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**Exploring Culturally Competent Telepractice in
Early Communication Intervention: Cultural Considerations in
Working with Parent-Child Pairs in Malaysia**

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requirements for the degree of

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Abstract

Current recommendations within the field of early communication intervention (ECI) includes a family-centred approach, the establishment of a collaborative relationship and using naturalistic learning opportunities as a context for intervention delivery. These suggestions have led to the development of a triadic intervention relationship which involves the family-speech-language therapist (SLT) and family-child relationship. However, the practical application of these recommendations in both contexts of the intervention relationship need to be guided by the families' cultural values. The cultural construct of individualism-collectivism has been recommended as a way of understanding the relationship between the individual's cultural value patterns and how this might be displayed in their communication behaviours. The mode of telepractice was used in this exploration of delivering ECI cross-culturally as it enabled the investigation of the triadic relationship and provided access to a culturally different context. Despite the capacity of telepractice to provide services across cultures, no studies have been published on its delivery of ECI cross-culturally.

A practitioner inquiry design was chosen to explore the implementation and investigation of my personal practice in delivering ECI while adjusting it to meet the families' cultural needs. An adapted version of the Internet-based Parent-implemented Communication Strategies (iPiCS; Meadan et al., 2016) programme was delivered to 2 parent-child pairs from Malaysia, a nation that has been identified to exhibit cultural value patterns that align with collectivism. The qualitative data collection methods were also used to support ongoing planning and implementation of ECI. This included ethnographic interviews, field notes, parent-child observations and self-reflections which were analysed using an inductive and a deductive approach. The key findings that emerged were the themes (1) Engagement and Collaborative Strategies, (2) Experience of Early Intervention (EI), (3) Parenting Values, and (4) Perception of Support. These themes were discussed and presented as a Cultural Practice Model for SLTs to use when delivering cross-cultural ECI.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Chapter One: Introduction	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Rationale for this Study	2
1.3 Research Aims	3
1.4 The Research Context	3
1.5 The Structure of the Thesis	3
Chapter Two: Literature Review	5
2.1 Introduction	5
2.2 Culture and Communication	5
2.3 The Cultural Dimension of Individualism-Collectivism.....	6
2.4 Collectivism in Malaysia.....	8
2.5 Delivering Early Communication Intervention	9
2.6 Family-SLT Relationship	11
2.6.1 Family engagement.....	11
2.6.2 Collaborative partnership.....	13
2.6.3 Cultural consideration of family-SLT communication processes.	14
2.7 Family-Child Relationship	16
2.7.1 Parent-child communication strategies.....	16
2.7.2 Cultural consideration of parent-child strategies.	18
2.8 Telepractice	20

2.8.1 Telepractice in early intervention.	21
2.8.2 The internet-based parent-implemented communication strategies programme.	23
2.9 Conclusion.....	24
Chapter Three: Methodology	26
3.1 Introduction	26
3.2 Research Questions	26
3.3 Research Design	27
3.3.1 Practitioner inquiry.	27
3.4 Recruitment and Participants.....	28
3.4.1 Family-child participants.	29
3.4.2 The researcher and the SLT.	29
3.5 Procedures	30
3.5.1 Phase 1: Assessment.	31
3.5.2 Phase 2: Planning-implementation.	32
3.5.2.1 First session.	32
3.5.2.2 Coaching cycle and review.	33
3.5.3 Phase 3: Wrap-up.....	35
3.6 Data Collection.....	35
3.6.1 Ethnographic interviewing.....	35
3.6.2 Field notes.....	36
3.6.3 Parent-child observation.	37
3.6.4 Self-reflection.	37
3.7 Technology	38
3.8 Data Analysis	38

3.9 Trustworthiness	41
3.10 Ethics Consideration.....	42
3.11 Conclusion.....	44
Chapter Four: Results.....	45
4.1 Introduction	45
4.2 The Parent-Child Pairs	45
4.2.1 Linda and Danielle.....	45
4.2.2 Samantha and Jasper.....	46
4.3 Thematic Analysis Outcomes.....	47
4.4 Engagement and Collaborative Strategies.....	48
4.4.1 Understanding family activities and expectations.....	48
4.4.2 Facilitating reflection.....	50
4.4.3 Affirmation.....	51
4.4.4 Adaptation.....	52
4.5 Experience of Early Intervention.....	54
4.5.1 Involvement in early intervention.....	54
4.5.2 Early intervention strategies.....	56
4.6 Parenting Values.....	57
4.6.1 Perception of play.....	57
4.6.2 Parenting behaviours.....	58
4.7 Perception of Support.....	60
4.7.1 Support for the child.....	60
4.7.2 Support for the parent.....	61
4.8 Communication and Cultural Outcomes	62
4.8.1 Linda and Danielle.....	63

4.8.2 Samantha and Jasper.....	64
4.9 Conclusion.....	65
Chapter Five: Discussion	66
5.1 Introduction	66
5.2 The Cultural Practice Model	66
5.3 Identifying Cultural Considerations	67
5.3.1 Ethnographic interviewing.....	68
5.3.2 Facilitating reflection.....	69
5.3.3 Affirmation.	70
5.3.4 Summary.....	71
5.4 Considering the Family-SLT Relationship.....	72
5.4.1 Early communication intervention roles and responsibilities.....	72
5.4.2 Engagement in early communication intervention.	73
5.5 Considering the Family-Child Relationship.....	74
5.5.1 Family expectations and relationships.....	75
5.5.2 Parent-child interaction.....	76
5.5.3 Context for learning.	78
5.6 Parent Perception of Early Communication Intervention Outcomes	79
5.7 Conclusion.....	81
Chapter Six: Conclusion	82
6.1 Introduction	82
6.2 Purpose and Rationale	82
6.3 Credibility.....	83
6.3.1 Cultural familiarity.	83

6.3.2 Ethnographic interviewing.....	84
6.3.3 Data collection and analysis process.	85
6.3.4 Sample size.	86
6.4 Implications for Practice.....	86
6.5 Implications for Future Research	88
6.6 Concluding Remarks	88
References	90

Appendices	102
Appendix A: Recruitment Letter	102
Appendix B: Participation Information Sheet	103
Appendix C: Participant Consent Form	105
Appendix D: Pre-intervention and Post-intervention interview protocol.....	106
Appendix E: Language Tree handout.....	108
Appendix F: Visual of early communication intervention.....	109
Appendix G: Example of strategy handouts.....	110
Appendix H: Action Plan	111
Appendix I: Collaborative Framework.....	112
Appendix J: Massey University ethics approval	116

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Summary of intervention phases and activities	30
Figure 2: The coaching cycle	34
Figure 3: Key findings of the thematic analysis.....	48
Figure 4: Cultural Practice Model.....	67

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Code book excerpt	41
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