discern subtleties in meaning, you first need to recognize whether something is subtle or not. Through this program, I expanded my awareness and broadened the scope of what I consider subtle. Consequently, I can say I've become more sensitive. As a result, I try to avoid engaging in sensitive conversations and making controversies. Occasionally, I pretended not to hear or avoided getting involved in such discussions. (Korean language partner, KB)

In particular, Korean language partners further mentioned that they paid even more attention to their interactions, harboring a sense of representing their culture or their country (Korea) to the American students who were in Korea.

Well, when I was talking with D, I tried not to make too many language or communication mistakes. I would ask her things like, "How does this sound in the U.S.? What do you think?" And she was pretty easygoing about it, like, "Yeah, it's fine." She was really understanding. But just in case it might come off as impolite or something, at first, I would ask her and bring it up. I guess it's about being a bit more cautious in that regard, you know, because in a way, I felt like I was representing our culture or being seen as a typical Korean. If I messed up, I worried that people might think all Koreans are like that or that I'm a representation of all Koreans, so this experience in Korea made me more attentive to these things. (Korean language partner, NK)

5. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to examine changes in intercultural sensitivity of 27 US and Korean university students who participated in an intensive eight-week summer program of Korean language and culture in Korea. Furthermore, this study also aimed to investigate differences in intercultural sensitivity changes between 14 American students who participated in the summer program, and 13 Korean participants who served as their language partners.

The findings of the study inferred that the mean value for Interaction Engagement increased following program participation as compared to the pre-program period. The interview analysis results indicate notable changes in Interaction Engagement, as well as in the recognition and acceptance of other cultures by both US

and Korean students. Korean language partners, in particular, shared how they realized the universality of human experiences and the importance of approaching individuals from different cultures with an open mind. They actively embraced American students as collaborators, fostering strong communication and a sense of community. Furthermore, program participants took pleasure in discovering cultural differences, ultimately gaining confidence in their ability to interact with people from other countries.

In the research findings concerning the changes in intercultural sensitivity among American participants and their Korean language partners, it was observed that statistically significant changes were evident for American participants in terms of Interaction Confidence. However, in the quantitative analysis of Korean language partners, no statistically significant changes were observed in any subdomain of intercultural sensitivity. Nonetheless, Korean language partners mentioned in interviews that, despite this, their Interaction Attentiveness improved, and their Interaction Engagement increased through the program.

The researcher would like to propose the following points in light of the development of intercultural sensitivity. While it is necessary to participate in overseas experience programs and expand international exposure for the development of intercultural sensitivity, it is a fact that this can be burdensome from a financial perspective. Therefore, the researcher believes that, in addition to expanding overseas experience programs, efforts should be made to provide opportunities for our domestic college students to gain such experiences domestically, through mentoring with international students, language exchange programs, and other initiatives. Furthermore, it is believed that ongoing and comprehensive research into the development of intercultural awareness among Korean students in such programs should also be maintained for the benefit of the academic community.

REFERENCES

- [1] H. R. Cho, "Changes of the Korean Language Education Environment and the Tasks for Development," *Journal of Korean Language Education*, Vol. 19, No. 1, pp. 1-25, The International Association for Korean Language Education, 2008.
- [2] J. Y. Jang, "The Effect of Intercultural Sensitivity on the Academic Achievement on Korean Culture on Foreign Students." *The Language and Culture*, Vol. 16, No. 4, pp. 212-239, 2020.
- [3] G. M. Chen, and W. Starosta, *Foundations of Intercultural Communication*. Allyn & Bacon: A Viacom Company, 1997.
- [4] D. P. Bhawuk, and R. Brislin, "The Measurement of Intercultural Sensitivity Using the Concepts of Individualism and Collectivism," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, Vol. 16, No. 4, pp. 413-436, 1992.
- [5] G. M. Chen, "A Review of the Concept of Intercultural Sensitivity," *Paper presented at the Biennial Convention of the Pacific and Asian Communication Association*, Honolulu, HI, 1997.
- [6] J. W. Creswell, and V. L. Plano Clark, *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2007.
- [7] J. O. Kwon, "Integrating Qualitative and Quantitative Approach to Explore a Psych-social Factors that Influence College Students' Successful Achievements," *The Korean Journal of East West Science*, Vol. 6, No. 2, pp. 303-319, 2003.
- [8] M. R. Hammer, M. J. Bennett, and R. Wiseman, "Measuring intercultural sensitivity: The intercultural development inventory," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, Vol. 27, No. 4. Pp. 421-443, 2003.
- [9] G. M. Chen, and W. Starosta, *Intercultural Communication Competence: A Synthesis*. Communication Yearbook, 19, 353-384, 1996.
- [10] M. B. Miles, and A. M. Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc, 1994.
- [11] B. Kang, and X. Zhang, The Effects of Overseas Experiences on the Intercultural Sensitivity, *The Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp. 3051-3063, 2023.

- [12] S. J. Lee, A Study on the Method of Korean Culture Education Based on 'Empathy', Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Busan University of Foreign Studies, 2017.