



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

**PERCEIVED COMMUNICATIVE
PATTERNS IN DAILY LIFE
INTERACTIONS:**

**HONG KONG CHINESE IMMIGRANTS'
PERSPECTIVES**

VS.

SWEDES' PERSPECTIVES

**ON COMMUNICATION WITH NEIGHBOURS &
COMMUNICATION DURING GROCERY SHOPPING**

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Abstract

The recent Swedish election shows an increase in support of the anti-immigration party, Swedish Democrats, signalling an unrest in society towards the immigration issue that challenges the harmony of the multicultural society of Sweden. This study aims at investigating the perspectives of Hong Kong Chinese immigrants and Swedes concerning perceptions of two daily life interactions, “communication with neighbours” and “communication during grocery shopping”. Differently from previous research, it investigates the perspectives of both native Swedes and immigrants, which gives a more comprehensive picture of the Swedish communicative patterns. Ultimately, it helps to figure out the possible cultural misunderstanding and the barriers for immigrants’ adaptation.

In this study, the data are collected through focus group interviews with a group of four Swedes and another group of five Hong Kong Chinese immigrants. The data are then transcribed for analysis. Through the comparison among the three sets of perceptions: Hong Kong Chinese communicative patterns, the Hong Kong Chinese perceived Swedish communicative patterns and the Swedish perceived Swedish communicative patterns, it is found that Swedes have a greater tendency to avoid communication with neighbours or staff and customers during grocery shopping than the Hong Kong Chinese immigrants. Social distance between individuals is greater in Sweden and privacy and freedom are highly emphasized by the Swedes. The Swedish tendency to do things by themselves and the separation of private and public lives are also seen in the study. Due to the lack of understanding of each other’s cultural patterns, misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the communicative behaviours occurred. Together with the Swedish language barrier, these characteristics of Swedish communicative patterns hinder the acculturation process of the immigrants, which causes negative impact to the immigrants’ adaptation to the Swedish society.

Keywords: *culture, intercultural communication, cross-cultural communication, immigration, neighbours, grocery shopping, social activity, misunderstanding, lack of understanding, acculturation, integration, adaptation*

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1 Introduction

This chapter provides an introduction to the central issue of the study in this paper. It explains the problem in Sweden currently and the aim of the study. The research questions and the paper disposition are also shown.

1.1 Problem formulation

Currently, Sweden is at an increasing unrest concerning immigration. The recent national election, where the anti-immigration party, the Sweden Democrats, doubled their votes, becoming the third-largest party, is considered as a signal for such unrest. According to migrationsinfo.se, in 2013, there are 1.5 million immigrants in Sweden, which make up to 15.9% of the population. In 2013 alone, 116 000 new immigrants entered Sweden for the first time to seek refuge or build a new home. Immigration is obviously one of the most important issues that the Swedish Government needs to handle and how to harmonize different diverging voices within the Swedish society concerning the immigration issue becomes a big challenge to the Government.

On one hand, communication is an important part of everyone's life and for immigrants, communication can actually be an important tool or process for them to get adapted to the host society. Whether or not immigrants can effectively communicate with the host citizens is a crucial factor influencing the perceptions of the immigrants towards the host country and the degree of adaptation towards the country. Meanwhile, the Swedish Government directs much of its effort in providing support to immigrants in learning Swedish (i.e. free Swedish language course for immigrants), implying its likely belief of attaining Swedish proficiency as the main way of adapting to the Swedish society. Language is undoubtedly an important factor when it comes to adaptation in a foreign country. However, in this research, I would like to direct the interest beyond the language barrier as well. It is believed that people with different cultural background might have different communicative patterns or norms under different contexts. When immigrants communicate with people from the new culture, which they now are a part of, the two parties might have different expectations about what and how to communicate in different scenarios. The incongruence in expectations might easily trigger misunderstanding, which in turns causes difficulties in adaptation for immigrants.

It is believed that the perception which immigrants share could be generalized to certain patterns. Understanding how immigrants perceive communication with Swedes in daily life, with focus on communication with neighbours and communication in grocery shopping, which are inevitable part of everyone's life, and making it general knowledge could prove helpful for the both immigrants and those who are working with them to achieve better communication and understanding of each other. Language is a crucial factor affecting immigrants' integration into the society. However, different perceptions or communication patterns due to cultural differences could also hinder an effective

communication especially in the case of lacking language proficiency, which in turn affects the degree of integration. Daily life interaction is an indispensable part of our life but its importance is often being neglected. A lot of research focuses on intercultural communication in business scenarios or immigrants' adaption in job market, but these most fundamental interactions of immigrants' life is barely touched upon. With such a study, I believe that the Government would have new insights in advancing the immigration policy of the multicultural state of Sweden.

1.2 The aim of the study

This study aims at investigating Hong Kong Chinese immigrants' and Swedes' perception of the communication patterns in daily life interactions with focus on communication with neighbours and communication during grocery shopping. **Swedes** are defined in this study as people who have been born and raised in Sweden. The term "immigrants" is based on the definition of immigration as "*process by which non-nationals move into a country for the purpose of settlement*" suggested by the International Organization for Migration (<http://www.iom.int>, 2011). Furthermore, new Hong Kong Chinese immigrants, instead of Hong Kong Chinese immigrants who have been living in Sweden for a long period of time, were targeted only since they are more likely to be more sensitive towards the similarity or difference between their culture and Swedish culture. Thus, we define **new Chinese Hong Kong immigrants** as the non-Swedish nationals who originally come from Hong Kong and are within the first three years of moving to Sweden for the purpose of settlement. 0-3 years is set as the time boundary in accordance to the Arbetsförmedlingen's new start job policy of offering start-up support to "new immigrants" up to 3 years (<http://www.arbetsformedlingen.se>, downloaded in May 2015).

Daily life interaction is chosen instead of formal interaction for study because it is the most fundamental interaction that people have in their life. "Communication with neighbours" and "communication during grocery shopping" are chosen because both scenarios occur very often in both immigrants' and Swedes' daily life. We believe that communication in this day-to-day scenario of walking into our housing block could be particularly interesting in respect to being closest to the private sanctuary of individuals. The communication during grocery shopping is semi-standardized interaction but still may comprise different expectations between the staff or other customers and the immigrants. When immigrants first arrive, they might not have work or go to school. Interaction in their neighbourhood, e.g. communicating with neighbours or grocery shopping, become a very first step for knowing the people and the culture and for integrating into the Swedish society. The impression of immigrants of this very first touch of the new culture might influence how the immigrants perceive the host country and how they adapt themselves to this new culture.

1.3 Research Questions

In order to investigate the above research topic, the study will be structured with reference to Allwood's framework for study of spoken language communication (Allwood, 1982). Under the two selected daily life activities, "communication with neighbours" and "communication during grocery shopping", the followings questions will be investigated:

1. What are the perceived purposes of communication and their relative roles for the immigrants and the Swedes?
2. What is the overall structure (with focus on topics) for communication that immigrants and Swedes observed?
3. What are the communicative behaviours that immigrants and Swedes observed respectively?
4. How do immigrants and Swedes perceive and interpret such structures/procedures and communicative behaviour?

Through data collected from the above 4 research questions, the trends concerning the perceived communicative structures, procedures and behaviours in these two scenarios among the Hong Kong Chinese immigrants and among the Swedes respectively are figured out. The way that immigrants and Swedes perceive or interpret the communicative structures or patterns might be different. This can also be a source of misunderstanding in daily life interactions between the natives and the immigrants. In addition, the corresponding interpretation and the expression of immigrants' generated feelings might give us insight about how the immigrants see their relation with the Swedes and the sense of integration to the Swedish society.

1.4 Paper disposition

This paper is organized into 8 main parts. The first chapter provides an introduction which includes the problem formulation, the aim of study, the research questions and the paper disposition. Chapter two provides a review of previous relevant research and the theoretical framework of the paper. Chapter three explains the methodology of the study, including study design, participants, data collection, data analysis, limitation and ethical consideration. The results collected from the focus group interviews are presented in Chapter four. Since there are two scenarios in this study, the results part is divided into two main sections: the communication with neighbours and the communication during grocery shopping. Each section consists of the answers to each research question and the discussion on each scenario. Chapter five comprises the overall discussion of the results with comparison of the findings from the two scenarios. The sixth chapter includes conclusions of the study and suggestions for future research. The reference list is then provided, followed by the appendix of the interview script.

2 Background

This chapter provides a review of previous related literature, which gives an overview of the current research in the same field and thus motivates the relevance of this study. It also defines different important theoretical terms for this research. Important concepts or theories include: “communication”, “intercultural communication”, “cross-cultural communication”, “culture and perception”, “intercultural communication barrier”, “adaptation and acculturation”, “activity-based communication analysis”, “spoken language analysis” and “content analysis”.

2.1 Previous literature

Current immigration lack of research focuses a lot on discrimination problems and a lot of attention has been paid on the mastery of the host language as the main barrier for immigrant’s adaptation. According to Avramov’s research in 2009 with focus on “*Needs for female immigrants and their integration in ageing societies*”, many natives hold the perspective that immigrants should learn the host language and get used to the customs and rules in the host country, otherwise they should return to their home country. This research also pointed out that many immigrants expressed difficulties in mastering the host language despite living in the host country for several years (Avramov, 2009). There is no doubt that language is a crucial factor influencing the verbal communication of the immigrants with the natives and in turns affect their degree of integration into the host society. However, it is also important to note that communication involves both verbal and nonverbal dimensions. In Watzlawick et al. 1967 and Giger & Davidhizar 2008, **communication** is defined as “*the ongoing and dynamic social process which includes spoken language as well as non-verbal aspects, and it occurs on the relationship level and on the content level. The relationship level means how two participants are bound to each other and the content level means words, language and information.*” (Watzlawick et al. 1967; Giger & Davidhizar 2008; Hadziabdic 2011). Based on such a definition, when one would like to investigate the communication process between immigrants and natives, focus should not be put on the mastery of the host language only. The significance of nonverbal communication should also be attended to.

According to Allwood’s article of “Are there Swedish patterns of communication?”, misunderstandings arise because one has, in some way, projected expectations which are based on one’s own culture on the behaviour of others (Allwood, 1982). A particular culture might have particular patterns of communication. On one hand, Fangen suggested that immigrants often regard subtle ways of watching, talking or in other ways relating or not relating to others as symbolic forms of exclusion, which are more direct forms of discrimination (Fangen et al, 2010; 2011). Both studies indicate that both verbal and nonverbal communication such as ways of watching, talking, etc. could be culturally dependent and this might create misunderstanding or even a sense of exclusion due to lack of understanding about the interlocutors’ culturally dependent communicative patterns.

Many past or current studies about immigrant issues focus a lot on immigrants' adaptation or intercultural communication in business scenarios. Little has been done in daily life encounters. As Gsir mentioned in the report 'Social Interactions between Immigrants and Host Country Populations: A Country-of-origin Perspective', in the workplace, people have shared activities and a common goal, which generate a mediating effect for people to interact. Interaction in one's neighbourhood, on the other hand, unlike in the workplace, is not compulsory. That means people can choose to communicate or not. How immigrants and the natives in such contexts perceive each other can affect the attitudes or intention for interaction (Gsir, 2014). Henning & Lieberg's research on one's neighbourhood networks pointed out the importance of the weak-tied interactions (i.e. interactions in one's neighbourhood including saying hello to people that you recognize, stopping and talking to people when you meet them and exchanging services such as practical help) in a neighbourhood as bridges between different networks and for giving people resources that otherwise they would be deprived of and helping people with bridges to the society outside. Such interactions are particularly important to people that lack access to a more extensive social network (Henning & Lieberg, 1996). Though Henning & Lieberg's focus was on the comparison between blue-collar workers and white-collar workers, one can apply this finding to the situation of immigrant groups too since the immigrants are usually groups that lack social networks in a new environment.

On one hand, many cultural/ intercultural studies such as the World Values Survey or Hofstede's cultural taxonomy (Hofstede, 1980), were conducted through interviews/questionnaires with the people with particular country of origin and then generalize certain cultural patterns within that particular country. On the contrary, it is believed that communication is not unilateral. When communication occurs between two interlocutors, how both sides perceive each other would be equally important in attaining an effective communication. In most research investigating immigrants-host interaction, emphasis was usually put on the host side, neglecting the significance of the immigrants' perspective in establishing effective communication. This study would like to do the study in an opposite way. Instead of just focusing on the native's perspective, the immigrants' views were also taken into account. The Swedish communication patterns are, in this way, narrated by both the native Swedes and the immigrants.

Swedish communicative patterns are central to this study. Several scholars have been writing about Swedish cultural values and some touched upon the relationship between cultural values and immigrants' adaptation. Daun, in his article "Swedishness as an obstacle in cross-cultural interaction", raised several Swedish cultural features such as separation of private and public lives and tension in social distance which hinder cross-cultural interaction (Daun, 2008). Similarly, Barinaga stated some other features such as "ensamhet (loneliness/solitude)", "jämlighet (equality)" and "enighet (consensus)" in the Swedish culture (Barinaga, 1999). Pedersen, on one hand, focused on the "tacksamhet (gratitude)" and "tacksamhetskuld (debt of gratitude)" in the Swedish culture. These studies provide a base for analysis and

explanation for the communicative patterns reported by the Swedes and the Hong Kong Chinese immigrants.

2.2 Theoretical framework

In facilitating the theoretical discussion of the findings in the later sections, several concepts or theories relevant to this study are defined and listed in the followings:

1. Communication

Many different scholars attempt to define the concept “communication” in various ways. Taking the definition by Lustig and Koester, **Communication** is “*a symbolic, interpretive, transactional, contextual process in which people create shared meanings*” (Lustig & Koester, 2010). By symbolic, it means that *symbols including word, action, or object that stands for or represents a unit of meaning, are central to the communication process*. Being interpretive implies that the communication process involves different levels or degrees of understanding, which is similar to Allwood’s explanation of the communication process that communication involves the process of interpreting the purpose or the motives behind the communicative and non-communicative actions and establishing a meaningful connection between input information and stored background information (Allwood, 1998). On one hand, communication is transactional in the sense that all participants in the communication process work together to create and sustain the meaning. This indicates that communication is not a unidirectional process. Lastly, communication is contextual since all communication takes place within a setting or situation. In this study, the two contexts are “Communication with neighbours” and “Communication during grocery shopping”.

2. Intercultural communication

Communication between Hong Kong Chinese immigrants and native Swedes is a typical example of intercultural communication. With reference to Lustig & Koester’s definition of **intercultural communication**, intercultural communication is “*a symbolic, interpretive, transactional, contextual process in which people from different cultures create shared meanings*” (Lustig & Koester, 2010). Effective intercultural communication is critical to the establishment and maintenance of favorable intergroup relations (Dodd, 1995; Gudykunst, 1986; Hall, 1976; Kim, 1986; Martin, 1993; Spencer-Rodgers & McGovern, 2002)

3. Cross cultural communication

Study on **cross-cultural communication** involves comparison of interactions between people from the one culture and those from another culture (Lustig & Koester, 2010).

Therefore, when this study compares the communication patterns in Sweden and Hong Kong, that belongs to the cross cultural communication comparison.

4. Lack of understanding and misunderstanding

Extending from the definition of communication and understanding of the communication process, in the article “Lack of understanding, misunderstanding and language acquisition”, Allwood distinguished between the concepts of “lack of understanding” and “misunderstanding” during communication. **Lack of understanding** occurs when “*a receiver cannot connect incoming information with stored information and this arises when relevant information is missing or when a relevant strategy for connecting incoming with stored information is missing*”. **Misunderstanding** occurs when “*a receiver actually connects incoming information with stored information but where the resulting meaningful connection must be viewed as inadequate or incorrect*”. Lack of understanding can lead to misunderstanding, if the lack of the understanding is combined with one or more of the following states (Allwood, 1984):

- i. *the individual has strong expectations about the content of what is being said or done;*
- ii. *the individual is not conscious of his lack of understanding; or*
- iii. *the individual is strongly motivated to interpret and understand.*

5. Culture & perception

In accordance with Allwood, the term “culture” refers to all the characteristics common to a particular group of people that are learned and not given by nature. There are our primary cultural dimensions, namely patterns of thought, patterns of behaviour, patterns of artifacts and imprints in nature (Allwood, 1985). Lustig & Koester defined that **culture** is “*a learned set of shared interpretations about beliefs, values, norms and social practices, which affect the behaviours of a relatively large group of people.*” Here, beliefs refer to the basic understanding of a group of people about what the world is like or what is true or false. Values refer to what a group defines as good or bad or what is regarded as important. Norms refer to rules for appropriate behaviours, which provide the expectations people have of one another and of themselves. Social practices are the predictable behaviour patterns that members of a culture typically follow (Lustig & Koester, 2010).

On one hand, according to Jandt, human **perception** refers to the three-step process of selection, organization and interpretation (Jandt, 2013, Ch. 3). Perception process is often influenced by culture (Tajfel, 1969; Triandis, 1964; Jandt, 2013) since the social practices give people within a culture a guideline about what things mean, what is important and what should not be done (Lustig & Koester, 2010). Even if there are often various stimuli in an environment, we are sensible to some but not all. In other words, we selectively “see” what we want to see. Then we will organize and decode the stimuli or signals in ways that we are familiar with (C.f. Jandt 2013, Ch. 3).

Therefore, even if people are put in the same contexts, people from different cultures might have different social practices and guide people to see or to put emphasis on the same thing in a different ways.

6. Intercultural communication barriers

In the article “Attitudes towards the culturally different: the role of intercultural communication barriers, affective responses, consensual stereotypes, and perceived threat”, Spencer-Rodgers and McGovern pointed out that group difference in cognitive (e.g. values and norms), affect (e.g. emotional expressivity) and patterns of behaviours (e.g., language, customs, communication styles, etc.) are factors causing intercultural communication barriers (Dodd, 1995; Gudykunst, 1986; Lustig & Koester, 1996). Thus, individuals must meet the challenges of language barriers, unfamiliar customs and practices, and cultural variations in verbal and non-verbal communication styles in order to achieve successful intercultural understanding (Dodd, 1995; Gudykunst & Hammer, 1988; Kim, 1986; Wiseman & Koester, 1993). These mentioned barriers will be applied to compare with the data collected from the immigrant participants in this study and see if similar barriers or more barriers are reported.

7. Adaptation and acculturation

According to Berry, individuals generally act in ways that correspond to cultural influences and expectation (Berry, Poortinga, Segall, & Dasen, 1992; Berry, 1997). In viewing the significant influence of culture on human behaviours, lots of studies have been done of how individuals continue to act in a new cultural setting. The concept “acculturation” comprehends “*the phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either of both groups.*” (Redfields, Linton & Herskovits, 1936; Berry 1997). Different cultural groups and their individual members might have different acculturation strategies, which are influenced by cultural maintenances (i.e. to what extent are cultural identity and characteristics considered to be important, and their maintenance strived for) and contact and participation (i.e. to what extent should they become involved in other cultural groups, or primarily stay among themselves). Four types of acculturation theories from the point of view of the non-dominant group are described as follows (Berry, 1997, p. 30):

- i. **Assimilation:** *when individuals do not wish to maintain their cultural identity and seek daily interaction with other cultures*
- ii. **Separation:** *individuals place a value on holding on to their original culture and at the same time wish to avoid interaction with others*
- iii. **Integration:** *when there is an interest in both maintaining one’s original culture, while in daily interaction with other groups*
- iv. **Marginalization:** *when there is little possibility or interest in cultural maintenance and little interest in having relations with others*

Adaptation, on the other hand, refers to relatively stable changes that take place in individuals or groups in response to environmental demands (Berry, 1997). Psychological adaptation requires “culture shedding” (i.e. the unlearning of aspects of one’s previous repertoire that are no longer appropriate). There might be cultural conflicts when incompatible behaviours create difficulties for the individual (Berry, 1997).

On one hand, Berry emphasized that integration can only be “*freely chosen and successfully pursued by non-dominant groups when the dominant society is open and inclusive in its orientation towards cultural diversity*” (Berry, 1991; 1997). This emphasis brings up the significance of the attitudes of both natives (i.e. Swedes) and immigrants (i.e. Hong Kong Chinese) in shaping the acculturation strategy and the adaptation of the immigrants to the society.

8. Activity-based communicative analysis and framework for the study of spoken language communication

According to Allwood (1980; 1984; 1995, p.9), a **social activity** is said to occur if:

- i. *two or more individuals*
- ii. *perform mental acts, exhibit behaviour or engage in action*
- iii. *in a coordinated way*
- iv. *which collectively has some purpose or function.*

The activity determined social roles to be filled by the individuals who engage in the activity and there will be expectations about what behaviour is appropriate for the activity. There are four main parameters, which can influence the activity, namely “purpose”, “roles”, “artifacts and instruments” and “social and physical environment”. In the analysis, the two scenarios “communication with neighbours” and “communication during grocery shopping” are regarded as two social activities where communication takes place and will be analysed in accordance with these four parameters (Allwood, 2007).

Considering the two mentioned scenarios as social activities, this research is structured and analyzed, in large extent, in reference to Allwood’s framework for study of spoken language communication as presented in his article “Are these Swedish patterns of communication?”. In this framework, focuses will be put on the followings (Allwood, 1999, p. 2):

- i. **Purpose:** *determines the activity and the communication involved*
- ii. **Roles:** *partly determined by the purpose of the activity and connected to certain s rights and duties.*
- iii. **Overall structures and procedures:** *concern typical sequences of events, turn-taking, feedback, spatial arrangements and topic or what is talked about*

- iv. *Communicative behaviours: non-verbal behaviours, phonological patterns, vocabulary and grammatical patterns.*

9. Content analysis

Content analysis is a technique for systematically describing written, spoken or visual communication. It provides a quantitative (numerical) description (<http://psychology.ucdavis.edu>, 2005). In this study, this technique is used for categorizing the topics detected in the communication with neighbours and communication during grocery shopping.

Relating all the concepts and theories above, this study is based on the idea that people from different groups, native Swedes and Hong Kong Chinese in this case, have different cultures which influence how these two groups of people place their attention to the purpose, roles, the structures with focus on topics communicated and the verbal and non-verbal behaviours in the communication of the two activities “communication with neighbours” and “communication during grocery shopping” as reported by the participants. Under the two contexts, this study collects three sets of data: the Hong Kong Chinese perceived Hong Kong Chinese communicative patterns, the Hong Kong Chinese perceived Swedish communicative patterns and the Swedish perceived Swedish communicative patterns. This research also focuses on figuring out factors, other than the language barrier, that hinder the communication between immigrants and Swedes, with the emphasis on the difference between native Swedes’ perspective and immigrants’ perspective on perception of the communication in the two contexts. By comparing the Swedish communicative patterns perceived by Swedes (e.g. something taken for granted as normal) and that by the Hong Kong Chinese immigrants (e.g. something regarded as “different/ strange/typical Swedish”), we might get some clues about some other sources of misunderstanding during day-to-day communication beyond lacking Swedish proficiency. This might inspire one about how effective communication can be carried out by eliminating such misunderstanding in a multi-cultural state like Sweden and thus increase the intercultural competence of both immigrants and native Swedes. In this study, it is hypothesized that the existence of difference in practices in these two activities due to cultural difference, the tendency of people in seeing and judging things in accordance to their own culture and the lack of understanding of each other’s cultural practices might cause misunderstanding in these contexts. The accumulation of misunderstanding in these daily life routines would lead to conflicts and influence the adaptation of the Hong Kong Chinese immigrants to the Swedish society.

3 Methodology

3.1 Study design

This study aims at collecting data on the Hong Kong Chinese immigrants' and Swedish perceptions about the communication in two daily life interactions namely "communication with neighbours" and "communication during grocery shopping".

Two qualitative data collection methods, focus groups interviews and observation during interview are used as the data collection methods. According to Lederman (see Thomas et al. 1995), focus group is *'a technique involving the use of in-depth group interviews in which participants are selected because they are a purposive, although not necessarily representative, sampling on a specific population, this group being "focused" on a given topic'* (Thomas et. al. 1995; Rabiee, 2004, p. 655). This method enables the researcher to generate large amounts of data in a relatively short time span. The uniqueness of a focus group is its ability to generate data based on the synergy of the group interaction (Rabiee, 2004). Since Sweden is the host country in this study, the Swedish respondents can serve as a control, setting up a set of narratives concerning the Swedish perspective on neighbour communication and grocery shop communication and their attitude or perception towards immigrants in general in these two scenarios. The Hong Kong Chinese immigrant respondents, on the other hand, set up one set of narratives in the perspective of Hong Kong Chinese concerning the same contexts in Hong Kong and one set of narratives about the perceived Swedish way of communication with neighbours and in grocery shopping. When we compare the Swedish set of data with the Hong Kong set of data concerning the communicative patterns in the two scenarios in Hong Kong, we are actually doing the cross-cultural communication comparison during the two types of interactions. This cross-cultural comparison helps to further understand more about the similarity and difference between the Swedish perspective and the Hong Kong Chinese perspective on the Swedish patterns in the scenarios and one might possibly be able to figure out some sources of misunderstanding or barriers of adaptation of immigrants towards adaptation to the Swedish society.

3.2 Participants

There are two groups of participants in the studies: the Hong Kong Chinese focus group and the Swedish focus group. The selection criteria for the Hong Kong focus group participants were: (1) born and raised in Hong Kong; (2) moved to Sweden for no longer than 3 years; (3) intend to settle in Sweden. The selection criteria for the Swedish focus group participants were: (1) born and raised in Sweden; (2) have experience of interaction with immigrants.

5 participants were recruited for the Hong Kong Chinese focus group and 4 participants were recruited for the Swedish focus group. All participants were recruited through

personal contact. The participants in each focus group know each other before the interview so that self-disclosure can occur in a natural way. According to Kitzinger, pre-existing group is suitable because acquaintances could relate to each other's comments and may be more able to challenge one another (Kitzinger, 1994; Rabiee 2004). Since the interviewer knows the participants beforehand, trust was already established before the interview, making it easier for participants to express themselves freely.

For ethical consideration, each participant is assigned a code to keep the anonymity of participants. The background information of the participants is listed in the following tables:

	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
Code	HK1	HK2	HK3	HK4	HK5
Gender	Female				Male
Age	36	31	29	35	36
Educational Level	Bachelor Degree	Master Degree	Doctoral Degree	Master Degree	Bachelor Degree
Occupation	Student	Chinese tutor	PhD Candidate	Freelance designer	Media/ Publications
City	Gothenburg				
Types of housing	Apartment				
Time in Sweden	Almost 3 years	2.5 years	9 months	2.5 years	3 years
Reason for resettlement	Boyfriend is a Swede		Education & work	Stay with husband	New job and looking for new prospect
Self-evaluation of adaptation (1: least; 5: most)	3	4	3	4	3
District in Hong Kong	Olympic	Tsing Yi	Fanling	Shatin	Kennedy Town
Types of housing in Hong Kong	Home Ownership Scheme Flat	Public Housing Estate			Private flat

	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4
Code	SW1	SW2	SW3	SW4
Gender	Female			Male
Age	23	26	26	23
Educational Level	Master Degree			
Occupation	Customer Service	Personal assistant	Carer, zumba instructor	Customer service
City	Gothenburg	Falköping	Gothenburg	
Types of housing	Apartment			

As can be seen from the above tables, the Hong Kong focus group comprises 4 females and one male with the age range of 29 to 36 whereas the Swedish focus group consists of 3 females and 1 male with the age range of 23 to 26. All of the participants are having at least bachelor degree in education. Most are living in apartments in Gothenburg, except one who lives in Falköping, a city close to Gothenburg. The aim was to recruit participants who are having as much similar background as possible so as to keep the homogeneity of the groups. Only participants with higher educational level are selected so as to eliminate the factor of education, which might influence the communication capability of people.

3.3 Data collection

On 14 March 2015 and 16 March 2015, 4 in-depth interviews with the two focus groups were conducted and video-recorded. In total, there are 279 minutes 25 seconds of recording. The duration of interviews within the corresponding groups and topics are as follows:

Topics Groups	Communication with neighbours	Communication during grocery shopping
Hong Kong Chinese, 14/03/2015	97 minutes 32 seconds	79 minutes 15 seconds
Swedes, 16/03/2015	43 minutes 53 seconds	58 minutes 45 seconds

The interviews are semi-structured. The script for interview was developed in advance in accordance to the research questions. Trial interviews have been done with one Hong Kong female and one Swedish male so as to make sure that the questions are understandable. Several questions were then reformulated. The interviewer followed but not limited by the script. The scripts enabled the interviewer to keep in mind about what kind of data would be necessary for the research but the interviewer also flexibly asked further questions based on what said by the participants. Participants were encouraged to express themselves freely and were not interrupted or stopped by the interviewer during utterance. The interviewer also acted as the observer to observe the non-verbal behaviours and the emotions of the participants.

The Hong Kong Chinese focus group interview was conducted at the interviewer's home where the participants were comfortable. The language for conducting the interview was Cantonese. The Swedish focus group interview was conducted at the Lindholmen campus since all the Swedish participants are familiar with the place. The language for conducting the interview was English. Time was determined by all the participants so as to ensure that all participants are available at the interview time. Since this discussion involved memory-recalling or description of past experience, participants were informed about the topics for the interview (i.e. "communication with neighbours" and "communication during grocery shopping") and the format of interview (i.e. focus group discussion) when they were

invited for the interview so that they could better prepare themselves and think about some relevant experience beforehand. The focus group discussion arrangement also helped in triggering memory as it happened many times during the interviews that one participant described an experience and another participant came up with another similar experience or a contrasting experience based on the mentioned experience.

3.4 Data analysis

According to Ritchie & Spencer, there are five stages for data-analysis: *familiarization, identifying a thematic framework, indexing, charting & mapping and interpretation*. The taped interview was carefully listened so as to get immersed in details and get a sense of the interview as a whole. The transcript was written during listening. The Hong Kong focus group interview was conducted in Cantonese for the comfort of the respondents. However, for the ease of comparison and analysis, the transcript was then translated to English. The transcripts were then read again for identify themes for the interviews. Afterwards, the highlights of each theme are indexed and quotes are sorted out. The identified quotes were then rearranged under the newly developed framework. The last stage was interpretation in which researcher tried to make sense of the quotes, considering the actual words used, the context, the frequency, extensiveness and intensity of the comments and the consistency. (C.f. Ritchie & Spencer, 1994; Rabiee, 2004)

Activity-based communication analysis and content analysis were applied to investigate the role, purpose and structure (with focus on topics) in the two chosen scenarios. Excerpts of the transcripts were used as examples of some communicative behaviours and the corresponding interpretations of such behaviours or structure by the participants. The focus was to gather three sets of data: the Swedish perceived Swedish patterns (including their perceived attitude towards immigrants), the Hong Kong perceived Hong Kong patterns and the Hong Kong perceived Swedish patterns during the two communicative scenarios. By comparing the three sets of data, some examples of intercultural communicative misunderstanding could be figured out and help to project some possible barriers for immigrants' adaptation to the Swedish society.

3.5 Limitations

One of the limitations of focus group interview is that the sample size is relatively small compared to other methodology such as questionnaire. The data might not be representative enough to apply to the whole population (Rabiee, 2004). The perceived communicative patterns are discussed through the group interaction. Personal bias could be minimized since one's view might be challenged by the others and the participants would thus have to fully explain or defend his or her view during the discussion. In addition, all participants are either native Swedes or native Hong Kong Chinese. Together with the group synergy effect, it is expected that the participants, are capable of giving a

general picture about what the communicative patterns are like in the two social activities in their motherland.

The other limitation is that the Hong Kong focus group interview was conducted in Cantonese and then translated into English. The editing during transcription and translation helps to pick up incomplete sentences or odd phrases in order to increase readability (Stewart, Shamdasani & Rook, 2007) but at the same time might alter the meaning to certain degree. However, the translator tried to keep the style, the tone and use of word as similar as what and how expressed by the participants as possible so as to preserve the meaning.

The last limitation is that Sweden is indeed multicultural and there are many second generation or third generation of Swedish people that have other nationality parents or grandparents that do not have the stereotypical look. One might have difficulties in telling whether the staff in grocery shop or the neighbours are Swedes or not. However, it is believed that the immigrants can still judge based on the proficiency of language or distinguish a general pattern of how most people in the Swedish society act. It is thus believed that the immigrants could tell when they are speaking to someone more “Swedish”, even though they might not have the typical look.

3.6 Ethical Consideration

For ethical consideration, the participants’ identities were kept anonymous. Codes, instead of real names, were used for identifying different participants in the transcripts and the report. The participants were well informed about the format of the interview and had given verbal consent to the researcher that the interview could be video-recorded. All data collected will be kept confidential and will only be used for this research study.

4 Results

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first section of this chapter is the analysis of the communication with neighbours and the second section is the analysis on the communication during grocery shopping. The data are collected from the four focus group interviews. In each section, the data are categorized in accordance to the research questions. The first part of each section examines data using activity-based communication analysis, which gives answers to the first research question about the perceived purposes of the communication and the relative roles of immigrants or Swedes in the two activities. The second part focuses on the topics being communicated about in each scenario, which gives answers to the second research question. The third part of the section includes analysis of the communicative behaviours and the interpretation of the immigrants or the Swedes about the observed communication patterns and behaviours that respond to research questions three and four. The analysis is supported by the examples from the transcripts and comments from the interviewees. Each section is ended by a discussion concerning different sets of perceptions of the two focus groups in each scenario.

4.1 Communication with neighbours

4.1.1 Communication with neighbours as a social activity

A. Purpose for communication

Table 4.1. Purpose for Communication with Neighbours					
		Hong Kong Chinese Perception		Swedish Perception	
		In Hong Kong	In Sweden	In Sweden	
Purpose	Goals	Greet to be polite			
		Make complaints or being complained about			
		Seek or offer information/ help when sudden incidents occurred			
		Keep a good relationship with neighbours		Know more about people living close to you (especially native Swedes) and let them know about you	Inform about holding parties
		Give out gifts			
	Procedures	<i>Face-to-face unplanned meeting</i>			
		People meet in eyes.			
		Head-nod			
		Say "Hi, Mr. XXX or Mrs. XXX"		Say "Hej".	
		Mostly followed by small talk.		Sometimes followed by small talk.	
				Seldom followed by small talk.	
<i>Face-to-face planned meeting (planned by at least one party)</i>					
Knock on neighbours' door.					

	Greet.	
	Start the conversation stating the needs/ wants	
	End conversation.	
	<i>Written communication</i>	
	Inform the management office of the building (e.g. complaints).	Write an note (e.g. complaints, informing party)
	The staff at the management office posts the notice to inform all tenants.	

a. Goal

As can be seen from the above table, all three sets of perceptions from the two focus groups share some similarities in terms of their goals for communication and the procedures of the communication. Both groups think that the purpose for greeting is politeness. But for the Hong Kong group, participants considered it to be important for keeping a good relationship with the neighbours as well. In Sweden, the Hong Kong immigrants also find it crucial to know more about the neighbours especially native Swedes and to let the neighbours know more about them. Other reported goals in both focus groups were quite functional such as communicate to complain or seek information

b. Procedures:

i. Face-to-face unplanned communication

All participants said that they did greet their neighbours by saying “Hi”, “Hello” or “Hej”. The difference between the groups in the way of greeting is that it was common for the Hong Kong participants to use the neighbour’s surname during greeting in Hong Kong. In addition, it is quite common to have small talk after greeting in Hong Kong. The Hong Kong participants expressed interest in having more small talk with their neighbours in Sweden while the Swedes explained that they did not really expect small talk after greeting.

ii. Face-to-face planned communication (planned by at least one party)

The procedures for planned face-to-face communication with neighbours in all three sets of perception are quite similar. The interaction usually starts off by knocking on a neighbour’s door, followed by greeting. After that, the one who initiated the meeting will state the purpose (e.g. ask for help) and the conversation usually ends after getting certain replies. Only one participant mentioned being invited into the apartment since he was asked to help writing an address in Chinese for his neighbour.

iii. Written communication

Both groups reported some written communication between neighbours. In Hong Kong, the Hong Kong participants would inform the management office of the building, mostly about complaints, and then the staff at the management office would post a notice to inform or remind all tenants about certain aspects. Both focus groups mentioned “angry note” which neighbours used to complain to others in Sweden. The neighbours would stick the note on places like the laundry room or entrance hall or insert it to the complainee’s letterbox. Swedish participants also wrote notes to inform neighbours about holding a party.

B. Roles

Table 4.2. Roles during Communication with Neighbours					
		Hong Kong Chinese Perception		Swedish Perception	
		In Hong Kong	In Sweden	In Sweden	
Roles	Neighbour/ Management office	<i>Competence</i>			
			Proficiency in Swedish for communication (Primarily Swedish; English)		
		<i>Rights</i>			
		Enjoy a nice neighbourhood (e.g. not disturbed by noise)			
		Use the shared facilities (e.g. laundry room)			
					Enjoy one’s privacy, silence and freedom
		Obligations			
		Take good care of the shared facilities			
		Respect your neighbours’ rights			
			Greet each other		
	Be united during sudden incident	Be a nice and polite neighbour as you do not know how others might think of you	Respect others’ privacy and freedom		

Referring to table 1.2 above, the main actor in this social activity of “communication with neighbours” is the neighbour. In terms of competence, rights and obligation of the role as a neighbour, both groups presented quite different views and expectations. Language proficiency was the only competence of neighbours mentioned in the interview. Both Hong Kong and Swedish participants did not mention this competence when they recalled their interaction with neighbours in their home country. It appeared to be taken for granted by participants that neighbours in Hong Kong and in Sweden can speak Cantonese and Swedish respectively. However, the proficiency in Swedish was mentioned several times when the Hong Kong participants described their interaction with neighbours and they explained that the proficiency in Swedish influenced how much the neighbours communicate with them. One of the participants explained:

***HK1:** At the beginning, my Swedish wasn't so good. When you said "hej", people would talk a lot in Swedish and you didn't understand. So I would just said that "Jag pratar inte svenska (I do not speak Swedish)" and then they would stop... They are less willing to talk with you if your Swedish isn't so good. Perhaps they don't have any negative thinking about me but they know my limitation in Swedish. So the conversation is shorter.*

Concerning rights and obligations of neighbours, though both groups did not mention them explicitly, one can deduce from what participants complained about their neighbours. Both groups, no matter in Hong Kong or in Sweden, commonly complained about noise or unpleasant situations of shared facilities. In other words, both groups agreed that everyone in the neighbourhood has the right to enjoy the nice neighbourhood and use the shared facilities while they are obligated to take good care of these shared facilities and the environment in the neighbourhood.

For Swedish participants, it is also vital that one can enjoy their privacy, their private life and their freedom and at the same time, one is obligated to respect others' rights reciprocally. For Hong Kong participants, they feel obligated to be united during a sudden incident in Hong Kong. In Sweden, the Hong Kong immigrants think that it is better to be a nice and polite neighbour as they do not know how others think of them.

C. Artefacts & environment

Table 4.3. Artefacts and Environment during Communication with Neighbours				
		Hong Kong Chinese perception		Swedish perception
		In Hong Kong	In Sweden	In Sweden
Artefacts	Instruments	Notice posted by management office of the building	Notes written by complainants	
	Media	Face to face bodily and verbal communication		
		Written communication (i.e. the notice/ note)		
Environment	Physical	Hallway		
		Entrance hall		
		Elevator		
		Area close to the building		
		Management office of building		
			Laundry room	
			Smoking area	
	Social	Mostly recognize people in the neighbourhood.	Recognize some of the neighbours	Mostly cannot recognize each other

		Know the name or surname of those who are more familiar with	Know the name of the one living on the next door and some of the surnames of the people live next door.	Know surname of some of the neighbours and the name of those who are having a “special” name or those who are actually friends
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The artefacts in the settings for the neighbour communication in all three sets of perceptions are quite similar. Instruments would be the notice posted by the management office of building in Hong Kong and notes written by the neighbours in Sweden. Media includes verbal and bodily communication and written communication.

The physical environment for the communication is similar, including hallway, entrance hall, elevator and area close to the building. All participants mentioned the laundry room as the common area where they run into neighbours. In Hong Kong, communication with neighbours also occurred in the management office of the building.

The social-cultural environment is rather different for the two groups. For Hong Kong participants, they mostly recognize people in the neighbourhood and they even know the names or the surnames of those whom they are more familiar with. However, in Sweden, they only recognize some of the neighbours and know the name of the one living at the next door and some of the surnames of the people living in the same building. For Swedish participants, they admitted that they know only some of the surnames of the neighbours and mostly, they cannot recognize each other. They might remember the names of those who are having a “special name” (e.g. name similar to celebrity) or those who are actually their friends from the beginning.

4.1.2 Topics of communication with neighbours

There are six categories of topics being communicated among neighbours: greeting; small talks; seek or offer help/information; exchange gift; complaints and party/ gathering. The topics are summarized in table 4.4 below.

A. Greeting

As mentioned in the previous section, greeting with neighbours happened in all three sets of data. The procedures of greeting were similar and the difference laid on the habit of using the neighbours’ surnames by Hong Kong participants when they were in Hong Kong.

Table 4.4. Topics in communication with neighbours			
	Hong Kong Chinese		Swedish
Categories	In Hong Kong	In Sweden	In Sweden
Greeting	Say "Hi" / "Hej" / "Hello"		
	Address interlocutor's surname (e.g. Mr. Lee)		
Small talk after greeting	Recent activities		
	Personal situations		
	Family members' situations (e.g. relationship status, work)	Weather	
	Pet		
	Promotion or sales in supermarkets		
	Gossip about other neighbours		
	Property inflation in the neighbourhood		
Seek/offer help/information	Sudden incident (e.g. fire, no water supply, electric power cut, town gas leak out)		
	Wrong letter delivery		
		Help writing letter	
		Gun shot	
		Pet	
		Location of tool shop	
	Calling police		
		Borrow stuff	
Exchanging gift	Giving kid's old clothes		
	Giving food as gift		
Complaints	Noise		
	Unpleasant smell in common area		
	Water dripping from air-conditioner/ clothes		
		Laundry	
Party/ gathering		Inform about holding party	

B. Small talks

Hong Kong participants usually had small talk with neighbours after greeting in Hong Kong and they also appreciate to have small talk with Swedish neighbours in Sweden. It is

observed that there are much more diversified topics being talked about in Hong Kong between neighbours than that in Sweden. Swedes do not expect small talk as reported.

Common topics include recent activities and personal situation. But there are still differences in terms of the depth of talk in these two types of topics. As mentioned by one of the Swedish participants, he would say, "Hej! How are you?" (i.e. asking personal situation) to one of his neighbours. But he did not expect his neighbour to elaborately talk about his situation. Or, when he saw his neighbour fixing his car, he would say, "You haven't finished fixing the car yet?". For Hong Kong participants, it is common that neighbours ask about "Oh you came back from school?", "What do you study?" or "Are you daughter of XXX?". Comparatively speaking, even though both Swedes and Hong Kong people talk about personal activities and recent situations, the Hong Kong neighbours touch upon more personal issues or activities. Another small talk topic in Sweden, mentioned by both Swedish and Hong Kong Chinese participants, is weather.

Furthermore, the Hong Kong neighbours would talk or ask about the family's situation such as "Your daughter studies at that school. Is it good?", "My daughter got married. When will your daughter get married?" or "Does your daughter have a boyfriend?". They also talked about pets, promotion/ sales in grocery shops, gossip about other neighbours and even property inflation in the neighbourhood.

C. Seek or offer help/ information

Both groups of participants do seek or offer help/information during sudden incidents, for example when there is water shortage, power cut, etc. They will also contact their neighbours in case there is wrong letter delivery. For Hong Kong participants, there are many more situations where they would seek or offer help/information from their neighbours in Sweden. For example, they will seek help when they have problems with their pets, do not know where to fix bike or do not know how to call police. They also offer help such as help writing an address in Chinese.

D. Exchange gift

It is common for Hong Kong neighbours to exchange gifts such as second hand clothes, food or red packets (Giving out red packets by married couples/one having higher position to the unmarried ones/ subordinate is a tradition in the Chinese New Year). In Sweden, one of the Hong Kong participants also experienced that an elderly neighbour gave them food as gift. She said that the neighbour was not Swede though.

E. Complaints

The most common complaint in the two groups is noise. Hong Kong participants also complained about water dripping from the air-conditioner or clothes from neighbours in

Hong Kong. Complaints also occurred when there was an unpleasant smell in the common area. In Sweden, laundry is a popular issue to be complained about.

F. Party/ gathering

Hong Kong participants expressed that they would never invite neighbours to home party and only one of the Swedish participants would actually invite neighbours to the parties. Swedish participants usually inform neighbours when they hold parties at home via written note. The note concerns a warning or apology for noise, not an invitation in most cases.

4.1.3 Perceived communicative behaviours with neighbours in Sweden and the corresponding interpretation

In the following section, some particular communicative behaviours in different scenarios of communicating with neighbours and how the participants explained their own/ others' behaviours or how they interpret the observed behaviours will be presented. The discussing scenarios include: 1) Unplanned face-to-face meeting; 2) Seek or offer help/information; 3) Conflicts/ Complaints; 4) Party.

A. Unplanned face-to-face meeting

Unplanned face-to-face communication includes greeting and small talks that followed. As mentioned in section 1 of this chapter, both groups of participants do greet neighbours but it appeared that Swedish participants tend to avoid running into neighbours so as to avoid the unplanned spontaneous communication. Just like one of the participants described:

SW2: "But it's like a 'hi' that you have to. If not, no."

The Swedish participants reported that they would avoid running into their neighbours. One of the participants commented that random fika was "weird" and he described his own behaviour as follows:

SW1: In Borås, my neighbours always came and knocked on the door and often we fika (SW2: REALLY!?! And then all laugh. SW3 frowns). Yes, it was so weird. There is a thing that you can peep and see if people are coming. Usually when I went out, because I didn't really like talk with my neighbour so much... I was standing and watching and then oh it's ok it's free, run!

Another Swedish participant also pointed out avoidance behaviours of the Swedish neighbours as follows:

SW3: I also noticed people... if I walked out... I can... coz someone close the door and you notice coz' you can hear that and you can hear them waiting until you lock and leave. I don't know if it's Swedish thing or...

Similar avoidance behaviours are also depicted by the Hong Kong participants:

HK2: This makes me think of my boyfriend (who is a Swede). Once I saw him looking through the peep hole before he left home for work. I asked him what he was doing. He said he wanted to make sure that no one come out coz' he didn't want to greet others. He always makes sure that he hears no footsteps, no one opens the door. Then he opens the door. He avoids people he admits.

Another Hong Kong participant once revealed that her Swedish neighbour tried to avoid interaction with her:

HK4: Once I met my neighbour... I don't know if he don't want to greet or what... we saw him walking the dog in a distance on the way to home. It seems like that he wanted to go home too but then when he saw us, he suddenly changed his route. After we reached home, we saw him entering the building after us. He lived next to us. You somehow sense sometimes we actually leave home at the same time. But he will leave home after we have left.

In explanation to the avoidance behaviour, one of the Swedish participants said:

SW4: I think it's Swedish thing. But I don't think we have problem to confront people or talk with people but it's more like you have your own private life even if you are living in the same building. It's like your home and you don't want to talk with people that are not your friends. So instead of go out and talk with your neighbour, you stay inside waiting.

Based on SW4's response, it appears that maintaining private life is the main reason why Swedes distanced themselves from their neighbours.

The Swedish participants said that they do interact with neighbours more when people are living in a house or terraced house. When asked about why they interact less when living in apartment, one of them explained:

SW1: I don't know. I don't depend on them and I don't want a new relationship with them.

Even in common area, Swedes also show some tendency of staying silent and do not interact with others. Here is an excerpt of the Hong Kong group discussion about meeting Swedish neighbours in the common area:

HK3: I had a friend who is Taiwanese. She is a very direct person. She and her European friend felt like they have never met Swedes who lived on the floor, as if the Swedes were actually not living there. Once she met my other Swedish friend, she asked them directly why they don't greet or talk. I am not sure if what my friends said can represent all Swedes coz' they always regard themselves as nerds (All laugh)... but anyway, the Swedes friends replied and said it's quite Swedish. When they stayed at their rooms, they just want to enjoy their freedom and privacy. If they are made to greet or talk, it's kind of interfering their private life. They said, "I just want silence. I have already socialized in the workplace or school. At home, I want my freedom of being quiet."

Interviewer: *What do you feel about this opinion of the Swedes?*

HK2: This made me recall an experience that I was cooking in the common kitchen. I was cooking and singing myself as I didn't notice anyone. After finish

cooking, I just realized that a Swede were sitting at the corner of the kitchen. I told him that “ Sorry! I didn’t notice that you were here” and he replied, “It’s fine. I was just having some deep thoughts”. (All laugh)

HK3: *They really distinguish between public life and Swedish life. Coz’ my friends are actually very nice and sociable at school. So it’s fine to me.*

Two participants claimed that they have never heard that Swedes need “freedom of silence” and do not like to be interfered with their private life or being silent. They have other interpretation such as the neighbour do not want to talk to them. Both of them think that it is good to know how the Swedes think. This can be seen as follows:

HK1: *I think it’s quite an interesting thing, coz’ I have never heard of that. I do respect them and their culture. But it’s good to know how they think. Then I know how I should get along with Swedes in the future.*

HK4: *Before hearing what HK3 said, I never know that they need “freedom of being quiet” and so they don’t greet. When they did not greet, I just thought they didn’t see me or not hear me or just they didn’t know I were living in the neighbourhood and didn’t want to greet.*

In contrast, Hong Kong participants do not show any tendency of avoiding communication with neighbours. All of them even try to initiate more communication with neighbours in Sweden. The followings are some self-explanation of the Hong Kong immigrants when asked about difference of the greeting between Hong Kong and Sweden:

HK4: *Um... a little bit different. Here, you feel not so good not to greet, like you know they live here but you don’t greet them. You don’t know what they (the neighbours) think of us. Like when you moved to a new country, you will think more, consider more about different things.*

HK2: *Coz’ you are not in your hometown. Maybe it’s better to be more initiative here. Although I don’t really recognize my neighbour much, as a foreigner, you don’t know how your neighbour will comment on you, so it’s better to be nicer.*

From the above two expressions, it is observed that living in a foreign country increases uncertainty for immigrants and it also become a motivation for people to be more initiative and active in communicating with others.

B. Seek or offer help/information

Seek or offer help/ information is quite a common reason for communicating neighbours. Hong Kong participants explained that they seek help more often in Sweden than when they were in Hong Kong since they are less resourceful:

***HK5:** In Hong Kong you were resourceful. Thus you didn't need to seek help from your neighbours. But in Sweden, you really don't know many things. Like once, my water tap was out of order and water kept coming out. I had no idea how we could fix it or whom I can turn to. So I could only seek help from my neighbour and he advised me to find the janitor.*

In addition, Hong Kong participants felt the difference about seeking help/ information in Sweden and in Hong Kong. They felt that people become more united when sudden incidents happened in Hong Kong. In Sweden, people are more indifferent in things that are not directly related to them.

***HK5:** Usually people were quite alert with these kinds of situations (in Hong Kong). It just about who take initiation first to knock each other's door. Once there was fire on the 6th floor and I lived on the 9th floor. I knocked neighbour A's door and then neighbour from flat B also came out to discuss together if it's necessary to take the wet towel and leave. Otherwise, not much interaction.*

The participant then recalled another incident which happened in Sweden:

***HK5:** But generally speaking, I feel like Swedish people don't usually step out when something happen. Once there was gunshot in the building I lived and people actually switched off the night immediately after hearing the shot. The lights in apartment were on before the gunshot. But after the "Bang", they switched off the night and close the curtain. I feel like they are kind of scared of things and want to be indifferent.*

The participant commented that Swedes are in general indifferent towards things that are not directly related to them and would not try to step out or interfere.

While Hong Kong participants tend to seek help from each other when things happen, Swedish people prefer solving problems by themselves in contrast. They do check with neighbours when things happened, but they further explained:

***SW3:** But I am not really asking them for help, but I ask the water company or the landlord to check.*

The Swedish participant said that they would prefer checking the situation with the one in charge instead of checking with their neighbours.

Another Swedish participants commented:

***SW4:** You don't talk to your neighbours until emergency*

C. Conflicts or Complaints

As mentioned before, laundry is a common issue that being complained about. Here is an excerpt of the discussion in the Swedish focus group:

SW4: I have arguments about laundry too in my building. So disgusting!

Ooo....

SW1: Write an angry note!

SW2: I wanna do that too. Did you do that?

SW3: So Swedish.

It appeared that “angry note” is quite a common way of making complaints in Sweden. The Hong Kong participants also noticed the use of “angry note”. In explaining why using written communication instead of face-to-face communication, the Swedish participants have the following response:

SW2: Confrontation sucks!

SW1: Swedish people are ... shy

SW4: But they even do it in offices and workplaces

On the other hand, one of the Hong Kong participants reported one time of face-to-face complaints by a Swedish neighbour:

HK5: I remember when I first arrived Sweden, I bought a lot of stuff from Ikea and built all the furniture till late night. Then my neighbour downstairs came up and said “Is there anything I can help?” and at that time I was thinking like “He is so friendly!” and then I just said “ No thank you. You are so nice!”. Then he said “Maybe you were new here, so you didn’t know. Actually you shouldn’t make noise like hammering at late night”. Then I immediately realized his real purpose of coming up. (All laugh) So I just said, “Please give me 5 more minutes and I would stop.” I also notice a very annoying way of complaint here. When people were annoyed, they would knock on the heater and then the whole building actually knew that some people were complaining. And somehow, it seemed like people knew that they were being complained and would stop making the noise. But it is very annoying coz’ it disturbs others too. And people don’t complain to you directly. They like to post notes on the notice board or on the entrance door on in the laundry room. They won’t say directly which neighbour did what but they would hint it somehow. You would know. So I feel like if you need to complain, you have to use this way too.

The Hong Kong participant found that the Swedes were not very direct when they are making complaints, which sometimes make things even more complicated.

D. Home party

About home party, Hong Kong participants said that they never invite neighbours for home parties, neither in Hong Kong nor in Sweden. They explained that the apartments are too small in Hong Kong, making it not common to invite others, even friends, for home party or gathering.

On one hand, one of the Swedish participants mentioned about writing a note to inform and invite neighbours for parties and the other Swedish participants were very shocked when that participant mentioned about inviting others. Here is the excerpt of the discussion:

***Interviewer:** How about when you organize activity like party, will you invite your neighbours to join?*

***SW3, SW1, SW2:** Nooo.*

***SW4:** I am super weird though.*

***SW2 and SW3:** You do that!?! (look surprised)*

***SW4:** Yea... except for one neighbour like we also have fun together ... he is fifty and always like "have you tasted this vodka? When I was at your age, I used to party so much but I never hear you" ... that's hilarious. But we are kind of like built up a relationship. But when I have a party I always leave a note to my neighbours and said like "if you are interested, you might join." Or "If we are too loud, you can let us know".*

When asked about why they are so surprised about the other participant inviting neighbours to party, the Swedish participants explained:

***SW3:** Send a note to say "I am having a party and if it's too loud, you can text me or contact me"...I understand that. But "you are welcomed to join if you want to" is weird to me.*

Then the participant eventually explained that he did not really expect others to come, it's only for politeness.

***SW4:** But yea... I don't expect people to come. If people really come, I would be like "what" ... haha... "what are you doing here".*

***SW3:** So it's for polite.*

***SW4:** Yesyes...*

Other than the abovementioned four scenarios of unplanned face-to-face meeting, seek or offer help/ information, conflicts or complaints and home party, the participants noted some other features of communication with neighbours are listed as follows:

E. More interaction with neighbours when living in house or terraced house

The Swedish participants remarked that they do interact more with neighbours when they lived in house or terraced house because they have more things in common. As one of the Swedish participants explained:

SW4: Coz' you are more dependent on your neighbours. You need favours from your neighbours and they need favours from you because it can happen so much when you live in your house.

F. More interaction with elderly neighbours

The Hong Kong participants commented that the elder neighbours are nicer than the younger ones in Sweden. Usually they interact with elderly but not the younger neighbours.

G. Swedish communicative pattern and immigrants' adaptation

All Hong Kong participants felt distance between themselves and the Swedish neighbours. They pointed out that Swedes do not like to be disturbed while it is more acceptable to be disturbed by others in Hong Kong. Even if the immigrants initiate communication and try to act friendly, it is still difficult to enter the Swedish social circle. Two of the participants described as follows:

HK2: I feel like here, people do not like to be disturbed. They stress personal space, private life. They always want to keep distance from a neighbour. But in Hong Kong, it's ok to be disturbed. In Hong Kong, it's easier to talk more with neighbour and befriend with them. In Sweden, even if you talk more with the neighbours but still you feel the distance. It's like they have set the line and you can't cross the boundary they set for you.

HK3: The difference I felt here is that, in Hong Kong, you knew it well how you should get along with your neighbours and you usually if you were nice to your neighbours, it's easy to build up a relationship. But in Sweden, no matter you interact with neighbours or you made friend with Swedes, it's not like when you initiate to talk, they will then regard you as friend or build a relationship with you. Somehow it depends on luck. I think Asians are more ready to build a relationship. If you were nice to others, they will be nice to you reciprocally. Perhaps Swedes are cold or ego. But they are very independent. It depends very much on where you meet them or know them. Making friends with Swedes is more like by chance.

When asked about whether the Swedish way of communicating with neighbours affects their adaptation to the Swedish society, most of the Hong Kong participants said that they would respect the Swedish way of behaviour, but they also expressed difficulties in

entering the social circle, which makes it harder to know more about the Swedish society. Here are two of the responses from the participants.

***HK2:** But I think it affects adaptation. Swedes categorize people depending on where they know you. This limits the ways that you adapt to the Swedish society. For them, if you are neighbours, then you are neighbours and you are supposed to appear in the neighbourhood only. They won't bring you to their social circle. If you are classmates, you are just classmates. This makes it hard to know more about them in depth. After I have my Swedish boyfriend, it becomes easier to get closer to them via my boyfriend. They feel strange to mix different groups like neighbours or friends.*

***HK1:** I think in Hong Kong, it's easier to join different social circles. In Sweden, I am still learning about their cultures. They might find you weird sometimes. I mean when you first arrived in Sweden, you just went to SFI and all people were immigrants. So you don't really have much chance to know a real swede. Therefore, at the beginning, I always wonder if I have done something weird or wrong, that's why they ignored me or stared at me. You didn't know what you did wrong. Well, it takes time. In Hong Kong, you won't think too much. But here, you would be more careful all the time. Or maybe we think too much I don't know. I still have the Chinese thinking " Even if we are not friends, it's not good to break a relationship".*

4.1.4 Discussion on communication with neighbours

Studying of the communicative patterns in all three sets perceptions of communication with neighbours: 1. Hong Kong Chinese's perception of Hong Kong communicative patterns; 2. Hong Kong Chinese's perception of Swedish communicative patterns; and 3. Swedes' perception of Swedish communicative patterns, certain similarities and differences are observed.

The fundamental goals for communication are quite similar for both Swedes and Hong Kong Chinese in both Sweden and Hong Kong: they greet to be polite; they contact their neighbours when they have functional needs such as asking for information or complaining. Even the communicative structures are similar: they say "hej" or "hello" for greeting and they mainly talk about the issue raised during the communicative act but tend not to socialize afterwards. For Hong Kong participants, though they do not intend to socialize with their neighbours every time they run into each other, they consider it as acceptable to have a bit small talk and they actually value of small talks even more after they moved to Sweden.

Wider range of topics of communication with neighbours

One of the most obvious differences among the three sets of data is that there are much more topics for communication with neighbours for Hong Kong participants in Hong Kong than in Sweden. Fewer topics are communicated by the Swedish participants in Sweden. To explain this phenomenon, one can revert to the difference in purpose for communication among the

three sets of perceptions. Except the functional purposes such as seeking or offering information/ help, the Hong Kong participants show an interest in keeping a good relationship with neighbours. When they are in Sweden, they display readiness to know more about their neighbours, especially native Swedes, and let neighbours know more about them. To serve the abovementioned goal, the Hong Kong participants tend to interact more and initiate to show friendliness to their neighbours. Bringing this goal and expectation from Hong Kong to Sweden, the Hong Kong immigrants always hope to initiate more conversation and topics for communicating with each other. Another reason could be related to their roles. In Sweden, the Hong Kong participants have a new role as immigrants. As pointed out by MacIntyre et al. (2003), people who have been living abroad usually hold more positive attitude towards intercultural interaction and motivation was positively related to the willingness to communicate (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; Lu & Hsu, 2008), the lack of knowledge of the society and the culture become a strong motivation which makes the Hong Kong participants be willing to learn about the Swedish society and the eagerness of getting adapted to the Swedish society makes the immigrants tend to initiate more communication with the neighbours, resulting in a wider range of communication topics.

Greater distance with neighbours in Sweden than in Hong Kong

Both Swedes and Hong Kong Chinese show a tendency of keeping distance with neighbours but the distance is found to be greater in the Swedish group than the Hong Kong Chinese group. Hong Kong participants signal the distance with neighbours by the fact that they usually address their neighbours with their last names instead of addressing their neighbours with their first names. One can also say that it is a trace of a hierarchical society with greater power distance since people would be considered impolite if one addresses the elder neighbour's first name instead of last name. In Sweden, participants signal the distance by not addressing neighbours' names. For Swedish participants, they mostly do not even know the names of their neighbours or recognize their neighbours, indicating an even greater sense of distance between neighbours. Like what is described by Daun, the Swedes lack curiosity of strangers (Daun, 2008). Not only do they show low, or even no, attention to the ones living close to them, non-verbal behaviours such as looking into others' apartments is not welcomed. The variety of topics during communication is also more limited and more personal or intimate topics are not touched upon by Swedes during communication with neighbours.

Greater tendency of communication avoidance of Swedes than Hong Kong Chinese

According to both Swedish and Hong Kong Chinese participants, Swedes tend to avoid communication with their neighbours. As one of the participants described, they would not contact their neighbours unless there is an emergency. The reason provided by the participants is that they have a private life and they want to enjoy their freedom of silence. Behaviours such as peeping via the peephole in the door before going out, waiting till neighbours left are reported by the Swedes themselves and also observed by the Hong Kong immigrants. Even in a common area such as shared kitchen, the Swedes tend to stay silent and would feel that their freedom was being interfered with if forced to socialize. Though the Swedish participants pointed out that they normally communicate more with their neighbours when they live in

house or terraced house, the reason behind this is not for socializing but that they depend more on their neighbours due to the sharing of some shared items (e.g. garden). Once they moved to apartments and there are fewer things in common with their neighbours, they do not interact with neighbours much since they do not need to depend on them. In contrast, Hong Kong Chinese are more open to spontaneous contacts by others and particularly welcome socialization when they are in Sweden as seeing this as a way to understand the Swedish society and the Swedes. They tend to build up a good relationship with others even if they do not need an immediate favour from others. This can be explained by the Chinese cultural custom of “guan xi”, which refers to the linking of two people in a relationship of a mutual dependence and often involves reciprocal gifts and favours (Lewis, 2005). Therefore, they tend to seek contact more with their neighbours in building up a relationship or even give out gifts to their neighbours, preparing for the future possible need of favours from their neighbours.

“Help oneself” versus “Be united with others”

Both Hong Kong Chinese and Swedes do contact their neighbours when sudden incidents such as a power cut occur. However, as reported by the Swedish participants, they often contact neighbours just for checking if the situation happened just for them or also for the neighbours. They will then handle the problems alone, such as calling the electricity company or contacting the landlord. Whereas, Hong Kong Chinese tend to and expect to solve common problems together with the neighbours, as what described by one of the participants, “*people (neighbours) become more united when things happened*”. This difference in attitude of handling a sudden incidence show the more individualistic characteristic of the Swedes and the more collectivist characteristic of the Hong Kong Chinese. The Swedes are in favour of autonomy while the Hong Kong Chinese incline to group power. This corresponds to the statistics from 2010-2014 Wave 6 World Values Survey that more than 90% of Swedish respondents see themselves as autonomous individuals whereas only 11 % of Hong Kong respondents agree or strongly agree that they are autonomous (World Values Survey, 2010-2014).

Greater tendency to avoid conflicts for Swedes than for Hong Kong Chinese

Both Hong Kong Chinese and Swedes make use of written communication when making direct confrontation. However, for the Hong Kong Chinese, contacting the management office of the building is viewed as a more effective way to handle the complaining issue. No Hong Kong participants expressed that they want to escape from conflicts. In Sweden, “angry note” is popularly used and the Swedes explained that Swedes are shy and hate confrontation and thus use “angry note” as a medium for complaining.

Language as a barrier for in-depth communication between immigrants and Swedes

The Hong Kong participants mentioned that lacking the proficiency in Swedish influences their own capability and willingness to communicate with their neighbours, especially at the early stage of immigration. After some time, most of them try to speak Swedish with the neighbours despite non-fluent Swedish. On one hand, the more fluent Swedish the immigrants speak, the more willing the neighbours are to talk with them in accordance to the Hong Kong

participants' perception. This matches the research of Avramov that both immigrants and natives have the view that the immigrants are obliged to learn the language of the host country (Avramov, 2009).

4.2 Communication during grocery shopping

4.2.1 Communication during grocery shopping as a social activity

A. Purposes for communication

		Hong Kong Chinese perception		Swedish perception
		In Hong Kong	In Sweden	In Sweden
Purpose	Goals	Buy items that are needed		
		Ask about location of goods		
		Deal with some after-sale problems (e.g. wrong charging or replace items)		
		Get opinions or latest promotion information from staff or other customers		
	Procedures	Say “Hej” or “Hi” when eyes meet		
		Find the items according to the buying list (if there is one)		
		Ask the staff or other customers in case one cannot find the items or in need of some more opinions		Ask the staff in case one cannot find the items
		Pay at the cashier counter		
		Talk to the staff in case there is wrong charge or want to replace a bought item		

a. Goals

Both Hong Kong and Swedish participants share quite similar goals for communication. They go to the grocery shops for buying items they need. Usually they just communicate with staff or customers when they want to ask about location of certain products or deal with some after-sale problems such as wrong charging or replacing items. For Hong Kong participants, it is common to ask for opinions from both staff and customers or ask other customers about promotion information.

b. Procedures

The procedures for communicating with staff or customers are quite similar. All participants will say “hej” or “hi” to the staff when eyes meet but usually it was the staff who initiated greeting. They will focus on finding items according to the buying list if there is one. In case they cannot find something, they would ask the staff for help. For Hong Kong participants, they will ask other customers or staff for opinions about food choice or cooking methods. Then they will pay at the cashier counter and then leave the shop. They will return to the store if there are incorrect charges or in case they want to replace a bought item.

B. Roles

There are three main roles during grocery shopping: customers, shop assistants and cashier staff.

a. Customer

Looking at table 2.2 as below, Swedish proficiency was mentioned by both Hong Kong and Swedish participants when they described the communication with staff or other customers in Sweden. It is expected that the customers themselves have good enough Swedish to explain what they want or ask questions. Otherwise they should be able to speak in English. This competence was not particularly mentioned by the Hong Kong participants when they described about the interaction in Hong Kong.

In Hong Kong, the Hong Kong participants expected that they can get the best service from staff such as getting immediate help and answers to questions. In Sweden, both Swedish and Hong Kong participants expected answers from staff when they asked questions. The Swedish participants also mentioned the right of leaving their carts untouched in Sweden.

The perceived obligations in the two groups are quite different. The common obligation of a customer perceived by all groups is to pay the bill. The Hong Kong immigrants mentioned that customers should put the items with the barcode facing the cashier staff and then put the wooden bar after putting all the items on the cashier desk. On the other hand, the Swedish participants stressed the importance that customers do not talk or interact too much, do not look at others' carts and mind their own business.

		Hong Kong Chinese perception		Swedish perception	
		In Hong Kong	In Sweden	In Sweden	
Roles	Customer	<i>Competence</i>			
			Able to explain what one wants when asking questions (language proficiency in Swedish primarily and English otherwise)		
		<i>Right</i>			
		Get the best service from staff (i.e. immediate help, answers to questions)	Get answers from the staff when asking questions		
			Leave the cart untouched		
		<i>Obligation</i>			
		Pay the bill			
			Put the wooden bar after place all the items on the cashier desk	Do not talk or interact	
			Placing the items on the desk with the barcode facing the cashier staff.	Do not look at other's cart	
			Put the coins into the coin machine		
		Mind your own business			

b. Shop assistant

		Hong Kong Chinese perception		Swedish perception	
		In Hong Kong	In Sweden	In Sweden	
Role	Shop assistant	Competence			
		Know the locations and relevant information of the items in the shop			
		Right			
		Earn their salary			
		Earn a commission			
				Say “I don’t know”	
		Obligation			
		Answer the queries from customers			
					Do not interfere customer’s buying decision

Shop assistants in both Hong Kong and Sweden are expected to know the locations and relevant information of the items in the shops by both groups of participants.

All participants agree that the shop assistants have the right to earn their salary. The Hong Kong participants mentioned that the shop assistants in Hong Kong might have the right to earn a commission too. The Hong Kong participants particularly mentioned that the shop assistant in Sweden can say “I don’t know” to the customers, rejecting offering opinions to customers.

Both groups hold the view that shop assistants should answer the queries from customers. The difference is that the Hong Kong participants stressed that the staff should answer the queries from customers and the staff might get complained about if they fail to give answers to the customers while the Swedish participants are less demanding in terms of service. The Swedish participants said that they might choose not to go to the store if they were not satisfied with the service. However, they will never complain about that.

c. Cashier staff

		Hong Kong Chinese perception		Swedish perception	
		In Hong Kong	In Sweden	In Sweden	
Role	Cashier staff	Competence			
		Know relevant information of the supermarket			
		Right			
		Earn their salary			
		Obligation			
		Collect the right amount of money from customers			

The expectations of all participants towards cashier staff are the same in both Hong Kong and Sweden. The cashier staff are expected to know the relevant information

about the store and collect the right amount of money from customer. They have the right to earn their salary.

C. Artefacts and Environment

As can be seen from table 4.9 below, the perceived artefacts in all three sets of perceptions are quite similar. They are carts, baskets, shelves, fridges and cashier machines. Self-service machines are present in Sweden in both Swedish and Hong Kong participants' perception and the wooden bar for separating customers' items is particularly mentioned by the Hong Kong immigrants.

Both the physical and the social environment in all three sets of perceptions are similar as well. All participants reported about going to a chain of supermarkets with all sizes. The Hong Kong participants specifically mentioned about going to the Asian stores here in Sweden. All participants said that they do not recognize the staff in the bigger stores while they might recognize staff in small stores and might have small talk with the staff. Small talk is more common for Hong Kong immigrants though.

Table 4.9. Artefacts and Environment in Communication during Grocery Shopping				
		Hong Kong Chinese Perception		Swedish Perception
		In Hong Kong	In Sweden	In Sweden
Artefacts	Instruments	Carts and shopping baskets		
		Shelves & fridges (for keeping food)		
		Cashier machine		
			Self-service machines	
			Wooden bar	
	Media	Face to face bodily and verbal communication		
		Written communication (e.g. Pricetag)		
Environment	Physic	Chain of supermarkets		
		Market		
			Asian store	
	Social-cultural	Big store: People that don't know each other Small local store: Staff and customers recognize each other and might have small talk		

4.2.2 Topic of communication during grocery shopping

There are 4 categories of topics to be communicated about between customers and staffs, namely greeting, small talk, inquiry about products and after-sale service. There are 3 categories of topics to be communicated about among customers including inquiry/recommend products, promotion/ sale and small interaction.

i. Communication with staff

	Hong Kong Chinese		Swedish
Categories	In Hong Kong	In Sweden	In Sweden
Greeting	Say “hi” when eyes		
	Addressing name or calling the customer “Ah mui (means “little girl”)		
Small talk	Current situation/ activity (e.g. “Work so late today?”)		
	Staff recommend what is fresh or remind about promotion		
		Blessing (e.g. “God Jul!” “Glad Mid-sommar”)	
Inquiry about products	Location of the production		
	Cooking method		
	Opinions about how to choose an item		The quantity of bag required
After-sale service	Apology		
	Wrong charging		
	Replace items		

A. Greeting

Greeting between staff and customers does happen in all three sets of perception. Usually it is the staff who initiates the greeting. In Hong Kong, the staff in the store might use the name (if they know) or calling the customer “Ah mui” (means “little girl” in Chinese).

B. Small talk

Small talk between staff and customers happened in both Hong Kong and Sweden but the content communicated is quite different. In Hong Kong, the staff and customer might ask about each others’ current situation, for example, “Work so late today, Ping Je (“Ping” is the name of the staff; “Je” means “elder sister” in Chinese)?”. The staff might also recommend what is fresh and remind the customer about the promotion.

However, the Hong Kong immigrants pointed out that they seldom have small talk with staff in Sweden. One of the reasons is due to language limitation.

The Swedish participants reported that sometimes the staff might make little comment on the products bought. For example, when one participant bought a lot of vegetables, then the staff said, “ Det är viktigt! (It is important!) ”. The staff might also wish the customers ”God jul (Merry Christmas!)” or ”Glad mid-sommar! (Happy mid-summer!)”.

C. Inquiry about products

Inquiry about products is the most common topic among all topics. Usually the customer will ask about the location of certain products when they could not find it. Some may ask about how to cook certain food items too. For the Hong Kong participants, they would ask opinions about how to choose certain types of products, for example, they asked about which brand is better. One Swedish participant mentioned that she would ask for advice about the quantity of bag that she needs.

D. After-sale service

Both groups of participants mentioned that they would contact the staff if there is wrong charging. The Hong Kong participants mentioned about replacing items in Sweden too. The Hong Kong group figured out that it is not common for the staff to apologize when there is mistake (e.g. wrong charging). They will just rectify the mistakes.

ii. Communication with other customers

	Hong Kong Chinese		Swedish
Categories	In Hong Kong	In Sweden	In Sweden
Inquiry about / recommend products	Location of products		
	How to choose among products		
	Cooking methods		
Promotion or sales	Exchange information about recent promotion or sales	Inform information about recent promotion or sales	
Small interaction			“Excuse me” or apologize when running into other customers

A. Inquiry about products

Both groups of participants would help other customers finding the location of products when they saw somebody, especially elderly, having difficulty with that. The Hong Kong participants would ask opinions from other customers about how to choose among products or about cooking methods.

B. Promotion or sales

In Hong Kong, it is also common that the customers exchange information about recent promotion or sales in different grocery shops in Hong Kong. One participant mentioned that he also tries to inform other customers about the promotion or sales here in Sweden.

C. Small interaction

The Swedish participants mentioned that they mostly would not communicate with other customers but they would have small interactions such as apologize when running into other customers or say “excuse me”.

4.2.3 Perceived communicative behaviours during shopping in Sweden and the corresponding interpretation

SW4: But I mean, if I know the other customer, I will talk with them. Like when I see a friend in the store.

SW2 (shaking head sideways)

(Everyone sees SW2's bodily response and imitates the action of avoiding eye contact.)

SW1: Hide with the eggs

SW4: With a cellphone.

SW4: But for other customers, they are customers for me. No.

The above is an excerpt from the Swedish focus group interview concerning the communication with other customers and how they exemplified non-verbal behaviours of avoiding communication with other customers. In general, Swedes communicate less with staff and other customers than the Hong Kong immigrants do. They do not expect much interaction with others except when there are functional needs such as not being able to find an item they need. On the other hand, Hong Kong participants are more open to interaction with others during grocery shopping. The following are some features mentioned by the Hong Kong immigrants as perceived communicative behaviours of Swedish staff and the perception about interaction with other customers. The Swedish participants also offer their opinion concerning staff's attitude towards immigrants and their own perception towards certain observed behaviours of immigrants in grocery shopping.

i. Communication between Staff and Customers

A. Offering help/ service

Most of the Hong Kong immigrants compared the service offered by the staff in Hong Kong and Sweden and commented that the staff in Sweden are slower and less customer-oriented. Here is one of the depicted interaction between the Swedish staff and the Hong Kong immigrant during the replacement of a new cooking timer:

***HK1:** I bought a cooking timer before, but it didn't work. So I went back to the store and asked the staff if I could get another timer instead. Then the staff just let me choose a new one myself. But I discovered that all timers didn't work actually. So I told the staff about that. The staff then just replied "I can't help too. Maybe I pay you back your money." I felt strange. They (The Swedish staff) provide service but compared to Hong Kong, it's not service-oriented at all. They don't interact with you when you are shopping. They talked among themselves instead. It 's like "you get the salary anyway no matter how much you work" (Translation of the Hong Kong saying "做又36 唔做又36"). They do answer you. But you just feel not enough. Maybe I am more used to the Hong Kong way of serving customers. Even if the staff might be a bit annoyed, they need to smile and help you solve the problem anyway.*

The participant continued to criticize the working pace of staff in Sweden:

***HK1:** In Sweden, even if you have things that are urgent or you are in a hurry, they still won't speed up. But in Hong Kong, if you said "I am in a rush", " I have to get on a taxi", the staff will work super fast to suit the customers. Perhaps, the staff in Hong Kong are scared that you will complain about them.*

The above Hong Kong participant was not very satisfied with the level of service provided by the Swedish staff. Solving problems for customers is highly expected by the Hong Kong participants.

Another Hong Kong participant commented that the Swedish staff here work slower compared with the staff in Hong Kong. Hong Kong is more customer-oriented, so that a customer never needs to wait. Here is what she described:

***HK2:** Sometimes when a lot of people are in the queue, the staff still do things slowly like keep tidying stuff and walk slowly to the cashier desk to handle the customers. Everything is just slow here. Hong Kong is very customer-oriented. Here, it is the customers who adjust, not the staff. Like, you have to wait at the cashier to wait for someone to come and help you. In Hong Kong, it won't happen.*

One Hong Kong participant mentioned that the staff do not usually apologize when there is mistake. They will rectify the mistake though. In Hong Kong, apology would come in first place when there is a mistake.

***HK4:** Once I paid more than necessary. Maybe they didn't update the information in the computer or the barcode stuff. It happened several time actually. They looked at the receipt and then paid me back the money. Their attitude was ok. But they won't say sorry. (**HK1:** Yea they don't say sorry.) In Hong Kong, they will say sorry immediately. But here, they would just say the system is wrong or something. They will correct the mistake but won't say sorry. The staff in Hong Kong will say sorry, kind of comforting you first.*

There is also observation that Swedish staff are less expressive in emotion than the Hong Kong staff. One of the participants described:

***HK3:** I think the staff here is very calm. They are always the same tone or same expression no matter what happen. In Hong Kong, you can see the change in emotion of the staff, like they are happy when you buy a lot of stuff and they look angry when you complain. But here you can't read them. They just follow the procedures to do thing.*

One interesting difference perceived by the Hong Kong immigrants towards the Swedish staff is that the staff's response of "I don't know" to customer's question. The answer of "I don't know" was indeed joked about by the Hong Kong participants several times during the discussion. This issue was raised during the discussion in the Swedish focus group and the following are the response of the Swedish participants:

***SW4:** They can say like "I don't know. But Wait a second I can ask someone". But if they just say "I don't know" and nothing more. I would feel like " what? Aren't you work here".*

***SW3:** But then they could be having another reason. I heard someone asking opinion about pumpkinseed and the staff said "I don't know. But this one is ecological and this one is blablabla..." but it is different in price. So you have to decide.*

***SW4:** But then they are not "I don't know". They know a lot of them. But they just don't know what you want.*

***SW3:** They say "I don't know" because they can't put someone in the direction of choosing the more expensive one. And they don't wanna do that.*

***SW4:** Yea. They are not allowed to.*

***SW2:** They can say I don't know but blablabla...*

***SW1:** Or like "I usually use this".*

***SW3:** Yea... I never ask coz I look at stuff myself. I check the ingredient whatever. I make the best choice for what I want.*

The Swedish participants also agreed that the staff should try to help the customer instead of just saying "I don't know". One Swedish participant explained that the staff might not want to direct the customers to buy something more expensive and that might be why they said "I don't know". The Swedish participants think that it is uncommon for the Swedes to complain about the staff. Besides, the participant also mentioned that she usually just look at stuff and check ingredients by herself instead of asking others.

The issue of packing was raised during the Swedish focus group discussion. Here is the excerpt:

***SW1:** Yea I think the mentality of people is different in the States. Maybe sometimes I also don't want people to pack my bag for me. I imagined I would be embarrassed of anything I will buy in a grocery store.*

SW2: But no... Sometimes when you buy weird things, like if I buy eggs and then I buy tampon. It's just the weird mix...yea when you buy these (SW3: random things) shits.

SW4: But why, no one will think that you use tampon and eggs at the same time.

SW2: No but... haha.... Like, you came to the store just for these two things.

SW3: I used the self-scanning thing. You pack your stuff after you scan it and you just pick your bag and leave. It would be weird if someone packs your bag in this situation.

As seen from the above, one of the Swedish participants mentioned the packing service of the staff in the States. Another participant found it embarrassing if someone would pack for her. The other participant said that she usually used the self-scanning machine and she put the items directly into a bag after scanning, so it was unnecessary to have a staff helping her with the packing.

B. The communicative behaviours or attitude towards immigrants

Both Swedish and Hong Kong participants noticed some harder attitude of staff towards the immigrants. One Swedish participant described about the situation when the immigrants tried to get back the money for pants.

SW4: I think they treat everyone go pay the same way. But I have seen that, mostly immigrants, coming with the coupons... not coupons but the pants and get money back. I can see that they are little bit... harder to those...

Another Hong Kong immigrant reported that the staff treated some colour-skinned people worse than other customer. He judged by the staff's tone and their body movement. Here is his description:

HK5: I think there's difference. Perhaps not towards yellow-skinned customers. When I noticed that when I went to Netto, staff there treated the coloured people worse. Those coloured people spoke Swedish too. But the staff won't have small talk with them. After they scanned the items, they just flung on the desk. I think they have discrimination towards the coloured skinned. Even though I do not know Swedish, you can feel it from their tone. That's what I feel.

Another Swedish participants observed that some staff got annoyed when people could not speak Swedish.

SW3: I just noticed that people get annoyed when people don't speak Swedish. Because they were not expected to know English when they work in ICA. It's not the requirement to know English. And usually... a lot of immigrants they come to Sweden, they don't know English themselves. Definitely it's not the requirement to know their language. So I can see annoyance. I noticed that.

When people cannot speak Swedish, the staff would repeat the sentence loudly and slowly and keep the sentence short. The staff would say less as compared to what they do to the Swedish customers:

SW2: When you notice that people don't speak Swedish... coz' sometime the cashier will say, "When you get two of these, they are on sales". And if they don't understand, they say, "Vad" or "Va" and the cashier will say really slowly and sometimes really pissed off... "Om... du... köper..." I don't know if they are doing that to be rude or just think that they would understand if they speak really slow and really loud. But I have seen quite a couple of times.

SW4: Yea... I 've also seen that they don't talk more than necessary. It's like...

SW2: very short. It's a different treatment. I don't know because it's anything else or like... they won't understand me

SW3: Maybe it's also for them. Coz' they don't need to stand there... I have been to countries that I don't understand and I hate... it's like "Hihihi...what?"

Similar behaviours of staff have been reported by the Hong Kong immigrants and here is what the immigrant reported her feeling towards this communicative behaviour:

HK1: I felt like they would speak particularly clear. You know, sometimes when you are familiar with the language, it takes time when you process what they are saying. But when you are still processing what they said, they might think that you can't understand and so they repeat again and again and might eventually switch to use English instead. You might feel embarrassed in that sense.

One Hong Kong participant explained that when one does not know much about Swedes or the Swedish language, misunderstanding or misreading of emotions might happen. Here is her elaboration:

HK2: When you couldn't understand, they spoke loudly and use more body language. It appeared to be more rude somehow. Perhaps they just want to make it clearer. Perhaps it's not that they are not friendly. Like they will "ah...je..." or inhale when they don't know how to express themselves. When you didn't know the language, you might think that they were rude to you. But actually it's just their usual expression when they tried to explain things. They might feel frustrated when they can't express themselves. When you don't know them well, then you would think that they were rude or unfriendly.

Other than causing misunderstanding, sometimes the lack of common language might favour immigrant as well. As two of the immigrants described:

Other than causing misunderstanding, sometimes the lack of common language might favour the immigrants as well. This can be show by two of the immigrants' descriptions in the followings.

HK5: I think it depends on where you shop. For example, if you go to stores that are owned by immigrants, they might not know English. Sometimes, it might

favour you. Once I bought chocolates, it's written "10kr for 5" in the pricetag. But the machine showed that it was "10kr for 4". If you argued with them in Swedish, they would just explain that it's problem with the machine or something and won't let you enjoy the better offer. But if they can't explain in English, they will just let you take it so that you won't disturb other customers. It's more efficient to use English coz they won't talk. You just pay and go away.

HK3: *Once I went to Willys, Mölndalvägen. I used the self-service machine. I didn't know the name of the bread. I somehow remember it's like 29kr or something. But I couldn't find it in the machine. So I asked the staff to help. The staff didn't know much English. He spoke Swedish. It seemed to me that he just wanna stop the conversation as soon as possible. He just picked a cheaper bread on the machine and left...There were some other Swedish people asking him questions when using the machine. But he spent longer time with them. I mean when he helped others to solve problem, he didn't rush. But when he helped me, he was particularly fast. Perhaps using English was a problem to them*

The participant felt the difference in treatment of the staff towards customers who can speak in Swedish and those who cannot. Another participant also found that the staff might feel more relaxed when speaking Swedish and sometimes have difficulty when using English.

HK2: *They would talk a bit with you if you spoke Swedish. It's more natural. Sometimes, when you used English, they just couldn't express themselves. Sometimes they mixed the two languages together.*

ii. Communication among Customers

The Swedish participants stressed that they seldom interact with other customers except for some small interactions like saying "excuse me" or helping some other customers in finding certain items. One of the most interesting topics being mentioned concerning communication among customers is the sharing of promotion and offer of coupons. The Swedish participants also reported some interesting observations of the immigrants' behaviour during grocery shopping which is different from the Swedish behaviour.

A. Share promotion/ sales and offer of coupon

One Hong Kong participant recalled his experience of offering a coupon to another Swedish customer but being refused. The other participants tried to interpret why that Swedish customer rejected the coupon that would help him to get a better deal. Here is the excerpt of the discussion:

HK5: *I remember once when I buy stuff in Sweden. You know, sometimes when you buy stuff in the supermarket, you could get some coupons next to the products and then you could enjoy certain discounts. I saw a guy standing in front of me in the queue buying an item but he didn't get the coupon. Then I told him " Hej! You can get the coupon next to it, you can then buy it at the discounted price." But he was very shocked and ignored me. I didn't know if he*

was too lazy to go back to the shelf to get the coupon or what, so I gave him my coupon which I didn't need to use. But he just refused and gave me back the coupon. It's so weird. The coupon was not paid by me or what. It's just something I got from that supermarket and I didn't need it at that moment. I couldn't understand why he didn't take it. After that, I never try to give some additional information to other customers, especially men.

HK2: *Like my boyfriend, he is not that attracted by promotion or sales. If he needs only one item, he will just buy one item despite buying two is cheaper.*

HK5: *It's strange.*

HK2: *Perhaps they feel like they are not ready to talk to you. You interrupted them.*

HK3: *I agreed with HK2. I think in Hong Kong, perhaps you don't always like interaction, but you accept the fact that you are always surrounded by people and you are prepared or ready to talk. You know, Hong Kong is crowded, 24 hours. Swedes are not like us. Like they would turn on different modes in different situations. Like when they are in "grocery shopping" mode, they will just do grocery shopping. They don't expect interaction with people. So, I think that's not like they don't like promotion or sales, but if they didn't switch on the "buy sales stuff" mode, they were not ready to accept it. Seems like they need time to process the unexpected new information.*

HK2: *Yes I agree. My boyfriend is like that too. He might refuse the sales like "buying 2 is cheaper" coz he only needed one. But then when he reached home after a while, he might regret. I think Swedes are not ready to new information. It takes time for them to digest information. Hong Kong people are very ready to new things and process information faster and are more flexible in handing things.*

The Hong Kong participants thought that the Swedes are not very responsive to new information and are less flexible in dealing unexpected things. When the Swedes are shopping for grocery goods, they will just focus on buying their items but not prepared to talk to others.

Here is the Swedes' views on share coupon or promotion sale:

Interviewer: *Sometimes you might have promotion in supermarkets like pay 2 get 3. Imagine if you just need one, but you wanna enjoy that promotion, will you ask other customers who are choosing the same items to share with you?*

All: *NO (shake head laterally).*

SW3: *Never.*

SW3: *I don't go for the promotion too. Coz' it's cheaper to buy one sometimes.*

SW4: *Yea... except for limes or lemons.*

SW2: *Or chips.*

Interviewer: *So in case if other customers ask you to share, would you share?*

SW1: *That's the only time I heard of doing that.*

SW2: *I would actually do that... I was about to say yes... but no!*

SW4, SW3: *No.*

SW2: *It's troublesome to give the money... and... yea.*

SW4: Maybe it's also the explanation because we don't have cash.

SW2: Yea...

SW3: But if I have cash, I wouldn't do it.

SW4: No.

SW3: No why would I do it? I buy my food for myself.

SW4: I think buying food is kind of private.

SW3: I never think of being asked to do that.

SW2: I think I would reluctantly accept it, awkwardly accept it.

SW3: It's weird.

SW1: It's not normal.

SW4: Because I feel obligated if I get something from someone, I need to redo it like I want to give that person something as well. And for me, like when I am invited to dinner parties, now I feel like I should have a dinner party as well.

SW2: Like if I get a gift... Oh ... I need to give you one as well.

SW4: But thing is that I would feel really graceful and yea it's really thoughtful. I would like to do it myself. But I think I would be shocked a little bit. Oh my God, somebody do something for me without wanting something back.

All Swedish participants said that they would not accept sharing the promotion. They find it weird and not normal. One participant explained that he feel obligation to give something back if someone treat him something.

B. Swedes' view on immigrants

The Swedish participants observed that immigrants usually went to the grocery shop with their kids and usually at later time of the day. The Swedish customer would avoid taking kids except for taking them to the shop on Friday for the "fredagsmys". They also found that some immigrant mothers bring their kids and go for grocery shopping together and they talk more with each other when they are doing grocery shopping. The Swedes explained they do grocery shopping with the one you are living with but not with friends usually. If the mothers or fathers are having parental leave, they will take the babies and meet for coffee instead.

Lastly, the Swedes concluded their view on interaction with other customers as follows:

SW3: But it's also a normal thing in Sweden. You keep to yourself but when people asked for help, you are friendly. But it's that face that "no"

SW1: We are in a bubble.

SW3: Yea we are in a bubble, when you are out in the public, generally. But when someone asked you something, you are always friendly.

SW4: The only exception is that when we go out.

SW3: Yea then people are very friendly, especially when they... (act like drinking)

SW2: Yea they are nice when they are drunk.

The Swedes self-commented that they are like in a bubble that they do not normally initiate interaction with others but they do offer help when they are asked. This also matched with the Hong Kong perception towards the Swedes.

4.2.4 Discussion on communication during grocery shopping

Similar to the communication with neighbours, Swedes show a higher tendency than the Hong Kong participants in avoiding communication with staff or with other customers. These are some of features summed up for the communication patterns during grocery shopping:

Greater tendency to avoid communication in Sweden than in Hong Kong

There are much fewer topics being communication between customers and staff as well as between customers for Swedes, mostly they will just ask for location and direction when they cannot find the items they want or when there is some problems with the items or charge. As described by the Swedish participants, “we are like in a bubble”. The Swedes appeared to be not ready to communicate with others during grocery shopping. “Customers are just customers”, that is what the Swedish participants commented.

Buying grocery items as a private issue in Sweden

Swedes consider grocery shopping as very private issue, not only that they find it strange that some immigrants, especially immigrant mothers, go grocery shopping together with friends, but they also do not welcome other customers’ behaviours such as looking at their carts or touching their carts. Sharing of promotion with other customers is not considered acceptable among Swedish participants. They will rather not enjoy the cheaper promotional price than sharing the cheaper price with an unknown person.

“Making decision by oneself” versus “sharing of opinions/ information”

One of the divergent behaviours between Swedes and Hong Kong Chinese during grocery shopping is that Swedes prefer to make own decision on the choice of goods while Hong Kong Chinese like sharing shopping information such as what kinds of items are on sale or which brand of goods is good. The Hong Kong Chinese also try to seek opinions such as cooking methods from both staff and customers. Taking this tendency from Hong Kong to Sweden, one Hong Kong participant reported trying to offer promotion information and a coupon to another Swedish customer but the Swedes eventually rejected the offer, making the Hong Kong participants feel weird since he did not understand why the Swede should reject better offer. On the contrary, the Swedish participants considered the offer of coupons as a weird act since they feel that weird to receive something from a stranger and they feel like they are obligated to give back something if they accept something from others.

Expectation on staff and the concept of service

The Hong Kong Chinese expressed dissatisfaction with the service provided by Swedish staff in general, criticizing the slower work pace and the lower degree of customer-orientation in Sweden than in Hong Kong. Probably due to the ideology of equality and individualism in

Sweden, staff and customers are equal beings and staff is an individual unit despite working in a company. Therefore, the staff in Sweden try not to be particularly nice to some customers, treating everyone the same; whereas in Hong Kong, staff tends to make closer relationship with the customers such as calling a younger customer as “Ah mui (little girl)” to show that they treat the customers specially. Strong individualism also makes Swedish staff inclined not to apologize for the company where the customers reported some mistakes made the store e.g. wrong charging of money. Hong Kong staff, on the other hand, have a stronger sense of representing their company, and the staff would apologize to the customers on behalf of the company when the customers complain. In coherence with the finding of Sverigestudien 2012 that the customer is still outside focus in Sweden, Sweden has much lower-degree of customer orientation than in Hong Kong (Preera, Skandia & Volvo IT, 2012).

Treatment of immigrants by Swedish staff and the problems with language

Both Swedish and Hong Kong participants noticed similar communication patterns and behaviours when a Swedish staff communicates with a non-Swedish speaking customer or non-fluent-Swedish speaking customer: talk no more than necessary, speak louder and slower, exaggerating every pronunciation or even change language of communication to English. Some Swedish participants interpreted these behaviours as a way to make it easier for the immigrants so that they do not need to stand there without knowing what is going on while some Hong Kong participants reported the embarrassed feeling due to such behaviours of staff as they wanted to try practicing Swedish but feel like rejected. This exemplifies the difference in interpretations, which possibly leads to misunderstanding or false-perception of discrimination in the case of language inproficiency.

5 Overall discussion

As mentioned in the Introduction chapter, the two investigated scenarios, “Communication with neighbours” and “Communication during grocery shopping” are chosen because both scenarios represent the most fundamental social interactions in our daily life. It is believed that people behave most genuinely when they are in such private zones and that allows the researcher to observe the cultural practices and values revealed by such subconscious behaviours. On one hand, when immigrants first arrive in Sweden, they might not have a job and they might be waiting for the Swedish language course, the interaction in their neighbourhoods and interaction during grocery as their daily life routines become their only source to get known to the Swedes, the society and the Swedish culture. Like what Gsir said, informal interaction in the neighbourhood is not compulsory and that people can choose to communicate or not (Gsir, 2014). How immigrants and the natives behave in such contexts and how the natives and immigrants perceive each other might influence the adaption of the immigrants towards the society.

Cultural values or beliefs do affect how and what people communicate in their daily life. Like what Jandt (2013) and Allwood (1985) said in their research, people perceive things differently based on their cultures. What Swedes believe as “normal” or “appropriate” verbal or non-verbal behaviours or interaction structures (i.e. sequence of the activities, turn-taking, feedback, spatial arrangements or topics to be talked about) during a conversation might be considered as “strange” or “inappropriate” or even “offensive” in some other cultures. It is observed that some common values are mentioned by the Swedes or the Hong Kong Chinese in both neighbour communication and grocery shopping scenarios, indicating that those values are quite significant to that group of people. In a homogenous cultural environment, people might not detect the existence of cultures since most people behave similarly. However in a heterogeneous cultural environment, cultural effect becomes obvious. In formal setting, for example at workplace, the effect of cultural values or beliefs exists but might sometimes be diminished by the sharing of common goal (Gsir, 2014). However, in an informal setting where people are not united by a common purpose, cultural differences become obvious. However what is considered as norm of the society is often taken for granted by the dominant group despite the fact that the minority group might have different views about what is right, appropriate or normal. Research focuses on how immigrants and Swedes perceive the communication during informal context (i.e. “communication with neighbours” and “communication during grocery shopping”) in their daily lives. Moreover, how mutual perceptions about the other can shape and influence attitudes and interactions (Pastore & Ponzo, 2013; Gsir, 2014). Thus this study investigates the adaption of immigrants and the establishment of a diversified but yet harmonious society.

Social distance with others

Daun pointed out several characteristics of the Swedish mentality. In Swedish culture, there is a tension in social relationships and Swedes are not curious enough or interested enough about strangers to make them desire closer contact. It is not relaxing for Swedes to speak with

strangers since the strangers do not belong to their closest family or circle of friends (Daun, 2008). This helps to explain the avoidance behaviours reported in both scenarios of the studies: Swedes do not know most of their neighbours' names and cannot recognize their neighbours except for those neighbours who are friends since the beginning or those who have funnier names which catch their attention; Swedes check from the peephole before they go out so as to make sure that they will not run into others. Swedes do not contact neighbours until an emergency occurs; Swedes do not talk to other staff or customers unless they do not find the items they want; Swedes do not want an extra relationship with their neighbours nor with the staff or customers in the grocery shops. Like what the participants described, "*Neighbours are just neighbours*" and "*Customers are just customers*". One should never get too close.

"I can do it myself"

In Hofstede's foundational work, Sweden scored 116 and Hong Kong scored -76 in the individualism-collectivism dimension, meaning that Sweden is a very individualistic country while Hong Kong is a comparatively more collectivist place. These two extreme features influence their behaviours respectively and their expectations towards each other in the two scenarios as can be seen in this study. Suggested by Ester Barinaga as one of the striking features of Swedish culture, Swedes have a positive connotation towards the word "*ensamhet* (loneliness/ Solitude)". Swedes cherish inner peace, independence and personal strength and they have a well-known saying of "*Jag kan själv*" or "*Jag klarar mig själv*" (I am able to do it myself) (Barinaga, 1999). This individualistic belief embedded deeply in many Swedes' mind and is shown in behaviours such as preferring to call the power company or call the landlord by themselves when there is a power shortage instead of seeking help from neighbours or checking food labels instead of asking opinions from staff or other customers in the grocery stores. Believing in "*att göra rätt för sig* (behaving correctly and doing one's full share)" and not being a burden on others, especially economically (Allwood, 1999), the Swedes find it very strange that the Hong Kong immigrants try to share promotion with other unknown customers and they actually rejected the offer of coupon from the other customers. With the concept of "*tjänster och gentjänster* (favours/services and return favours)", it is culturally important for the Swedes to pay your way to return favours to retain the equilibrium between individuals (Pedersen, 2009). That explains why the Swedish participants feel obligated to give something back if they accepted something from others (i.e. the coupons in the grocery shopping scenario). This also connected to the above mentioned concepts of independence and self-sufficiency as well as "*jämlikhet* (equality)" since Swedes prefer to rely on their own means and favour behaviour symmetry, balance and reciprocity or mutuality which lead to sameness and equality between people (Pedersen, 2009). Since the acceptance of the coupon would make the Swedes suffer from "*tacksamhetskulld* (debts of thanks)" and be scared of losing their independence, they would rather pay a higher price than to accept this favour from a stranger. However, from the Hong Kong Chinese collectivist perspective, the rejection from Swedes concerning the offer of coupons is unreasonable, since they expect people to help each other and be even more united when there is a sudden incident such as a fire or a power cut. Offering a free-of-charge coupon is just "as easy as raising your hand (Translation

of the Chinese saying ”舉手之勞”) as individuals have the ”we-consciousness” and are expected to help each other out in the collective society (Lustig & Koester, 2010).

Separation of public and private lives

Extending from the individualistic ideology, private life and privacy are highly stressed by the Swedes. Not only do Swedes interact less with neighbours, they have limited topics to talk about with their neighbours or other customers and staff and seldom touch upon more personal issues, such as family life or develop a more in-depth conversation. People intending to be closer (e.g. elaborately explain one’s personal situation, self introduction) might be regarded as weird as mentioned in the interview. “ Don’t get too close”, “ Don’t interact”, “Mind your own business” are what Swedes expect from others in neighbourhood and during grocery shopping. Not being interested in looking into others’ apartment and not welcoming others looking into their apartment, Swedes have a clear-cut separation between their private life and their public life (Barinaga, 1999), not allowing others to get involved in their private life so that they can enjoy individual freedom and silence at home. They can socialize at work or school. They can help others when requested. But they do not allow others to step into their private zone. Even at the more neutral context of grocery shopping where buying grocery goods does not seem to be sensitive to many others, the privacy issue is still raised and expressed in their behaviours: “Do not mess with my private life”, “ Do not look at my cart”, “ Leave my cart untouched”. There seems to be a invisible line between Swedes and people around them as described by the Swedish participants “We are like in a bubble”.

Conflict avoidance

Conflict avoidance as the spirit of Swedes is also shown in the two scenarios. As explained by Barinaga, Swedes believes that they should control feelings and that aggressive behaviours will not lead to desirable results (Barinaga, 1999). Similarly, as mentioned by Austin in the book “On being Swedish”, a prime rule of Swedish life is not to “såra andras känslor” (hurt other people ’s feelings). Being “lättårbar” (easily hurt) himself, he assumes you to be too. They seldom give you a harsh comment (Austin, 1969). This might explain why Swedes avoid face-to-face confrontation by using “angry note” to avoid direct conflicts. Even if they complain face-to-face, they adopt a more indirect approach. An example would be the Hong Kong immigrants’ experience of not being directly asked to stop building furniture and stop creating noise. In grocery shopping, even if the Swedes are not satisfied with the service provided by the staff, they do not opt for a complaint. They only avoid going to that same shop. The Hong Kong immigrants indeed commented that it is hard to read the emotions of the Swedes since the Swedes are not expressive in facial expression.

Language as barrier in both cases

Looking more at the immigrants’ perspective of adaptation to the Swedish society via these two social activities, it is noticeable that language is the main obstacle for the immigrants. In congruence with Avramov’s research, both Hong Kong immigrants and native Swedes expressed the importance of learning the native language as a crucial factor for immigrants to be socially integrating with Swedes and the lower the perceived capability of the language

mastery, the less the immigrants feel like at home in the host country (Avramov, 2009). The Swedes stated that the staff in Sweden are not required to speak English, not to say the immigrants' native language. The Swedish proficiency is a key for the immigrants to initiate communication with Swedes and to get help in both scenarios of the study. All of the Hong Kong participants agreed that Swedes are more willing and more relaxed to talk with them if they speak Swedish, and they interact less with them if they speak English instead. It is similar for the grocery shopping scenario as well. The staff tends to talk less if the customer does not speak or speaks less fluent Swedish. It thus appears that immigrants must be capable of the language in order to be accepted in many situations.

On one hand, both Swedes and immigrants noticed that the Swedish staff would speak loudly, slowly, exaggerating the pronunciation of each word if they found out that the customer did not know Swedish. Or as mentioned previously, they would simply talk less or switch to English. As shown in one of the interpretations of the Swede in the result section, the staff might try to be nice not keeping the customer standing embarrassingly there without understanding what is actually said. This reveals the shyness characteristic of Swedes and that they expect other people to think similarly and thus they are reluctant to put others in an awkward position to be shy or embarrassed (Pedersen 2009). Unfortunately, this might not be understood by the immigrants as it was reported by some of the Hong Kong immigrants that they felt embarrassed when the staff shared the abovementioned behaviours when they tried to speak more Swedish.

Swedish communicative patterns and immigrants' adaptation

In evaluating the acculturation of the Hong Kong immigrants, one can adopt the acculturation strategies as suggested by John Berry. There are four types of acculturation strategies from the viewpoints of the non-dominant groups, namely assimilation, marginalization, separation and integration. *Acculturation strategies are determined by cultural maintenance (to what extent are cultural identity and characteristics considered to be important and their maintenance strived for) and contact and participation (to what extent should they become involved in other cultural groups, or remain primarily among themselves)* (Berry, 1997). Analysing the responses of the Hong Kong interviewees, they appear to adopt integration as the acculturation strategy, meaning that they are interested in maintaining one's original culture, in daily interactions with other groups. This can be seen from their behaviours that they still go to Asian stores, keep some of the Chinese beliefs (e.g. maintain good relationship with the neighbours even if they do not intend to befriend with the neighbours) in their mind and at the same time they try to maximize their contacts with the Swedes and learn about their cultures. Integration is usually regarded as the most successful strategy for the development of a position adaptation. However, Berry also pointed out that *integration can only be 'freely' chosen and successfully pursued by non-dominant groups when the dominant society is open and inclusive in its orientation towards cultural diversity* (Berry 1991; 1997). The question here is "Is Sweden really an open and inclusive country in its orientation towards cultural diversity?".

According to Daun, Swedish customs and values are difficult to adjust to for a great many immigrants (Daun, 2008). Swedes' tendency of keeping distance from those who are not friends or family members, the separation of private and public lives, the individualistic spirit make it hard for immigrants to integrate into the society. As Avramov suggested, the responsibility for the integration of immigrants rests not only on immigrants themselves but also other actors such as the government, and the citizens in the receiving society (Avramov, 2009). Therefore how the native citizens, Swedes in this case, behave and how such behaviours are perceived and interpreted by the immigrants influence the degree of adaptation towards the Swedish society. As mentioned by some Hong Kong participants, they tried to take more initiative and tried to develop more topics but that did not go very well. They commented that it is difficult for an immigrant to enter the Swedish social circle since Swedes tend to categorize people according to where they get known to that person. As described by one of the Hong Kong participants *"For Swedes, if you are neighbours, then you are neighbours, it is not appropriate for neighbours to appear in a friend gathering."* This matches with what the Swedish commented on their relationship with neighbours or other customers in grocery shopping *"Neighbours are just neighbours"* and *"Customers are just customers"*. The social distance created by the Swedes minimizes the contacts of the immigrants to the Swedish groups, reduces the chance for the immigrants to know more Swedes or more about Swedish culture and limits the channels that the immigrants can use to integrate to the Swedish society.

Avoidance behaviours, keeping distance from others and separation between private life and public life are reported features of the Swedish culture in the two scenarios. Native Swedes are so used to these norms and take them for granted as the way to get along with neighbours or other unfamiliar people around them, expecting others (i.e. the neighbours or staff and other customers) to respect their freedom to be alone or to stay silent. On the contrary, Hong Kong Chinese immigrants, with their own cultural mindset and the eagerness to integrate to the Swedish society, might also take it for granted that they should and are welcomed to communicate more with the native Swedes. When the two cultures with the divergent expectations collide, frustration or misunderstanding might occur: When the immigrants noticed the Swedes' avoidance behaviour, they might take it personally; When the immigrants tried to initiate more conversation but failed, they might feel frustrated; When they offered the coupon to the other customers just to be nice but were rejected, they might feel frustrated; When they wanted to make friends with Swedes but did not succeed, they could just blame it on bad luck. As described by Daun, immigrants who go against norms might not experience terrible opposition but are reminded of their position as foreigners and can feel insecure (Daun, 2008). All this arises from the lack of understanding of each other's culture and when the lack of understanding or misunderstanding escalates, conflicts might pop up. Looking at Berry's theory of acculturation theory again, acculturation is *"the dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members."* (Berry 2005). On one hand, intercultural encounters may also be confusing due to group differences in emotional expressivity and non-verbal communication styles (Kim, 1986; Gudykunst & Hammer, 1988), and cultural variations in values, norms, and customs may lead to cultural misunderstandings and instances of

communication breakdown that are stressful and unpleasant (Giles & Robinson, 1990; Gudykunst, 1986; Wiseman & Koester, 1993). Therefore, in a new cultural context, people often experience doubt and uncertainty concerning the host culture's behaviours, values and attitudes (Berry, 1976; Fritz, Chin & DeMarinis 2008). Ultimately, repeated communication failures and emotionally laden cultural misunderstandings can give rise to a negative evaluative orientation toward the culturally different (Spencer-Rodgers & McGovern, 2002). This can be a trigger towards conflicts in the society.

Berry brought up that good psychological adaptation is predicted by personality variables, life change events and social support whereas good sociocultural adaption is predicted by cultural knowledge, degree of contact and positive intergroup attitudes (Berry, 2005). Personality variables and life change events are of course more individually dependent since different people can have different personality and life events. However, social support, cultural knowledge, degree of contact and positive intergroup attitudes are mutually dependent among immigrants and natives. This implies that good adaptation relies not only on the immigrant's willingness to adapt but also the receiving country's willingness to allow contacts and support which make possible positive intergroup attitudes.

Is it just about culture? – other factors influencing communication pattern

One might argue if it is just culture that causes the difference in the communicative patterns in the three sets of perceptions. From the study, it is noted that other factors such as age and physical environment also contribute to the difference in communication patterns. For example, in both focus groups, it is mentioned that the elder people usually initiate more in communicating with others, both in Hong Kong and in Sweden. Physical environment such as types of housing people are living at (e.g. apartment, terraced house, house) and the size of the apartment or house also shape the communicative patterns. For example the Swedes commented that they communicated more with their neighbours when they lived in house or terraced house instead of living in an apartment since there are more things in common with the neighbours. The Hong Kong Chinese explained that the apartments are usually so small in Hong Kong that people usually would not invite others, neighbours or even friends, to their home. Furthermore, the Hong Kong participants clarified that the fact that Hong Kong people are always surrounded by lots of people since Hong Kong is a densely populated city also make Hong Kong people more prepared to interact with others anytime.

6 Conclusion

This study focuses on the perceptions of Swedes and Hong Kong Chinese immigrants towards the communication patterns in the contexts of communication with neighbours and communication during grocery shopping. Three sets of data are collected– Hong Kong Chinese immigrants’ perception of Hong Kong communicative patterns, Hong Kong Chinese immigrants’ perception of Swedish communicative patterns and Swedes’ perception of Swedish communicative patterns. The perceived communicative purposes and roles with the response to research question 1, the topics communicated which are answers to research question 2, the communicative behaviours corresponding to research question 3 and the interpretation of the participants towards the perceived purposes, roles, structures and the communicative behaviours which answer research question 4 are obtained in each scenario for each set of perceptions. By comparing these three sets of data, possible misunderstandings between the native Swedes and immigrants in daily lives as well as the hindrance of integration of the immigrants into the Swedish society are revealed.

Under both contexts “communication with neighbours” and “communication during grocery shopping”, the similarity between the two groups of participants lies on the fundamental and functional purposes of communication (e.g. to enquire, to complain) and the general structure of how people initiate a conversation. Differences are observed mostly in terms of the expectations of the communication behaviours or outcomes (e.g. keeping distance vs. building relationship). The traces of individualism and collectivism are revealed in the behaviours of the Swedes and the Hong Kong Chinese respectively. Swedes tend to be alone, handle things themselves and value freedom and privacy, resulting in a narrow range of topics to be communicated with others and a tendency of avoidance in communication; whereas Hong Kong Chinese tend to build relationships and be united with others, resulting in a much wider range of topics with other neighbours or staff and customers in grocery shopping. When the Hong Kong immigrants come to Sweden, they bring along their Hong Kong mindset and eagerness to integrate into the Swedish society. However, the Swedish way of distanced social relationship and separation of private and public lives make it difficult and discouraging for the immigrants enter the social circles and understand the Swedish culture in a deeper sense.

As mentioned in the introduction, Sweden is increasingly becoming more diverse with people from different cultures entering and living in Sweden for the upcoming and foreseeable future. At the same time, it is known from the newspapers that different hostile acts have occurred between people of Swedish descent and people that have immigrated from different cultures. It is shown in this study that much of the hindrances of integration are due to the fact that there is misunderstanding or lack of understanding between the different cultures, for example immigrants want to appear good but might be regarded as interrupting the freedom of Swedes. The Hong Kong immigrants expressed that they do respect the Swedish way of interaction with others but they just do not realize what can be done and what cannot be done in accordance to the Swedish norms. However, it is ironic that when they want to get closer to

the Swedes to know more about the norm, they are actually breaking the norm of “not getting too close”.

This study is relevant and unique as previous studies have often been made of the Swedish perception of immigrants, with a focus on the natives’ point of view rather than the immigrants’ point of view. It is important for all countries to know how they are perceived in today’s globalized world, as this is not only an indication of how Sweden is towards immigrants, but also how Swedes are when they themselves are abroad. This research could be regarded as a pilot study for proving the existence of differences or similarities in perception between the Swedish group and the Hong Kong Chinese group and for identifying possible barriers for immigrants’ adaptation. Future research effort could be directed to expanding the scope of research to different groups of immigrants so as to find out if there are any cultural trends of different immigrant groups towards the perceived Swedish communicative structures, procedures and behaviour. It is expected that different sets of perceptions would be formed and could be insightful in such a culturally diversified country as Sweden.

Communication is something we do daily, something we do as we step out of our houses, and we use as a tool to live. Communication is, however, sometimes challenging. What we expect and how we express ourselves might not be the same as the rest of the world. Therefore, it is not only important to know about how Swedes see themselves and how they see immigrants, it is even more important for Swedish people to know how they are perceived by immigrants, so as to foster better understanding between groups. It would be mutually beneficial to both the immigrants and the Swedes for achieving a more effective communication and ultimately create a culturally well-integrated society.

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8 Appendix: Focus Group Interviews Script

Section 1: Background information

Background information of participants will be collected in written form before the start of the interview (see below)

Name:	
Age:	
Gender:	
Educational level:	
Occupation (Including part time jobs):	
You are living in:	Apartment/ terraced house/ villa
City & district you are living in: (e.g. Göteborg, Hisingen)	
<u>For immigrant participants only:</u>	
District you lived in Hong Kong:	
You are living in:	Public Housing Estate / Home Ownership Scheme Flat /Private flat/ House (公屋 /居屋/ 私人住宅/獨立屋)
Length of Stay in Sweden:	
Purposes for moving to Sweden:	
How well do you think you adapt to the Swedish society?	1 2 3 4 5 very unadaptive  very adaptive
<u>For Swedish participants only:</u>	
Do you have contact with immigrants on daily basis?	

Section 2: Communication with neighbours:

	Hong Kong Chinese Immigrants	Swedes	
<i>Greeting with neighbours in Hong Kong</i>			
1	<p>回想在香港的情況: Recalling your experience in Hong Kong:</p> <p>a. 你是否經常碰見你的鄰居? 通常在哪裡碰見? How often did you run into your neighbours? Where usually? And when?</p> <p>b. 你知道你的鄰居的名字嗎? Did you know the names of your neighbours?</p> <p>c. 你會否和你的鄰居打招呼? 你的鄰居會否跟你打招呼? 通常是哪一方先打招呼? Did you greet your neighbours? Or did your neighbour greet you? Who initiated greeting usually? Was it different with different neighbours?</p> <p>d. 你如何打招呼? 你打招呼時會否稱呼你的鄰居? 如果會的話, 如何稱呼 (如: 稱呼他的名字還是姓氏)? 你的鄰居有何反應? 你可以描述他們的措詞、身體語等等。 How did you greet? What was the common greeting? Did you address your neighbours when greeting? If so, how (e.g. first name/ second name)? How did your neighbour react? How did you end the conversation? You may describe how they do so verbally and nonverbally.</p>		1,2
<i>Greeting with neighbours in Sweden</i>			
2	你是否經常碰見你的鄰居? 通常在哪裡碰見?	How often do you run into your neighbours? Where usually? And when?	1,2
3	你知道你的鄰居的名字嗎?	Do you know the names of your neighbours?	1, 2
4	你會否和你的鄰居打招呼? 你的鄰居會否跟你打招呼? 通常是哪一方先打招呼?	Do you greet your neighbours? Or do your neighbour greet you? Who initiate greeting usually? Is it different with different	1,2,3

		neighbours?	
5	你如何打招呼? 你打招呼時會否稱呼你的鄰居?如果會的話, 如何稱呼 (如:稱呼他的名字還是姓氏)? 你的鄰居有何反應?你可以描述他們的措詞、身體語等等。	How do you greet? What is the common greeting? Do you address your neighbours when greeting? If so, how (e.g. first name/ second name)? How do your neighbour react? How do you end the conversation? You may describe how they do so verbally and nonverbally.	1,2,3
6	你為何打招呼?/你為何不打招呼?/你認為對方為什麼打招呼/不打招呼?	Why do you/ why don't you greet?/ Why do you think others greet /don't greet?	4
7	如果不想打招呼時, 你或你的鄰居會以什麼方法避過打招呼?	What strategies do you/ your neighbours use to avoid greeting?	2,3
8		Do you greet in the same way to the immigrant neighbour? Why/ Why not?	4
<i>Interaction with neighbours in Hong Kong (except occasional greetings)</i>			
9	<p>In Hong Kong:</p> <p>a. 除了打招呼外, 你和瑞典鄰居有其他溝通、接觸嗎? Other than occasional greeting, have you ever contacted your Swedish neighbours?</p> <p>b. 你認為在什麼情況下與鄰居聯絡是可接受的? When do you think it is ok to contact your neighbours?</p> <p>c. 回想上一次鄰居接觸, 原因是什麼? Recalling the previous time of interaction, why did you contact your neighbour?</p> <p>d. 你如何啟始對話? How did you initiate the conversation?</p> <p>e. 對話怎樣結束? How did the conversation end?</p> <p>f. 你對於這種溝通模式有何看法? 正面還是反面? How did you feel about this interaction? Positive or negative?</p>		1, 2, 3
<i>Interaction with neighbours in Sweden (except occasional greetings)</i>			

10	除了打招呼外，你和瑞典鄰居有其他溝通、接觸嗎？	Other than occasional greeting, have you ever contacted your Swedish neighbours?	
	如果會：	If yes:	1
	a. 你認為在什麼情況下與鄰居聯絡是可接受的？	a. When do you think it is ok to contact your neighbours?	
	b. 回想上一次與瑞典鄰居接觸，原因是什麼？	b. Recalling the previous time of interaction, why did you contact your neighbour?	1
	c. 你如何啟始對話？	c. How did you initiate the conversation?	2
	d. 你的鄰居有何反應？	d. How did your neighbour respond/ react?	2
	e. 對話怎樣結束？	e. How did the conversation end?	2
	f. 你對於這種溝通模式有何看法？正面還是反面？	f. How did you feel about this interaction? Positive or negative?	4
	如你從不聯絡你的鄰居 g. 為何不？	If you never contact you neighbours: g. Why not?	4
	h. 與瑞典鄰居聯絡時你會使用哪種語言？為什麼？ which language do/ will you use when/ if you contact your neighbour? Why?		3
	h. Which language do/ will you use when/ if you contact your immigrants neighbour? Why	3	
11		Do you contact your immigrant neighbours other than greeting too? Is it the same way as how you contact with the Swedish neighbour? Why/ Why not?	3,4
Conflicts with neighbours in Hong Kong			
12	在香港，如果你對你的鄰居有所不滿，你會如何處理問題？直接與鄰居指出？向管理處投訴？向其他鄰居投訴？ In Hong Kong, if you were not satisfied with your neighbour behaviour in certain situations, how did you solve the problem? Did you contact your neighbour directly? Did you contacting the housing committee? Or did you		2,3

	talk to other neighbours?		
Conflicts with neighbours in Sweden			
13	在瑞典，如果你對你的鄰居有所不滿，你會如何處理問題？直接與鄰居指出？向管理處投訴？向其他鄰居投訴？	In Sweden, if you are not satisfied with your neighbour behaviour in certain situations, how do you solve the problem? Do you contact your neighbour directly? Do you contacting the housing committee? Or do you talk to other neighbours?	1,2,3
Seeking help from neighbours in Hong Kong			
14	在香港，如果你有需要，你會否向鄰居尋求協助？為什麼？ In Hong Kong, in case you are in need, would you seek help from neighbours? Why/ Why not?		3,4
Seeking help from neighbours in Sweden			
15	如果你有需要，你會否向鄰居尋求協助？為什麼？	In case you are in need, would you seek help from neighbours? Why/ Why not?	3,4
16	對於找瑞典鄰居幫助還是找其他移民鄰居幫忙，你有沒有任何偏好？	Do you have any preference about seeking help from a Swedish neighbour or an immigrant neighbour?	3,4
Party with neighbours in Hong Kong			
17	在香港，如果你在家中舉行派對，你會邀請你的鄰居參加嗎？如果會，以什麼方式邀請？ In Hong Kong, if you held a party at home, will you invite your neighbours to join? If yes, how will you invite your neighbours?		2
Party with neighbours in Sweden			
18	如果你在家中舉行派對，你會邀請你的鄰居參加嗎？如果會，以什麼方式邀請？	If you held a party at home, will you invite your neighbours to join? If yes, how will you invite your neighbours?	2
19		Will you invite immigrant neighbours too? Why/ why not?	3,4
Others			
20	你有否其他跟瑞典鄰居接觸而你覺得有趣/奇怪/憤怒的經驗想分享？	Can you share more about any interesting communication experience with your neighbours?	3,4
21	普遍來說，你會怎麼辦形容瑞典人與鄰居相處的行為或態度？	Generally speaking, how would you describe the most common behaviours / attitude of Swedes in communicating with their neighbour?	3,4

Section 3: Communication in Grocery Shopping

	Hong Kong Chinese Immigrants	Swedes	
Grocery shopping habits in Hong Kong			
1	<p>a. 你多久會購買食品、生活用品一次? How often did you go for grocery shopping?</p> <p>b. 你通常是單獨去購買食品、生活用品?還是結伴去?如果會結伴去的話,通常會和誰一起去? Did you usually go for grocery shopping by yourself or with others? Whom did you usually go with?</p> <p>c. 你通常會在哪一類型的店購買食品、生活用品?大型還是小型?平價還是貴價? What type of grocery shop did you usually go to? Big or small one? Budget or luxury one?</p> <p>d. 如果你是經常在小型的店購物,你知道職員或老闆的名字嗎? If it was the small one, did you know the names of the owner or the other staff?</p> <p>e. 你是否經常去同一間店?為什麼? Did you usually go to the same grocery shop? Why?</p> <p>f. 你購物時會與其他人溝通/聊天嗎?如果會,你和哪些人溝通/聊天? Did you talk with others during grocery shopping? If yes, whom do you talk with? Why?</p>		1, 2
Grocery shopping habits in Sweden			
2	你多久會購買食品、生活用品一次?	How often do you go for grocery shopping?	1,2
3	你通常是單獨去購買食品、生活用品?還是結伴去?如果會結伴去的話,通常會和誰一起去?	Do you usually go for grocery shopping by yourself or with others? Whom do you usually go with?	1, 2
4	你通常會在哪一類型的店購買食品、生活用品?大型還是小型?平	What type of grocery shop do you usually go to? Big or small one?	1, 2

	價還是貴價?	Budget or luxury one?	
5	如果你是經常在小型的店購物, 你知道職員或老闆的名字嗎?	If it is the small one, do you know the names of the owner or the other staff?	1, 2
6	你是否經常去同一間店? 為什麼?	Do you usually go to the same grocery shop? Why?	1,2
7	你購物時會與其他人溝通/聊天嗎? 如果會, 你和哪些人溝通/聊天?	Do you talk with others during grocery shopping? If yes, whom do you talk with? Why?	1, 2
8	如果不會, 為什麼?	If not, why not?	4
<i>Interaction with shop assistants in Hong Kong</i>			
9	<p>a. 你會否與職員打招呼? 他們又會否與你打招呼? Did you greet the shop assistants in the shop? Did they greet you?</p> <p>b. 在什麼情況下你會跟職員溝通、聊天? Under which circumstances will you talk to the staff?</p> <p>c. 通常是誰開啟對話? 你還是職員? Who initiate the interaction usually? You or the staff?</p> <p>d. 回憶其中一次與職員互動經驗, 你可以否形容一下那一次經驗?(如: 整個過程如何、職員的反應、面部表情、身體語言等) Recall one of the interaction experience, can do describe the interaction? (e.g. the whole process, the staff's response, facial expression, body language)</p> <p>e. 你對這次互動經驗有何感覺? 正面還是反面? How do you feel about this interaction? Positive or negative?</p>		1, 2
<i>Interaction with shop assistants in Sweden</i>			
10	a. 你會否與職員打招呼? 他們又會否與你打招呼?	a. Do you greet the shop assistants in the shop? Do they greet you?	1,2
	b. 在什麼情況下你會跟職員溝通、聊天?	b. Under which circumstances will you talk to the staff?	1

	c. 通常是誰開啟對話? 你還是職員?	c. Who initiate the interaction usually? You or the staff?	
	d. 回憶其中一次與職員互動經驗, 你可以否形容一下那一次經驗?(如: 整個過程如何、職員的反應、面部表情、身體語言等)	d. Recall one of the interaction experience, can do describe the interaction? (e.g. the whole process, the staff's response, facial expression, body language)	3
	e. 你對這次互動經驗有何感覺? 正面還是反面?	e. How do you feel about this interaction? Positive or negative?	4
<i>Interaction with other customers in Hong Kong</i>			
11	<p>a. 你會否與其他顧客打招呼?他們又會否與你打招呼? Did you greet the other customers in the shop? Did they greet you?</p> <p>b. 在什麼情況下你會跟其他顧客溝通、聊天? Under which circumstances will you talk to the other customers?</p> <p>c. 通常是誰開啟對話? 你還是其他顧客? Who initiate the interaction usually? You or the other customers?</p> <p>d. 回憶其中一次與其他顧客互動經驗, 你可以否形容一下那一次經驗?(如: 整個過程如何、其他顧客的反應、面部表情、身體語言等) Recall one of the interaction experience, can do describe the interaction? (e.g. the whole process, the other customers' response, facial expression, body language)</p> <p>e. 你對這次互動經驗有何感覺? 正面還是反面? How do you feel about this interaction? Positive or negative?</p>		1,2
<i>Interaction with other customers in Sweden</i>			
12	a. 在什麼情況下你會跟其他顧客溝通、聊天?	a. Under what circumstances will you talk to other customers?	1,2

	b. 通常是誰開啟對話? 你還是職員? ?	b. Who initiate the interaction? You or the other customers?	
	c. 回憶其中一次與其他顧客互動經驗, 你可否形容一下那一次經驗? (如: 整個過程如何、顧客的反應、面部表情、身體語言等)	c. Recall one of the interaction experience, can do describe the interaction? (e.g. the whole process, the customer's response, facial expression, body language)	3
	d. 你對這次互動經驗有何感覺?	d. How do you feel about this interaction? Positive or negative?	4
<i>Interaction with cashier staff in Hong Kong</i>			
13	a. 你會否與收銀職員打招呼?他們又會否與你打招呼? Did you greet the cashier staff in the shop? Did they greet you? b. 在什麼情況下你會跟收銀職員溝通、聊天? Under which circumstances will you talk to the cashier staff? c. 通常是誰開啟對話? 你還是收銀職員? Who initiate the interaction usually? You or the cashier staff? d. 回憶其中一次與收銀職員互動經驗, 你可以否形容一下那一次經驗? (如: 整個過程如何、職員的反應、面部表情、身體語言等) Recall one of the interaction experience, can do describe the interaction? (e.g. the whole process, the cashier staff's response, facial expression, body language) e. 你對這次互動經驗有何感覺? 正面還是反面? How do you feel about this interaction? Positive or negative?		1,2
<i>Interaction with cashier staff in Sweden</i>			
14	a. 在什麼情況下你會跟收銀職員溝通?	a. Under what circumstances will you talk to the cashier	1

		staff?	
	b. 通常是誰開啟對話? 你還是收銀職員?	b. Who initiate the conversation? You or the cashier staff?	1,2
	c. 回憶其中一次與收銀職員互動經驗, 你可否形容一下那一次經驗?(如: 整個過程如何、職員的反應、面部表情、收銀身體語言等)	c. Recall one of the interaction experience, can do describe the interaction? (e.g. the whole process, the cashier staff's response, facial expression, body language)	3
	d. 你對這次互動經驗有何感覺?	d. How do you feel about this interaction? Positive or negative?	4
Others			
15	根據你的觀察或個人經驗, 你認為超市職員是否以或一的態度對待不同國籍的顧客?	According to your observation or personal experience, do you think the staff treat customers with different nationality in the same manner?	4
16	如果不是, 你認為原因何在?	If not, why do you think they behave like this?	4
17	你與超市其他顧客或職員溝通時使用哪一種語言? 為什麼? Which language do you use when communicating with other customers or staff?		3,4
18	你有否其他跟瑞典顧客/職員接觸而你覺得有趣/奇怪/憤怒的經驗想分享? Can you share some other interesting/ strange experience about communicating with a Swedish customer/ staff?		3, 4
19		According to your observation/ experience, do you think immigrant customers behave the same in the grocery shop as other Swedish customers? If not, what are the differences?	4
20	總括來說, 你認為在瑞典超市購物有沒有一些潛規則?	Generally speaking, do you thinking there are any norms about how one should behave during grocery shopping in Sweden?	4