Immigrant Intercultural Development: A perspective taking approach to support intercultural and workplace adjustment

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A thesis submitted to the Sprott School of Business in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science in Management

Carleton University
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Abstract

This two-phased study sought to understand the challenges Canadian immigrants faced in their workplace and intercultural adjustment as technology mentors and explore intercultural development interventions to address them. Drawing on sixteen qualitative interviews with ten Canadian immigrants and two co-founders of their non-profit employer, I found that technology mentors faced communication, technology, and personal challenges and were concerned with their intercultural and workplace adjustment as well as long term work integration. Clean spinning, a non-directive coaching intervention based on clean language and emergent knowledge principles, was used to facilitate perspective taking and support their intercultural development towards addressing their adjustment challenges. I found that clean spinning supported participants in finding resource(s) to address their topic or reframe the way they understood their topic and their relationship to it. These positive outcomes suggest the need for alternative types of intercultural development that support perspective-taking and self-reflection.
Acknowledgements

I really would not have been able to accomplish this without the help of my supervisor Dr. Luciara Nardon. Her guidance, insights, mentorship, and coaching throughout my master’s experience is one of the most, if not the most, invaluable experience that I gained throughout this program. Thank you for believing in me and my work, and for enabling me to engage in my own process of engaging with different perspectives.

A big thank you to all the participants who agreed to be interviewed and the Canadian non-profit organization that allowed me to explore my thesis topic within their organization. I learnt so much from the participants and this experience. The organization was always incredibly supportive and open to discussing the varying aspects of this project. Without their help this project would not have been able to happen.

I’d also like to thank Dr. Gerald Grant and Dr. Daniel Gulanowski for their support as part of my academic committee, the Sprott School of Business, and everyone who contributed to my Carleton University experience.

Finally, a big thank you to my family and friends! To my MSc friends whose friendship and advice through video calls made this experience so much better, and to my family and friends at home who have always been there to support me.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Immigrants are a growing part of Canadian society. The Canadian government projects that Canadian immigrants will make up almost 30% of the population by 2036, whereas the immigrant population currently stands at 22% based on the 2016 population census (Statistics Canada, 2017). As a result, the Canadian workforce and society are becoming increasingly diverse. Although immigrants' process of establishing normalcy in a receiving country involves many different moving parts, in many cases, their workforce integration is a crucial element of their overall integration (Moffit et al., 2020; Kaushik & Drolet, 2018).

Specifically, workforce integration for immigrants is a process where they "engage in economic activities (employment or self-employment) which are commensurate with individuals' professional goals and previous qualifications and experience and provide adequate economic security and prospects for career advancement" (Lee et al., 2020, p.195). It is well-documented that unemployment rates among Canadian immigrants are higher than their Canadian counterparts, especially for those who recently immigrated to Canada (Hou & Picot, 2022).

Furthermore, whether implicitly or explicitly, Canadian organizations favour candidates with Canadian working experience. As a result, many immigrants face barriers in finding meaningful employment and are either unable to secure positions or acquire those they are overqualified for (Kaushik & Drolet, 2018).

Parallel to their workforce integration, immigrants adapting to the new cultural contexts go through intercultural adjustment in the receiving country. Intercultural adjustment describes the process as they relocate "to an unfamiliar socio-cultural environment [and] strive to establish and maintain a relatively stable, reciprocal, and functional relationship with that environment"

Furthermore, once immigrants secure employment, they are required adjust to the new workplace. Immigrant's workplace adjustment involves the development of the socio-cultural skills and knowledge of their job duties that are required for them to successfully integrate into their work roles and the Canadian working environment (Lai et al., 2017). In short, intercultural adjustment involves being comfortable with the receiving culture both at work and outside of work. On the other hand, workplace adjustment only focuses on being comfortable at work.

Cultural differences can increase the difficulty of intercultural and workplace adjustment, notably when trying to learn the implicit socio-cultural workplace etiquette, norms, and practices within organizations (Zhang & Zhou, 2019; Gaur et al., 2017). Research suggests that Canadian work experience helps immigrants manage the challenges cultural differences create in their intercultural and workplace adjustment because it can help build their soft skills, intercultural skills, and networks (Kaushik & Drolet, 2018; Lai et al., 2017; Moffit et al., 2020). Addressing the challenges associated with an immigrant's intercultural and workplace adjustment can positively affect their overall workforce integration.

While a large body of research documents the barriers and challenges facing immigrants in their overall integration into the workforce (Moffit et al., 2020) and the intercultural and workplace adjustment processes at play (Kaushik & Drolet, 2018; Lai et al., 2017), few of these studies have had an impact in practice. Scholars are increasing calling for more research that is impactful, useful, and relevant to those outside of the academic community (Pettigrew, 2011; Banks et al., 2016). Impact in research is typically the dissemination of findings and knowledge to the academic communities but often is inaccessible to the outside communities and others that
could benefit from this knowledge. As a result, scholars are increasingly calling for embedding social impact in the research process (Cunliffe & Scaratti, 2017; Frey, 2009; Rossetto, 2014). For my thesis, I decided to support Canadian immigrants in the challenges they experienced in their intercultural and workplace adjustment in their work roles at a Canadian non-profit organization to increase the likelihood of my research's social impact. In this thesis, I will refer to this organization through the pseudonym Older Adults Connect (OAC).

OAC presented a unique opportunity in the immigrants' workforce integration ecosystem. They explicitly sought to hire immigrants for a short-term paid internship to reduce their economic hardship and strengthen their employability by allowing them to gain Canadian work experience. Having Canadian work experience is an implicit requirement from hiring committees that can act as an exclusionary criterion for Canadian immigrants who do not have it (Kaushik & Drolet, 2018).

OAC’s mandate is to provide older adults over 55 with accessible technology support and training. It is a growing organization with one full-time employee and 20 part-time employees overseeing operational activities with over 200 volunteers as technology mentors who help support older adults. Volunteer technology mentors typically meet with older adults remotely for hour-long sessions at a time to help them with any technology goals they have.

From May – to December 2021, OAC ran a program to hire immigrants as paid technology mentors to provide them with Canadian work experience. The program ran three 10-week cohorts starting in May, July, and September of 2021, where four Canadian immigrants worked as technology mentors for each cohort, totalling twelve individuals for the whole program.
As part of my thesis work, I worked as a program coordinator at OAC for the length of this program from May to December 2021. My duties involved coordinating the twelve-immigrant technology mentor's training and work activities and provided them general ongoing support.

From the onset of this program, the immigrant technology participants knew that the role was a short-term internship designed to strengthen their employability in the Canadian workforce. The short length of the program was due to OAC having funded these short-term internships through a municipal grant. As a result, they could not extend the positions in a paid capacity to the technology mentors after their pre-determined internship period but encouraged them to continue to volunteer as technology mentors afterwards if they had the time and means to do so. Therefore, the Canadian immigrants who applied for the technology mentor short-term internship understood it to be a steppingstone in their Canadian workforce integration. The skills and Canadian work experience they would gain could help in their search for permanent work in Canada.

**Two Phased Thesis**

I began this thesis as an action research project that aimed to solve the cultural challenges associated with the technology mentor's intercultural and workplace adjustment through training interventions. As I entered the field I realized that a training intervention would not meet the needs of the immigrant technology mentors and, in the second phase of this study, explored a non-directive coaching intervention to support their intercultural and workplace adjustment. Below I explain phase 1 of the study. Phase 2 is the focus of the remainder of this thesis.
Phase 1 – Developing an intercultural training intervention

I entered the field to address the intercultural challenges facing immigrant mentors by developing a training program. As I was working at OAC coordinating the program that hired the twelve Canadian immigrants to work as technology mentors with Canadian older adults, my research intention was to increase the intercultural fit of OAC's training program for new immigrants. This research stemmed from the known challenges that immigrants face in their intercultural and workplace adjustment due to cultural differences (Zheng & Zhou, 2019; Gaur et al., 2017; Lai et al., 2017; Kaushik & Drolet, 2018). Learning cultural workplace norms is not a straightforward process, but several research-based approaches help learners understand cultural workplace norms.

Cultural Learning Interventions

The general approach to cultural learning involves organized training sessions where participants learn about cultural differences in explicit terms. In the expatriate literature, those sent on international assignments often engage with cross-cultural training programs to help them learn about the cultural differences and the workplace norms of the receiving country (Zheng & Zhou, 2019; Presbitero & Toledano, 2018).

These training programs explicitly tell the individual the information they will need to know to work effectively in these new environments. The expected outcome of these training programs is to develop the participants' intercultural competence. Researchers suggest that it is essential to have intercultural competence for successful integration in a foreign workplace (Zheng & Zhou, 2019; Presbitero & Toledano, 2018). Zheng and Zhou (2019) define intercultural competence as having three interrelated parts: the affective, cognitive, and behavioural. These are "the willingness to know and appreciate cultural differences in
intercultural contexts; (...) the understanding of cultural practices that influence how individuals interpret and behave; and (...) the skills needed for individuals to perform effectively during intercultural interactions" (Zhang & Zhou, 2019, p.31).

My intention with the first phase was to follow the general cultural learning approach and develop a training module for OAC based on the salient cultural challenges the technology mentors faced. In theory, this would help increase the intercultural fit of OAC's training program for new immigrants joining the team. I planned to develop intercultural scenarios based on feedback interviews with the technology mentors to include in the training module.

The premise of this intercultural development intervention was to teach culture as applied to the context that mattered to them in their work roles (Weisinger & Salipante, 2000). This resulted in a broad research question for phase one: *What cultural challenges does this group face?*

**Methodology**

Phase one applied action research in its methodology. Action research in management combines theory and practice and generates practical solutions for an organization or community's problem (Luscher & Lewis, 2008; McNiff, 2017). The identified problem for OAC was to improve the intercultural fit of their training program for technology mentors joining the team who were unfamiliar with Canadian work environments and the OAC's workplace culture.

Action research follows a cyclical process of learning about the organization's context and challenges and engaging with interventions to address them in an ongoing process (Ternblanche, 2019). The data collection in phase one followed the beginning of my role at OAC as the program coordinator for the twelve immigrant technology mentors.
Data Collection

Phase one had six qualitative semi-structured interviews with four immigrant technology mentors and the two founders of OAC. I used qualitative semi-structured interviews as the research tool due to their ability to reach deeper insights about participants' experiences compared to quantitative tools (Bryman et al., 2019).

In the first phase, only four technology mentors of the twelve had started their technology mentor internship and were available to be interviewed. The focus of the interview with the technology mentors was understanding their experience with OAC and client interactions to gather feedback to improve the intercultural components of OAC’s training program at the time. I interviewed the two OAC founders to provide more context to OAC’s overarching objectives and technology mentorship roles. The focus of the interview with the co-founders was to learn more about their interactions with immigrant technology mentors and any intercultural factors they noticed or had observed regarding client feedback or requests. The interview questions for phase one can be found in Appendix A.

The four technology mentors interviewed immigrated to Canada from India, Nigeria, Brazil, and Libya. These immigrants were highly skilled as several had completed post-secondary education and had work experience within Canada or outside Canada. Their experience working with technology varied. Some technology mentors studied technology-related disciplines (i.e. Computer Science), whereas others had a working knowledge of technology through their day-to-day use. OAC’s two co-founders interviewed had extensive education and work experience in technology-related fields and created the business model of technology mentorship with older adults.
Following ethical practices, I approached the four technology mentors and two co-founders in multiple stages of informed consent. The participants were recruited by OAC, as those hired for the technology mentorship roles were briefed prior to beginning their roles that there was a voluntary research project running in tandem with their internship. As I worked closely with the technology mentors, I introduced the research project with a letter of invitation and consent form over our work emails in our daily interactions, making myself available for any questions about the project during the process. The two co-founders were aware of the research project given the action research methodology. Consent was requested for a video and audio recording of the interviews, as all six interviews took place remotely over the video-conferencing tool Zoom. The interview recordings were transcribed using NVivo transcription software and verified by myself with the interview recording to ensure accuracy.

Participants' real names were removed, and gender-neutral pseudonyms were used to ensure anonymity. I followed Nardon and Hari's (2021) inductive grounded approach to analyze the data (Nardon & Hari, 2021; Charmaz, 2014). I transcribed the six interviews and coded for salient cultural factors and intercultural scenarios the technology mentors faced. Following the grounded approach, this initial analysis and findings informed the project's second phase.

**Findings**

While interviewing the participants in this first phase, I asked questions about their experience as a technology mentor, aspects they found surprising or challenging in their roles, and their perceptions of cultural differences in their work interactions (see all interview questions in Appendix A). I found that none of the technology mentors perceived cultural differences as a barrier to their work as a technology mentor. Erin describes their experience in their interactions with members of OAC:
Cultural differences exist because we are from different places and different backgrounds. [...] I did not feel it was a barrier because they should be there. Like, cultural differences. They should be there; we are all different from different cultures. But it was not something that prevented me or was a barrier in my way. It was something good that I felt like someone, or some people were trying to make it work together, which I liked. – Erin

Another technology mentor, Alex, described how if anything, it was a point of conversation while getting to know the client at the beginning of the call:

I did not feel any difference because I am an immigrant, I just felt comfortable. And they usually would ask me, what do you do? Why did you come to Canada? What are your plans? They always ask these questions [...] and they just build your confidence so much.

– Alex

The challenges that the technology mentors described in their client calls with older adults were specific to the context of the client and that technology mentor. As a result, these problems were categorized into "technical problems" and "personal problems."

Technical problems involved time management or not knowing the answer to their technical questions during the call. Personal problems include miscommunications, either when the client or the technology mentor became frustrated, or clients shared personal information about themselves that might be of concern.

To utilize these findings for OAC, I created a training module on intercultural communication that drew from OAC's training materials while also explicitly identifying that

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1 Grammatical adjustments have been made to the qualitative quotes in this thesis for ease of reading
'technical' and 'personal' problems may arise in their sessions with OAC clients. However, I concluded that there were no reoccurring intercultural scenarios that I could identify that presented salient challenges to the technology mentors.

Ultimately this first phase uncovered that the general approach to cultural learning through a training intervention was not ideal in this context. As the challenges the technology mentors faced in the role were nuanced and varied greatly, the problems the technology mentors faced were more subtle and required more individualized support. This followed grounded theory principles as it emerged from the data collected (Charmaz, 2014).

**Results and Justification for Phase Two**

As I discovered that the challenges the technology mentors were facing were contextual and personal and that the general cultural learning approach through training would not meet their needs, I then engaged in a literature review to identify skills and approaches that would benefit this group. A review of the intercultural development literature and intercultural training and coaching approaches revealed that a critical skill in intercultural competence development is the ability to take new perspectives (Reichard et al., 2015; Lenartowicz et al., 2014; Van der Horst & Albertyn, 2018; Yip et al., 2020).

I then proposed the second phase of this thesis, that technology mentors at OAC needed an individualized intercultural development intervention to create opportunities for reflecting on and making sense of the challenges they were facing. Specifically, for the second phase of this thesis, I explored whether a coaching intervention to foster perspective-taking could support their intercultural development and allow the technology mentors to identify outcomes addressing their unique challenges to support their intercultural and workplace adjustment.
The coaching intervention called *clean spinning* is based on clean language and emerging knowledge frameworks and is a non-directive coaching method. Many coaching methods follow the directive bias, as the coach presents their opinions and solutions explicitly or implicitly. Non-directive methods emphasize the coach being a facilitator where the participant guides the direction of the conversation (Dunbar, 2016).

This thesis will primarily focus on phase 2 of the study.

**Phase 2 – Exploring Clean Spinning as a tool for perspective taking and adjustment**

The second phase employed clean spinning with the technology mentors to facilitate exploring their topics through multiple perspectives (Grove, 2003; Dunbar, 2016). This approach builds on reflective approaches to interviewing (Nardon et al., 2021) and allows for the exploration of salient challenges facing technology mentors in their intercultural and workplace adjustment as technology mentors. At the same time, clean spinning could support them in their intercultural development through perspective-taking to facilitate finding outcomes to address these challenges.

This research is concerned with the nuanced and salient challenges the immigrant workplace adjustment, intercultural adjustment, and workforce integration literature present (Lai et al., 2017; Sobre-Denton & Hart, 2008; Lenartowicz et al., 2014; Reichard et al., 2015; Zhang & Zhou, 2019; Moffit et al., 2020). The technology mentorship role interacted with multiple levels of the immigrant's settlement journey.

The technology mentor internship provided them with Canadian work experience, which helped with their overall workforce integration. At the same time, OAC is a workplace where individuals have roles, responsibilities, and specific tasks to perform. The technology mentor
work role was a culturally influenced work that posed unique challenges for the participants as determined in the first phase of the project. These challenges and experience engaged their workplace adjustment and their intercultural adjustment. There were instances in which the challenges engaged both their intercultural and workplace adjustment simultaneously for the technology mentors.

In the second phase, the proposed solution to address the cultural challenges participants faced as technology mentors was to enable their intercultural development through perspective-taking (Yip et al., 2020; Van der Horst & Albertyn, 2018) with clean spinning (Grove, 2003; Dunbar, 2016). Clean spinning acted as an intercultural development tool to help the participants address their cultural challenges as technology mentors. I anticipated the positive outcomes of the clean spinning would better the participant's workplace and intercultural adjustment. As this thesis adopted an inductive grounded approach, I integrated the literature into the research taking cues from the data as is typical (Nardon & Hari, 2021).

**Research Questions**

The remainder of this thesis will answer two related research questions for the second phase of this research: 1) *What are the challenges of immigrants' intercultural and workplace adjustment in their technology mentorship work roles?* And 2) *What is the role of clean spinning in immigrants' intercultural and workplace adjustment?*

**Thesis Structure**

This chapter focused on introducing the overall topic and presenting the first and second phases of the thesis. As the remainder of the thesis concerns the second phase, in Chapter 2, a review of the relevant literature is presented. The literature in this thesis represents the works of literature I drew from and are presented together for ease of reading. Chapter 3 covers the
theoretical framework and research questions, whereas Chapter 4 describes the research methodology and data analysis method. The findings of the second phase are presented in Chapter 5, and Chapter 6 is an overall discussion of the research with concluding thoughts.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Culture carries an array of definitions, understandings, and applications within management and across disciplines. In many instances, culture is defined as the shared understanding between groups of people of how things are typically done (Mahadevan, 2017). In other words, culture is a shared, learned, and social trait individuals hold. It works as a complex whole involving their "knowledge, belief, arts, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Tylor, 1871 as cited in Mahadevan, 2017, p.13).

Individuals can become members of many cultures as they learn from those around them. To learn how things are generally done within a given culture, the individual will likely be exposed to the settings and specific situations, known as the context, where a culture's expected behaviours occur (Mahadevan, 2017).

There are differing assumptions in the literature that underpin understandings of culture and how related concepts such as communication and cultural learning interventions are understood and taught to individuals. The three prominent positions and assumptions on culture, positivist, constructivist and critical, are reviewed below.

**Positivist Assumptions of Culture**

Positivist views of culture assume that individuals share specific cultural attributes and traits and that there are aspects of intercultural encounters and scenarios viewed across cultural groups. Typically, positivist assumptions understand culture as homogenous mental programming shared collectively in nation-states of cultural clusters across defined cultural dimensions (Hofstede, 1980; Collier, 2015).
The general approach to cultural learning with training sessions as described in phase one typically adopts positivist cultural views. Interventions that adopt positivist cultural assumptions emphasize the codifiable, explicit knowledge about cultures (Lenartowicz et al., 2014; Collier, 2015; Mahadevan, 2017). These interventions teach culture as nationalities and emphasize cultural differences in varying dimensions across nations, as seen with Hofstede's cultural dimensions or Hall's high-low context (Young & Chi, 2012). In these constructs, members of a nation are assumed to adhere to the cultural dimensions of their home countries.

The focus of these positivist cultural interventions is on teaching cultural differences, where the point for participants is to learn how cultural differences affect interactions across cultures. Ultimately, it is understood that by teaching an individual about cultural differences, they will better understand their cultural assumptions and be better prepared to recognize these cultural differences in their intercultural interactions (Morris et al., 2014; Young & Chi, 2012). This recognition of their cultural assumptions and differences better prepares them for intercultural communication. Pandey's (2012) use of popular movies as a learning tool for cross-cultural management helps demonstrate this, as they were used in classes to learn explicit cultural concepts such as culture shock and cultural stereotypes. The focus is to make aspects of the other culture explicit so that the participants understand where cultural distances lie.

**Constructivist Assumptions of Culture**

Constructivists' assumptions of culture, on the other hand, understand that an individual's world views and understandings are subjective and are negotiated within specific contexts. Learning how to navigate new cultural environments and intercultural social situations becomes a matter of understanding the implicit, unspoken ways of socializing in that context (Collier, 2015).
Under constructivist assumptions, intercultural communication and culture cannot be taught as explicit information. Each encounter is different and is a social process where the outcomes are negotiated between players (Collier, 2015). The context takes place where the involved actors significantly influence the communication outcomes. Ultimately, the culture-created problems are personal and unique to the individual and the context.

Constructivist interventions that seek to address these challenges know that culture cannot be taught as homogeneous across nation-states since individuals' intercultural interactions vary due to several factors. These include the context they take place within, the relationship the individual has with their interaction partner, and the social roles they are enacting (Collier, 2015). Within interventions with constructivist assumptions of culture, there is a shift away from cultural differences and focuses on the strategies of successful intercultural interactions.

**Critical Assumptions of Culture**

Critical researchers have more discussion and studies around the power dynamics associated with culture-related research and cultural learning interventions (Allain et al., 2020; Shan & Butterwick, 2017; Collier, 2015; Mahadevan, 2017; Marovic, 2020; Hayward & U-Mackey, 2013). In this field, they are primarily concerned with answering the question of whose interests are served by the cultural learning interventions that seek to integrate those unfamiliar with the culture and the cultural descriptions used in research (Mahadevan, 2017). These questions challenge assumptions adopted in commonly accepted cultural learning interventions. This includes identifying who the intervention is beneficial for, what aspects of culture does it prioritize, champion, or diminish, and how do these static and homogenous cultural dimensions perpetuate cultural stereotypes and affect their likelihood of stereotyping those from those cultures in their interactions (Mahadevan, 2017; Collier, 2015).
Regarding intercultural development, training or mentoring programs are interventions that tell the foreigner to assimilate or integrate by informing them of the "right" way to behave. This is in large part due to the beliefs of the receiving country's nationals believing their way is the right way and, as a result, end up in interventions that explicitly or implicitly tell the foreigner to behave in a way that is in line with the norms of the receiving country nationals (Collier, 2015). As a result, it has been argued that these interventions prevent individuals from attempting to resolve the challenges or developing the skill set to resolve the challenges on their own (Mahadevan, 2017). Furthermore, these interventions explicitly tell the foreigner what problems they should expect to experience. While adopting a nuanced view of culture, the challenges that arise in each intercultural interaction will vary across individuals.

Those who advocate for or employ critical stances in their cultural learning interventions attempt to dismantle many of the power dynamics that underlie them (Marovic, 2020; Hayward & U-Mackey, 2013). The result is a cultural learning intervention that is situated and attentive to the context and explains the assumed cultural facets and power structures. An example of this is Marovic's (2020) culturally sensitive training program incorporating indigenous African healing practices for westernized South African health practitioners. It aimed to explore cultural biases and generate intercultural competence and knowledge so that health care practitioners from both cultures could better understand the diversity of patient care.

An individual's understanding of culture predominately carries positivist, constructivist, or critical assumptions. These assumptions influence how culture is framed within cultural learning interventions and what their intended outcomes are meant to be. I followed a constructivist perspective of culture (Collier, 2015) in phases one and two of this thesis.
Intercultural and Workplace Adjustment

As mentioned previously, cultural differences play a role in a foreigner's ability to adapt to their culturally foreign environments. Notably, cultural differences can increase the difficulty for culturally diverse individuals in their workplace and intercultural adjustment when learning the implicit socio-cultural workplace etiquette, norms, and practices within organizations (Zhang & Zhou, 2019; Gaur et al., 2017).

There is overlap in an individual's workplace and intercultural adjustment, as workplace adjustment issues are often related to intercultural adjustment. Intercultural adjustment concerns the individual becoming comfortable with the receiving culture both at work and outside of work. Workplace adjustment, however, focuses on the individual being comfortable in their workplace. Even though there is overlap between intercultural and workplace adjustment they can still happen separately, for example when getting to know your neighbours.

A brief overview of how cultural differences can affect an immigrant's intercultural and workplace adjustment is reviewed below.

Intercultural Adjustment

Intercultural adjustment describes the overall process and strategies associated with integrating with a foreign cultural environment. It is a stream of literature on intercultural communication that describes how individuals go through an adjustment to an unfamiliar cultural environment (Kim, 2005).

As described previously, through this process, the individual works towards establishing stability for themselves in the new environment by adjusting and work towards figuring out what works best for them (Sobre-Denton & Hart, 2008; Kim, 2005; Gudykunst, 2005; Bennett, 1998).
There have been several theories that describe the process of intercultural adjustment for individuals, some of which are described below.

The U-Curve model is popularized in cultural teachings as it explains the emotional states an individual is likely to experience when adapting to a new cultural environment (Oberg, 1960). These stages are conceptualized as sequential and follow 1) the initial honeymoon phase, where the individual is elated, 2) culture shock, where the individual begins to feel disoriented in the new environment, 3) resentment and hostility towards the new culture, 4) an initial adjustment, as their autonomy increases and lastly 5) assimilation, as the individual has a shared sense of belonging in both their home culture and the new culture (Sobre-Denton & Hart, 2008, p.539). Many preparatory materials for international expatriate assignments include teaching this model for individuals to be able to recognize these emotional stages and attribute their potentially negative feelings towards them as a strategy to cope.

Gudykunst (2005) developed their intercultural adjustment Anxiety/Uncertainty Management (AUM) model based on the assumption that all individuals will experience anxiety when uncertain or lack control. This acts as the basis for the AUM model to adapt and manage the anxiety they are experiencing. They must acquire communication tools to gather information and make sense of the adjustment process (Sobre-Denton & Hart, 2008). Like the U-Curve model, AUM assumes that part of the intercultural process is predictable. Those individuals who have a high tolerance for ambiguity and have a strong sense of self are understood to have an easier time adapting interculturally (Gudykunst, 2005). Both the U-Curve and AUM models adopt more positivistic assumptions of culture. The individual's progression through the stages is assumed to be linear, and specific individual traits determine intercultural adjustment success.
Kim's (2001, 2005) stress-adaptation model describes the process for individuals as less linear, not progressing through stages but rather moving towards growth through a series of stress-adaptation cycles. By continuously experiencing cultural stressors, which are culturally different situations from what they are used to, the individual finds specific strategies to manage and adapt to them, leading to their increased growth (Sobre-Denton & Hart, 2008). Cultural immersion under this model is increased through fluency in the receiving culture's language. Therefore, communication with the receiving country's cultural nationals is vital for individuals to adapt interculturally. As intercultural adjustment happens through communication and learning by doing, the individual loses some of their original cultural patterns (Kim, 2001).

Like Kim's (2001) stress-adaptation model, Bennett's (1998) transition model also assumes that individuals naturally go through the intercultural adjustment process at their own pace. However, Bennett (1998) asserts that individuals will have a 'fight or flight' response to new cultural environments. Whereas the flight response is when the individual will observe their new cultural surroundings to learn appropriate behaviours and responses to cultural stressors, the fight responses are when individuals immerse themselves without hesitation (Sobre-Denton, 2008). The transition model does not assume that all individuals will have fight or flight responses to specific cultural stressors. Rather, it depends on the individual and their personality traits. Therefore, two individuals experiencing a similar intercultural scenario could have different fight or flight responses depending on their characteristics (Bennett, 1998).

Both the stress-adaptation and transition models describe the process of intercultural adjustment as an individualized experience that can differ across individuals. The responses and strategies to adapt occur when the individual is faced with a culturally novel situation where they are not familiar with the receiving culture's normal response. Kim (2001) and Bennett's (1998)
models adopt more constructivist assumptions of culture, as everyone can go through a different process of intercultural adjustment.

These models have helped prospective and current internationally mobile individuals make sense of their experiences abroad while travelling, living, working, and experiencing different cultures from their own. They are primarily used as explanatory materials in preparation courses for expatriates on assignments. They provide participants with a sense of what will come as they leave in culturally unfamiliar situations (Sobre-Denton & Hart, 2008). Understanding the stages and emotional reactions associated with intercultural adjustment processes can provide those experiencing it with coping strategies. They can attribute the potentially ambiguous and confusing feelings and reactions they might experience as expected.

**Workplace Adjustment**

An immigrant's workplace adjustment involves the development of the socio-cultural skills and knowledge of their job duties that are required for them to successfully perform their work roles and adapt to the organization's culture (Lai et al., 2017). In short, the challenge of adapting to new workplace cultures is learning a workplace's norms and expectations. These norms and expectations are not explicit and are often learned through observation and doing (Lai et al., 2017).

For an immigrant's workplace adjustment, the challenges that can be heightened due to cultural differences include grasping communication norms specific to the industry, company, and receiving country's culture. These communication norms are specific linguistic nuances the individual is likely not familiar with when first entering a workplace in their roles in an organization (Kaushik & Drolet, 2018).
This is exacerbated for immigrants who have not had previous Canadian work experience as they may not be familiar with the norms around general Canadian workplace etiquette and communication (Lai et al., 2017; Kaushik & Drolet, 2018). For immigrants, there is an expectation that they already understand the Canadian workplace's expectations and norms related to the professional conduct and ethics, teamwork, safety processes, leadership, communication with co-workers/other stakeholders as well as conflict resolution when entering the workforce (Lai et al., 2017, p.939). All these factors are based on cultural beliefs and assumptions that can differ for culturally dissimilar individuals entering the organization who are unaware of Canadian workplace norms.

Individuals may face workplace adjustment challenges that are not related to cultural differences. An example of this could be learning their specific job duties or tools, such as how to use a technology device or software. However, those in new cultural work contexts will often encounter situations that relate to their workplace and intercultural adjustment simultaneously.

**Intercultural Development**

Intercultural development focuses on interventions that can help develop an individual's competencies to manage cultural challenges. Researchers suggest that intercultural development is a key aspect of an individual's successful workplace and intercultural adjustment in a foreign workplace (Zhang & Zhou, 2019; Presbitero & Toledano, 2018).

These interventions enable participants' intercultural competence to manage themselves in culturally foreign environments. As mentioned previously, Zhang and Zhou (2019) define intercultural competence as growing three interrelated parts: the affective, cognitive, and behavioural. These are "the willingness to know and appreciate cultural differences in intercultural contexts; (...) the understanding of cultural practices that influence how individuals
interpret and behave; and (...) the skills needed for individuals to perform effectively during intercultural interactions" (Zhang & Zhou, 2019, p.31).

Multiple approaches have been presented for enabling a person's intercultural development. A theme present across interventions for participants' intercultural development is building their ability to take different perspectives (Berger, 2006; Lenartowicz et al., 2014; Reichard et al., 2015; Yip et al., 2020; Van der Horst & Albertyn, 2018). Perspective-taking supports intercultural development because as individuals grow and learn, "they become more and more able to understand and take into account the perspectives of others, while, at the same time, becoming more aware of their responsibility for their emotions" (Berger, 2006, p.78-79). Therefore, engaging with different perspectives affects all aspects of our development as individuals but can be applied to specific contexts. When these contexts are intercultural, the individual can "consider the typical approach that a counterpart from another culture might take" by engaging with different perspectives (Lee et al., 2013, as cited in Van der Horst & Albertyn, 2018, p.4). This is one of many applications of perspective-taking in intercultural contexts.

I draw on transformative learning and intercultural development literatures and define perspective taking as the process of engaging critically with different viewpoints and perspectives (Nardon, 2019; Berger, 2006; Yip et al., 2020). Therefore, for an individual to engage with perspective-taking to support their intercultural development, they critically engage with the cultural information they have by interacting with different perspectives to develop new intercultural understandings (Nardon, 2019). The interventions that enable perspective-taking for participants' intercultural development are described below.
Training Approaches

Although there are many ways to facilitate participants' intercultural development, three training approaches, explicit training, tacit behavioural, and self-reflection, act as the main approaches for intercultural development and perspective-taking.

Explicit Training Approaches. The traditional approach of teaching perspective-taking is to explicitly inform participants of what these other perspectives are through informational training programs. Some scholars describe that making individuals aware of explicit cultural knowledge, such as cultural differences, is critical to understanding unfamiliar cultural contexts (Pandey, 2012; Madni, 2013). These approaches utilize popular cultural dimensions such as Hofstede (1980) (Young & Chi, 2012) and follow positivist assumptions about culture.

These approaches often teach research findings such as explicit communication styles, cultural differences at the country level, ethical judgements, and decision-making processes (Morris et al., 2014). An example of this is Madni's (2013) structured simulation, where participants are put in international negotiation scenarios and are provided with a selection of answers as to how to respond. The participants are taught to understand where cultural distances can lie and how these differences affect specific scenarios (Madni, 2013). These cultural differences are presented as finite, and participants are meant to learn about the impact of differing cultural assumptions in intercultural decision-making situations.
**Tacit Behavioural Approaches.** Other scholars argue that building participants' tacit cultural knowledge helps their intercultural development, as they learn the appropriate behavioural responses for the given cultural context through actions and experience (Lenartowicz et al., 2014; Hofhuis et al., 2020). This approach follows constructivist assumptions of culture since the objective is to help participants acquire the tacit cultural knowledge specific to the unfamiliar context. Tacit cultural knowledge is defined as "difficult to articulate and difficult to communicate; it is based on actions, ideals, values and emotions, and it is rooted in a person's experience" (Lenartowicz et al., 2014, p.1698). As a result, a person must engage with tacit cultural knowledge to understand it. According to experiential learning theorists Kolb (1984) and Nonoka and Takeuchi (1995), tacit cultural knowledge is learned through socialization, by interacting directly in those intercultural situations and learning as the individual's experience directly translates into the knowledge of how to navigate ambiguous social settings (Lenartowicz et al., 2014). Focusing on experiential learning through socialization and interaction is apparent across tacit behavioural interventions such as role-playing, field trips and cultural exchange programs (Hofhuis et al., 2020; Tuleja, 2017).

For example, Tuleja (2017) describes how socialized experiences are critical for post-secondary students' intercultural development. Tuleja (2017) utilized metaphors for students to describe their impressions of the receiving culture before and after their international academic trip and promote their understanding of the receiving culture in their terms and context. Their change in perspective was demonstrated as most students utilized explicit artifacts to represent the culture before departure, compared to when they returned in using personalized representations of the tacit components of the culture (Tuleja, 2017).
Another example is Hayward and U-Mackey's (2013) facilitated group discussion intervention for migrants was vital in promoting intercultural development supporting a smoother integration in settling in New Zealand. Through active discussions and role-playing, the participants were engaged and learned the behavioural responses of the receiving country nationals during the intervention.

**Self-Reflection Approaches.** Several researchers describe that individual reflection on experience is essential for intercultural development (Nardon, 2018; Reichard et al., 2015). This requires that the participant has intercultural experiences to reflect on, and their intercultural development happens afterwards (Nardon, 2018).

One form of intercultural experience has been described as a cultural trigger event, "a culturally novel situation marked by radically different cultural norms from those of the individual" (Reichard et al., 2015, p.466). Reichard et al. (2015) describe how students who experienced cultural trigger events, such as culture shock, retrospectively engage with intercultural development. This is due to their internal world views being challenged by the cultural trigger prompting a process of reflection to make sense of the situation. The outcomes of their self-reflection were described as broadened perspective and engagement and directly related to increasing their intercultural development through perspective-taking. The highest level of engagement a participant could have with their cultural trigger event was defined as "us[ing] this new information to inform their self-reflection, analysis, or development of new perspectives" (Reichard et al., 2015, p.467). In other words, this retrospective learning by engaging with self-reflection and different perspectives from their intercultural experiences is critical for their intercultural development.
Several scholars link intercultural development through reflection and transformational learning (Nardon, 2019; Shan & Butterwick, 2017). Everyone possesses mental models, described as "a picture in our mind of how the world works" (Hill, 1996, as cited in Nardon, 2019, p.6). During an individual's reflection on their intercultural experiences, they can adapt their mental models and, as a result, change their interpretation of future experiences and actions will be different. Adapting an individual's mental model requires that the individual "become aware of specific assumptions (schemata, criteria, rules, or repressions) on which a distorted or incomplete meaning scheme is based and, through a reorganization of meaning, transforming it" (Merirow, 1985, p.23 cited in Nardon, 2019). This means that the individual must engage with critical self-reflection to understand where the gaps in their mental models lie.

This shift and change in future interpretations because of the change in their mental models ultimately reflect their intercultural development (Nardon, 2019). The link to transformational learning theory is in this process of an individual adapting and engaging with their mental models (Nardon, 2019; Shan & Butterwick, 2017). Transformational learning theory describes this process of changing our mental models through challenging them and ultimately leads to changes in the individuals' future interpretations (Nardon, 2019). Therefore, intercultural development through reflection is one form of transformational learning that can occur for an individual.

For example, Shan and Butterwick (2017) described in their study that mentors working with Canadian immigrants experienced this transformative learning through changes in their mental models. Their transformative learning was defined as the mentors "develop[ing] new ways to perceive and relate to the self" (Shan & Butterwick, 2017, p.12), resulting in a change in
how they viewed the mentorship process, as they understood it to be a reciprocal relationship instead of being one way.

**Coaching Approaches**

An alternative approach to promoting an individual's intercultural development is through coaching. Bachkirova, Cox, and Clutterbuck (2018, p.xxix) define coaching as "a human development process that involves structured, focused interaction and appropriate strategies, tools, and techniques to promote desirable and sustainable change for the benefit of the client and potentially other stakeholders." Perspective-taking is a coaching tool advocated for in intercultural coaching contexts and is highlighted below (Wilson, 2013; Yip et al., 2020; Van der Horst & Albertyn, 2018).

Many coaching professionals describe the importance of fostering the coaches' and clients' state of mind to effectively communicate interculturally and creating an environment that accommodates and promotes inclusivity. Wilson (2013) explores how having or understanding 'global mindedness' as a coach could be helpful with the increasing diversity in clientele. Global mindedness is a multifaceted concept in international management that is defined as a way of thinking by "having an open mind while actively seeking to understand cultural norms and expectations of others, and leveraging this gained knowledge to interact, communicate and work effectively outside one's environment" (Hunter et al., 2006, p.277).

Perspective-taking is seen as an essential aspect of developing global mindedness (Wilson, 2013). How we engage with different perspectives can help explain how we think about things. Our way of thinking shapes our understanding of previous experiences and new ones (Kegan, 1994, cited in Wilson, 2013). To practice global mindedness, Wilson (2013, p.44) describes how an individual "sees and understands the perspective of others and uses those
perspectives to continuously transform their own systems" as a step further than the typical individual that "take[s] multiple perspectives whilst maintaining their own and they use the views and opinions of others to strengthen their own set of principles."

Van der Horst and Albertyn (2018) also advocate for perspective-taking in intercultural coaching practices. They explain how it can help improve coaches' cognitive flexibility and contextual thinking to learn from their experiences and understand culturally appropriate behaviours (Van der Horst & Albertyn, 2018). Cognitive flexibility is a person's adaptability in using their behavioural scripts in intercultural situations. In contrast, contextual thinking is more focused on a person's level of understanding of culture's influence on their motivations and behaviours (Van der Horst & Albertyn, 2018).

On the client-side, this notion of adapting one's perspective is advocated for when changing work roles and moving across cultures. Yip et al. (2020) describe how coaching methods can help with the identity work of changing work roles. Culture influences the difficulty of integrating clients' new work role identities should their current cultural identities cause conflicts between the new identity they are trying to integrate. Perspective-taking is identified as a strategy to manage and make sense of the conflicting identities and work toward developing new perspectives (Yip et al., 2020). Developing new perspectives helps clients expand their understanding of themselves as a leader and how it relates to the different identities they hold.

Overall, intercultural coaching focuses on facilitating an internal process of intercultural development for the coach and clients' given the context, such as an increasingly multicultural world or integrating diverse identities. These coaching approaches are not focused on a specific cultural topic but rather work to understand how to operate in changing cultural contexts.
Although many coaching methods follow the directive bias where the coach presents their opinions and solutions explicitly or implicitly, perspective taking in coaching embodies non-directive practices. Non-directive coaching describes the coach as a facilitator as they work alongside the client to negotiate the destination and outcomes for the client to focus on (Dunbar, 2016). In non-directive practices, the facilitation aspect is emphasized, as coaches are not prescriptive in offering their clients solutions but rather enable the client to find them themselves (Lam, 2016). Clean spinning (described in the detail in chapter 3) is a non-directive coaching facilitation tool that support clients in perspective taking and can help clients come to their conclusions about handling their problems or goals. In this thesis I further explore the potential of clean spinning as an intercultural development tool in support of intercultural and workplace adjustment.

Conclusion

The intercultural development literature suggests that it is essential that individuals immersed in culturally novel settings be self-aware and recognize the impacts these settings can have on them, and adapt their approach and mindset given the changes in the environment (Lenartowicz et al., 2014; Reichard et al., 2015; Nardon, 2019). This process can be supported through perspective-taking, used in coaching interventions (Berger, 2006; Yip et al., 2020; Van der Horst & Albertyn, 2018).

The second phase of this thesis adopts clean spinning as a coaching tool to support participants' intercultural development through perspective-taking to address intercultural and workplace adjustment challenges. The theoretical framework and research questions to support this intervention are described in the following chapter.
Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework and Research Questions

The clean language and emergent knowledge approaches form the theoretical foundation of this thesis (Cairns-Lee, 2017; Grove, 2003; Dunbar, 2016).

Clean Language

Clean language is an overarching practice that facilitates people to explore their inner symbolic world and acts as the foundation of David Grove's (1950 – 2008) work in psychotherapy. Grove (1989) developed the clean language practice for clients to explore and articulate their inner worlds through their metaphors in open conversation, with minimal interference from the therapist's metaphors, assumptions, and presuppositions (Grove, 1989; Tosey, 2014; Lawley & Tompkins, 2004).

As a result, the facilitators developed 'clean language' and employed questions that used the clients' exact wording and invited them to pay attention to their underlying perceptions and assumptions in their responses. By having the client focus on their responses and exact wording, they can understand how their perceptions relate to them to make sense of their inner world (Lawley & Tompkins, 2004). The client's understanding of their inner world provides them with deep insights that they refer to and use as a catalyst for change (Tosey, 2014).

Clean approaches have been gaining popularity in management research (Cairns-Lee, 2017; Cairns-Lee et al., 2021; Tosey et al., 2014; Lawley & Tompkins, 2012; Nardon & Hari, 2021). Even though the clean language approach was developed in therapeutic practices by David Grove (1950 – 2008), it has been adopted by practitioners, coaches, trainers, and researchers that do not practice therapy, making themselves accessible to non-practicing therapists (Tosey et al., 2014). Researchers employing clean approaches have advocated that implementing them in interviewing has reduced the researcher's potential for biasing responses.
(Cairns-Lee et al., 2021) and increased trustworthiness (Guba & Lincoln, 1985) and authenticity in qualitative research (Tosey et al., 2014).

**Emergent Knowledge**

Grove (2005) created emergent knowledge as an underlying set of principles that guide the use of clean language with individuals (Grove, 2005). At its core, emergent knowledge understands the individual's inner world as a system. Asking clean questions acts as a method of exploring the individual's inner world system (Grove, 2005). Through this process of clean language questioning, Grove describes how "knowledge will emerge [for the individual] which will unravel [their] systems which have become convoluted, uncovering knowledge which had previously been obscured" (Grove, 2005, para. 4). In other words, by having the individual explore their inner world, what can result is a re-arrangement of its landscape through the knowledge that emerged for them during the facilitator's clean questioning. As emergent knowledge understands individuals as having their inner world system, any changes to a part of their system will affect the whole system (Grove, 2005).

These principles of emergent knowledge describe how an individual's unique inner world systems consist of a network of non-linear, non-ordered elements that are seemingly unrelated. What clean language questioning can do for the individual is create an impactful knowledge experience that helps them make sense of their inner world and addresses their core selves (Grove, 2005).

Grove's (2003, 2005) emergent knowledge approach is the basis of clean spinning employed in this thesis and is one of Grove's emergent knowledge applications.
Many coaching methods follow the directive bias, as the expert (coach or trainer) presents their opinions explicitly or implicitly, denying the participant their exploration of solutions and minimizing their sense of empowerment (Dunbar, 2016). Emergent knowledge works against the directive bias, as its primary assumption is that participants should have the time, space, and stimulus to find their own conclusions (Dunbar, 2016). Therefore, this model assumes that participants can find their own solutions to their problems or challenges.

Conventional approaches to coaching understand the journey for a participant as linear. For example, if they started at point A and see their goal at point B, the path from point A to B would be straightforward. This contrasts with the emergent knowledge approach for coaching, which assumes that the path from point A to B is non-linear and involves multiple seemingly unrelated points (Grove & Wilson, 2005). As mentioned previously, with the emergent knowledge principles, while the individual is exploring their inner world system, seemingly random and irrelevant points may be brought forward. This represents the non-linear path from point A to B for the individual. Under the emergent knowledge approach, exploring these random points can help the individual achieve their goal (point B) through the knowledge that emerged during the process (Grove & Wilson, 2005).

Ultimately emergent knowledge assumes that the coaching process is a non-directive, non-ordered path that uncovers new emergent knowledge the participant finds valuable. The emergent knowledge uncovered by the participant through exploring their inner world system enables the participant to reach point B and understand and reach their goal (Grove & Wilson, 2005).

Grove and colleagues have developed multiple coaching interventions following emergent knowledge principles (Dunbar, 2016; Wilson, 2017). I selected clean spinning for this
thesis, given its focus on changing perspectives. In all the emergent knowledge model approaches, the participant is led through structured questions, known as "clean questions." These questions encourage reflections on what the participant knows with the intent of emerging new knowledge. While the questions seem repetitive, clean questions build off the previous one, creating a 'feedback loop' the participant experiences to enhance further their insights and change (Dunbar, 2016). Emergent knowledge approaches typically rely on six iterations of clean questioning. This is based on Grove's (2003) assumption that six rounds of exploration stand between an individual's current state and reaching insights. This is rooted in the "small world" phenomena, where any two points within a network can be linked through six points.

Grove and his colleagues have also incorporated how individuals understand the space around them into their approaches following psychology understandings. When individuals experience a space subjectively, it is known as a perceptual space defined "by the configuration of objects and symbols that exist within it and usually by a boundary that separates this space from any other space" (Lawley, 2005, para no. 2). Perceptual space includes both the physical space that interacts directly with the individuals' senses and the metaphorical space, which is the space where their imagination takes hold (Lawley, 2005). This is incorporated into the emergent knowledge approach as the space around the participant as holding potential symbolic meanings for them. Therefore, a space can produce perceptions for the participant that causes change when they react to their physical and imaginative mind space in a symbolic way (Lawley, 2005).

**Clean Spinning Coaching Intervention**

In my thesis, I follow the tradition of clean methods in management research as I applied clean spinning in a management context (Nardon & Hari, 2021; Cairns-Lee, 2017; Grove, 2003; Dunbar, 2016). As mentioned previously, clean spinning is grounded in Grove's (2003) emergent
knowledge framework and follows three principles: clean questions, the use of space, and repetition (Grove, 2003; Dunbar, 2016). How it follows these three principles are described below.

The clean questions used in clean spinning are structured to avoid researcher bias in the conversation, encourage reflection by using the participant's exact words, and elicit deeper insights by mirroring their language (Dunbar, 2016). The participant is led through a series of clean questions to encourage reflection on what the participant knows, for example, with the clean question: "And is there anything else about that (participants words)?" (Dunbar, 2016, p.93).

Second, it assumes that knowledge and insights are stored in the space around participants and hold valuable insights that can be accessed (Grove, 2003). Space is known to have perceptual attributes that are subject to one's interpretation and can act as a source of change for the participant (Dunbar, 2016). During clean spinning, participants are asked to revolve in a 360 circle and share their insights from each place they stop. The intent is to "emerge knowledge which may be uncovered when the client faces different directions" (Dunbar, 2016, p.169).

Lastly, while the participant spins, there are six repetitions of the clean questioning plus one final round to reflect on their experience in the exercise. The reasoning for the six rounds of repetition is based on Grove's (2003) reasoning; those six rounds of exploration stand between an individual's current state and reaching insights and solutions. In the final round, the participant is asked, "And what do you know about that [participants topic] now?" to elicit deeper insights from them about their experience with clean spinning, as well as bring it to a close (Dunbar, 2016). A complete overview of clean spinning is in Appendix B.
Research Focus and Research Questions

As discussed in the previous chapter, an essential skill in intercultural competence development is taking new perspectives (Lenartowicz et al., 2014; Reichard et al., 2015; Yip et al., 2020; Van der Horst & Albertyn, 2018). Intercultural development has been understood to help people address the cultural challenges in their intercultural and workplace adjustment (Zhang & Zhou, 2019; Lenartowicz et al., 2014; Reichard et al., 2015). I argue that the participants in this study, immigrants working as technology mentors, needed an individualized intervention to create opportunities for perspective-taking to reflect and make sense of the challenges they faced related to their intercultural and workplace adjustment and identify outcomes to address their unique challenges.

As a result, this study seeks to answer two related research questions: 1) What are the challenges of immigrants' intercultural and workplace adjustment in their technology mentorship work roles? And 2) What is the role of clean spinning in immigrants' intercultural and workplace adjustment?
Chapter 4: Methodology

I used the canonical action research methodology (Ternblanche, 2019; Davidson, Martinsons & Ou, 2012; Grove, 2003) to explore the role of clean spinning in facilitating immigrants' intercultural development. CAR is a type of action research and follows action research principles as it intends to contribute to scholarly knowledge while addressing organizational problems (Davidson et al., 2012). The CAR methodology is "iterative (it involves one or more cycles of activities), rigorous (it requires strict adherence to a cyclical process model), and collaborative (work should be shared between researchers and organizational clients)" (Davidson et al., 2012, p.764).

CAR follows the cyclical process of act – evaluate – reflect. Following Terblanche's (2019) CAR utilization, I applied CAR's cyclical principles to analyze and improve the application of clean spinning in this context. I followed this cycle with each clean spinning session with the participants by writing a reflection on what worked or did not after each interaction with participants, engaging in change through action and reflective learning (Terblanche, 2019; Davidson et al., 2012). CAR is iterative as multiple cycle sequences are repeated and collaborative between the researcher and the organizational clients (Davidson et al., 2012).

Four rounds of change were implemented throughout the ten interviews in the second phase. Each change that was made happened by reflecting on the previous interview(s) and debriefing with my research supervisor. For example, after the first couple of interviews, I noticed that the participants struggled to understand how to do the exercise and would benefit from a more explicit explanation about how the exercise would proceed. I then spent more time
explaining that they would be turning in different directions to explore their chosen topic. All the changes are reflected in the step-by-step outline of the clean spinning method in Appendix B.

**Interview Structure and Justification**

In the second phase, I used qualitative semi-structured interviews for the ten technology mentor participants. Qualitative interviews were chosen for this research due to the emphasis on exploring the participants' experience of perspective-taking through the clean spinning and their workplace adjustment in their technology mentorship roles. As Bryman et al. (2019) note, in qualitative research, "the stress is on the understanding of the social world through an examination of the interpretation of that world by its participants" (Bryman et al., 2019, p.356).

Semi-structured interviews were selected to maintain consistency across interviews and apply the clean spinning method in full while still maintaining some flexibility to better focus on participants' salient experiences (Weston et al., 2001). All ten interviews took place online over Zoom, the video conferencing tool, due to the stay-at-home precautions with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The interview structure had three stages following Nardon and Hari's (2021) interview structure in exploring the metaphor elicitation model with international students. An overview of the three stages of the interview and their anticipated outcomes are summarized below in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of the Interview</th>
<th>Anticipated Outcome</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Identifying their challenges in the role as a technology mentor</td>
<td>Description of the types of challenges that immigrants faced in their work roles as technology mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Articulating a goal related to their adjustment</td>
<td>Description of the topics that are salient to immigrants related to their intercultural and workplace adjustment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3) Clean Spinning Coaching Intervention

| Clean Spinning Coaching Intervention | Explore how participants engage in perspective taking to address their topics and describe whether participants’ perspective on their initial topics changed because of clean spinning |

**Table 1: Three Stages of the Interview and their Anticipated Outcomes**

In the first stage of the interview, I probed the participants underlying behaviours or patterns of their perceived challenges in their technology mentorship roles. This would describe the challenges that immigrants faced in their work roles as technology mentors. I also gathered pertinent information for OAC and highlighted problem areas that could be improved. Since I was working alongside them at OAC, trust was already established prior to the interview.

In the second stage of the interview, I encouraged them to identify a topic they wanted to explore during the clean spinning intervention (Nardon & Hari, 2021). These topics could be related to their work role challenges directly or indirectly as a salient topic related to their adjustment to Canadian society. This stage helped identify and describe the salient topics to immigrants related to their intercultural and workplace adjustment.

The third stage of the interview was the clean spinning intervention to explore outcomes and ideas related to their topic and engage with perspective-taking (Dunbar, 2016; Grove, 2003). In the fifth chapter, the findings compare the participants' initial topics with the end to see if the participant did change their perspective. This stage addressed the research questions directly by describing the participants' experience with clean spinning and whether participants' perspectives on their initial topic changed because of it.
**Epistemological Considerations**

The research approach is inductive as the intent was to explore how clean spinning helps the participants' intercultural and workplace adjustment in their technology mentorship roles. This is opposed to deductive models that seek to prove hypotheses related to the phenomena in the study (Bryman et al., 2019). This inductive approach allowed for the exploration of salient challenges faced by the participants in their technology mentor roles and supported their perspective-taking to find outcomes to manage the challenges experienced during their intercultural and workplace adjustment through clean spinning.

Furthermore, the clean methods under the emergent knowledge framework originated from Grove's therapeutic practice. Even though its origins are in therapy, several researchers have paved the way for their use in research contexts without practicing therapy themselves (Tosey et al., 2014; Cairns-Lee et al., 2021; Lawley & Tompkins, 2012; Nardon & Hari, 2021). As I am not a practicing therapist, I followed these researchers' steps to adhere to ethical standards and respect the therapist-researcher boundary (Tosey et al., 2014; Rossetto, 2014; Minikel-Lacocque, 2019).

The qualitative interview process can be therapeutic for the participant as they share their experience. This is since the interview serves as a meaning-making space for participants, where they can experience emotional release and positive feelings due to speaking their stories out loud (Rossetto, 2014). The distinction of qualitative interviews is that the researcher intends to learn about the meanings and relationships that underlay participants' experiences and emotions through gathering facts and information and eliciting storytelling (Rossetto, 2014). This process is characterized by paraphrasing and probing through active listening to develop trust with the participant, like clinical interviews in therapy. However, whereas clinic interviews will offer
treatment plans or advice, qualitative researchers do not as they focus on information gathering (Rossetto, 2014). The relationship between the qualitative researcher and participant is also caring (Minikel-Lacocque, 2019). Researchers are not neutral in the encounter and bring forward their subjectivities, and their presence impacts the interview environment (Minikel-Lacocque, 2019). Therefore, the researcher must understand that their intentions should not be therapeutic and should be based on a relationship of trust with the participant (Minikel-Lacocque, 2019; Nardon, Hari & Aarma, 2021).

**Data Collection**

The recruitment methods followed phase one's footsteps, as the participants were recruited from OAC's selected participants for the training and technology mentorship program. The ten participants were employed as technology mentors with OAC for the short-term three-month internship. Their technology mentorship roles involved assisting older adults remotely for hour-long sessions with their technology needs and goals, as described in the first phase. Three of the participants from the first phase of this study also participated in this second phase.

At the beginning of their internship, they were informed that a research project to improve the organizational processes for immigrants as part of the program at OAC was taking place and that their participation would be optional. As I was working alongside the participants to help with their training during their three-month internship, I described the research project to see if they were interested in participating. I emphasized that it was optional and not required of their duties to follow ethical practices. For those interested, follow-up information for the study, including the recruitment email, consent forms, and an outline of the interview process, was provided to ensure participants were informed of their consent. As I met with the participants semi-regularly as part of their technology mentorship work, I let them know that they were
welcome to ask questions at any point. For added anonymity, I assigned all the participants gender-neutral Anglo-Saxon pseudonyms in the interview transcripts and data analysis and used a pseudonym Older Adults Connect (OAC) for the non-profit organization.

All ten participants immigrated to Canada from India, Brazil, Libya, China, Italy, United Arab Emirates, Mexico, Syria, and Bangladesh. Of the ten participants, there were two males and eight females. The participants' work and education experience varied, as some had school or work experience in technology-related fields, while others had experience working with older adults. All the participants had completed high school education, and the majority completed post-secondary education outside of Canada or were completing post-secondary education within Canada. Three of these technology mentor participants also participated in the first phase.

Data Analysis

Two data analysis approaches were employed to analyze the three stages of the semi-structured interviews. The data from the first two stages, identifying challenges and a topic for the clean spinning, were analyzed through a thematic analysis. The data from the third stage was analyzed through qualitative content analysis using a combination of Lawley and Tompkins's (2012) REPROCess and Harland's (2012) power of six categories as a codebook to analyze the clean spinning intervention data.

Due to the small number of interviews, Microsoft Excel was used to organize and code the data as the amount of data did not warrant coding software such as NVivo or Dedoose. NVivo transcription software was used to transcribe the interviewing recordings, followed by my verification of each transcript with their respective audio recording to ensure their accuracy.
Following Nardon and Hari (2021), I took an interpretative approach to analyze the data. Under the interpretative approach, I assumed that participants' experiences and responses were subjective. Given that I was working parallel with the participants at OAC during their technology mentor internship, having this prior knowledge of their work environment and experience enabled me to interpret their responses as I was familiar with their work environment.

For the first and second stages, thematic analysis was applied for the data, the challenges the participants experienced in their technology mentorship roles and their topics for the clean spinning. Thematic analysis is concerned with "identifying, examining and recording themes within data – with these themes being defined as patterns explaining certain phenomena" (Myers, 2020, p.210). This was achieved inductively, as the themes from the first and second rounds were derived from the data.

There were three rounds of coding for the first and second stages. The initial coding round focused on identifying keywords that summarized their response. The second round then looked at these keywords to find similarities among participants, classifying the responses into categories. The third round repeated this process with the results of the second round. These three rounds of coding follow the process of thematic analysis of "generating initial codes, searching for themes among codes, reviewing themes, defining and naming them" as described by Myers (2020, p.210). The result was overarching themes for the challenges the technology mentors faced in their roles and the themes of their topics, described in-depth in chapter 5.

The data from the third stage was analyzed through qualitative content analysis. Qualitative content analysis is "a searching-out of underlying themes in the materials being analyzed" (Bryman et al., 2019, p.511). Typically, these themes are demonstrated through illustrative quotes (Bryman et al., 2019), as is done in chapter 5.
Furthermore, qualitative content analysis systematically applies pre-determined categories to the data to understand the meaning of written sources. These pre-determined categories are either defined by the researcher or borrowed from other sources (Myers, 2020). I followed this approach of using pre-determined categories to analyze the clean spinning intervention data in the third stage of the interview. I adopt Lawley and Tompkins's (2012) REPROCess categories and Harland's (2012) "Wobble" category as my codebook to analyze the data from the ten semi-structured interviews.

**REPROCess Model**

The REPROCess model was developed by Lawley and Tompkins (2012) and was used to understand what kind of experience the participant is having during a clean language intervention (Lawley & Tompkins, 2012, p.5; Grove, 2003). The REPROCess model is linguistic-based and has six different categories to classify a participant's experience: Resource, Explanation, Problem, Remedy, Outcome and Change. The six categories are not sequential, and the participants' responses can follow any trajectory between the REPROCess categories.

Their model helps answer where the participant is directing their attention during a clean language intervention. This is done by examining their exact words in response to clean questions and then allocating them to one of the REPROCess categories. Ultimately it is a method of modelling the participant's attention. Each of the categories is described below.
**Resource.** Resources are defined as something the participant has or can access and sees as valuable. The participant can describe these resources as imaginary, physical, or symbolic representing a skill, attribute, or quality. Although its description varies, at its core, the resource is something the participant attributes as valuable and is within their reach (Lawley & Tompkins, 2012).

**Explanation.** Explanations are the participant's description of the link between action, idea, or event and often follow the 'because' of a participant's response (Lawley & Tompkins, 2012). Explanations are often the link between the other REPROCess categories and help make a participant's understood relationships between concepts explicit.

**Problem.** If the participant identifies anything that they do not like, expressing their dislike through words or phrases, it is considered a problem. These statements address either difficulty in their present, past, or anticipated future (Lawley & Tompkins, 2012). This includes if the participant describes their discontent with the context, not directly addressing their dislike (e.g., "I am depressed/in pain") (Lawley & Tompkins, 2012, p.9).

**Remedy.** Remedies are propositions participants make to avoid, reduce, or eliminate a problem. The premise of a remedy is that the participant expresses a need, desire, or want for a problem to change. These are often band-aid fixes to problems, and either are not sufficient, cannot be implemented, or will worsen the problem (Lawley & Tompkins, 2012). Remedies are found to be quickly brought forward by participants, but as Lawley and Tompkins (2012) argue, if they were viable solutions to their problems, they would not have the problem. An example of a remedy would be "I don't want X" where the participant states that they do not want the problem of X to exist anymore (Lawley & Tompkins, 2012).
**Outcome.** Like remedies, outcomes express a desire or want for something different. Although they are different as outcomes explicitly express the desired result after the problem has been addressed. Linguistically a participant's outcome will have some variation of would like, want, need, desire but do not address the problem directly, only the aftermath of it being resolved (Lawley & Tompkins, 2012). Compared to the remedy of "I don't want X" where the participant does not want the problem X to exist, an outcome would be "I want Y". The participant describes Y as a desirable outcome, but it is only attainable after problem X is resolved (Lawley & Tompkins, 2012).

**Change.** Within the REPROCess model, all categories except for change are representative of the participant's current reality (Lawley & Tompkins, 2012, p. 13). What qualifies as a change is subjective, and therefore behavioural or linguistic evidence must occur to signal to the facilitator that a change has happened. The conditions for a change must be present, as change is not an action that the participant or facilitator performs (Lawley & Tompkins, 2012, p.9). It is important to note that a change for a participant can occur at different points in time, either during the session or after the fact.

Some considerations with this model should be discussed. Even though clean language is focused on removing the researcher's bias in influencing the participant's response Lawley and Tompkins (2012) still acknowledge that, to a lesser degree, the researcher's interpretation will still be present in the selection of the REPROCess category (Lawley & Tompkins, 2012). There is also the possibility of the facilitator miscategorising the participant's response (Lawley & Tompkins, 2012). This is especially true for identifying whether a change has occurred in real-time with the participant. As 'change' is especially susceptible to misinterpretation, there may be an expectation in a coaching session from the facilitator or participant for a change to occur.
Lawley and Tompkins (2012) stress the importance of staying close to the participant's exact wording and refrain from assuming something is a change, problem, remedy etc.

Self-reflexivity is vital to help mitigate the likelihood of miscategorising and is actively practiced through reflection in interviewing (Way et al., 2015). Furthermore, what the participant considers a resource, an explanation, or any one of the categories can change for the participant and is not static (Lawley & Tompkins, 2012). While ultimately, the aim is to better understand the participant's perspective by modelling their responses according to their exact words with the REPROCess model, it is important to acknowledge its constraints.

**Power of Six**

The power of six is a different but similar framework to REPROCess developed by Harland (2012) that seeks to understand the participant's experience moving through a clean language intervention. Harland's (2012) framework consists of six stages as follows 1) Proclaim, 2) Explain, 3) Reinforce, 4) The Wobble, 5) Crash and Burn and 6) Out of the Ashes. A participant moves through these six stages sequentially during a clean language intervention. This contrasts with Lawley and Tompkins' (2012) REPROCess framework, which proposes that participants move freely among their six categories.

Harland's (2012) framework focuses on repetition as the participant is asked the same clean question in the six rounds. The emphasis is placed on the participants' reaction to being asked the same question. During this iteration, the participant's "information increases and iterates, complexity builds and eventually collapses or reorganizes, allowing self-healing and resolution to emerge" (Harland, 2012, p.32).
The only category borrowed for my data analysis codebook was Harland's (2012) "The Wobble" category. Each stage follows the clean language exercise as the participant is repeatedly asked the same clean question six times "and what else do you know?". Harland's (2012) first three stages build off one another and are described as presenting the participant's current reality. The fourth stage, The Wobble, is where the participant is confronted with the repetition of the questioning. Their reaction is defensive, where "there could be indecision, hesitation, equivocation, a wavering between conflicting feelings or courses of action, and an inclination to favor the first one side and then the other" (Harland, 2012, p.75). The fourth stage questions the reality presented in the first three stages. It is the interim period when the participants let go of their current view but have not yet found another one.

While analyzing the data, initially, only the REPROCess categories were used. As the first coding round was done, it became apparent that a few of the participant's responses fell outside of the REPROCess framework and that Harland's (2012) Wobble category best described a number of those responses. Therefore, it was adopted into the codebook in the third stage.

As a result, each of the ten participant's paths through the seven stages of the clean spinning intervention was coded using the categories Resource, Explanation, Problem, Wobble, Remedy, Outcome and Change described in the previous chapter (Lawley & Tompkins, 2012; Harland, 2012).

Two additional categories emerged from the data, as the categories above did not adequately represent their response. The first Describe Space category was created to explain participants' responses exclusively describing their surroundings. These statements the participants made had no reference or interpretation of how they related to anything to do with themselves or their topic and were purely descriptive of their surroundings. The second category,
Action, was created to describe an explicit intention to achieve their goal as none of the REPROCess or power of six categories explicitly focused on this (Lawley & Tompkins, 2012; Harland, 2012).

Following Lawley and Tompkins (2012), a visual representation of each participant's trajectory through the seven rounds of the clean spinning intervention can be found in Appendix C. One of the participants' visual representations can be seen below in Figure C as an example of their progression through the seven rounds of clean spinning and the respective codes assigned using the codebook (Lawley & Tompkins, 2012; Harland, 2012).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Round No.</th>
<th>Describe Space</th>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Wobble</th>
<th>Remedy</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure A: Visual Representation of a Participants Progression Through the Seven Rounds of Clean Spinning

A separate analysis round of the participants' responses was done to compare the final description of their topic with their initial one. This would address if any change in their perspective of their initial topic occurred with clean spinning. The findings of these analyses are discussed in depth in chapter 5.
Chapter 5: Findings

Immigrant technology mentors faced communication, technology knowledge, and personal time management challenges in their role. These challenges reflect several problems identified in immigrants’ intercultural and workplace adjustment literature (Lai et al., 2017; Rajendran et al., 2017). The topics the participants chose for the clean spinning intervention were related to not only to challenges specific to their workplace adjustment as technology mentors but also their long-term workforce integration and overall intercultural adjustment. These topics represent salient areas for these immigrants' experience living and working in Canada. Lastly, clean spinning facilitated two types of change for participants: finding resources to address their topics and reframing their view of the challenge. All ten participants experienced one of these forms of change through the clean spinning exercise. These findings are discussed in detail below.

Challenges Facing Immigrant Technology Mentors

Each participant had challenges to discuss in their roles as technology mentors. Although the challenges are described in detail, it should be noted that all participants described their overall experience as positive in their roles as technology mentors. These challenges describe aspects of the role that they had difficulties navigating some of the time. The three main challenges identified were communication, technological, and personal challenges.

These challenges reinforce the findings from phase one of this study in that there were areas within technology and communication practices that were difficult. Of the challenges that the technology mentors faced in their work roles, the number of participants that discussed their communication challenges (6), technology challenges (7) and personal challenges (5) were close in distribution.
Certain challenges described by participants involved both their intercultural and workplace adjustment, as there is often overlap between the two (Lai et al., 2017). For example, often, the technology mentors, during their sessions with clients, would encounter a challenge that involved both a technical challenge (e.g., unsure of how to solve the technical issue) while at the same time involve a communication challenge (e.g., how to let the client know and prevent them from becoming upset). These findings ultimately reflect that the challenges the participants' experienced in their work roles were related to their intercultural and workplace adjustments.

The challenges and the number of participants that identified this challenge are summarized in Table 2 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Challenge</th>
<th>Participants that Identified this Challenge</th>
<th>Sub-themes of these Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication Challenges</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Managing client’s emotions and linguistic challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology Challenges</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Lack of having the same device as the client and lack of general technology knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Challenges</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Logistical and time management challenges and technology mentors’ managing their expectations for successful sessions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Summary of Challenges Identified in Technology Mentor Roles

*Communication Challenges*

Technology mentors faced challenges communicating with senior clients. Several technology mentors described the difficulty in continuing sessions when the client's technology problem could not be solved, or unanticipated technology problems arose during the session. This sometimes led to the client feeling dejected and frustrated, which posed a challenge for the technology mentor as they worked to resolve the issue and build the client's confidence to
continue the session. Half of the participants described these challenges during their time as technology mentors. Blair describes a situation when this happened and their reaction as follows:

For example, today, a client opened the camera and didn't know how to get out of the camera. I tried to tell the options that the client should do to get out and exit. The client for 10 minutes was facing himself using the camera and was saying, 'I... I give up. I don't know what to do'. I responded, 'no, let's do this. Let's be patient. I wish I could be by your side, but I can't.' (...) We finally figured out how to get out of the camera. But it took a while. - Blair

Navigating ambiguous situations when the other person is upset or angry is difficult even for those with much experience. Participants who talked about emotional challenges were quick to preface that upset or angry clients were not typical in their day-to-day interactions and sessions with the clients. These scenarios stood out to them as anomalies but still presented a challenge for them at the time. While it was not possible to evaluate possible cultural effects given my small sample, differences in expectations for how emotional conflicts should be managed vary across cultural contexts and individuals (Lai et al., 2017) and could compound the challenge.

Another challenging area within communication involved the participants expressing themselves effectively and teaching the clients how to use their technology. As many people have different communication styles, the participants described a process of adjusting and calibrating their communication to suit the client and in the online environment. Three out of the

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2 Small grammatical adjustments have been made to participant's quotes for ease of reading
ten participants described these kinds of challenges. Sam explains this kind of challenge as follows:

> For the choice of words, I may know what the word is, but maybe the meaning or that particular word is not used in a certain context [...] I find it very challenging and then maybe I am trying to adjust to a client. I am trying to say something but he or she understands something else due to the choice of words - Sam

Both communication challenges demonstrate the importance of understanding language and behavioural nuances within interactions. Many of the participants described how as they gained experience, they learned strategies to address these challenges better. Language proficiency for immigrants is a well-identified challenge (Lai et al., 2017; Rajendran et al., 2017). Knowing the specific workplace terminology is vital to communicating the details of the work. In this case, explaining and teaching the specific features of the technology proved to be a challenge.

The communication challenges arose in situations where there was prolonged one-on-one intercultural communication. The clients were predominately older adult Canadian-born nationals, and the technology mentors were immigrants. These challenges arose in managing the clients' emotions when things were not going as planned and the technology mentors experiencing linguistic challenges with their English proficiency. Proficiency in the receiving country's language is one of the most emphasized pathways for integrating into society (Kaushik & Drolet, 2018). Challenges with English proficiency are identified and linked to several workplace adjustment challenges for immigrants observed previously (Kaushik & Drolet, 2018; Lai et al., 2017).
Specifically, a lack of knowledge of the specific job-related or industry-specific jargon, a lack of a Canadian accent, and the expressions, slang or idioms have been described as threats to intercultural communication (Kaushik & Drolet, 2018). Some were present in a few communication challenges with clients the technology mentors described. Communication is a two-way street and requires the immigrant to adapt to the linguistic nuances of Canadian English or French and requires Canadians to welcome new people and cultures by being accepting and non-discriminatory towards those with non-Canadian accents (Kaushik & Drolet, 2018).

Even though several participants described these challenges, it should be noted that many of the participants described how this short-term internship improved their English proficiency significantly as they were practicing their written and verbal skills regularly.

**Technology Challenges**

Many of the technology mentors expressed their concerns about technology in their roles. Several discussed how they felt like their lack of technical knowledge posed a challenge. They did not know enough about technology to answer all the questions clients would ask them. This could partly be due to their lack of prior experience, as some previously worked in non-technology related fields, such as healthcare, as described by Blair:

> I don't feel as secure because I do not come from a technology field. Sometimes clients ask me questions that I think even my [partner], who is in the technology field, doesn't know. But sometimes I think that this is my fault because I am supposed to know everything [...] So I wish I could know this... when a problem is hard to solve, is it because it is very hard to solve or is the problem hard to solve because I don't know basic things. – Blair
Blair’s concerns about the 'correct' amount of technical knowledge for a technology mentor within this role were evident in their answers and echoed across other participants' answers. OAC had guidelines that describe the technology mentors as technology allies for the older adult clients and not technology experts to help minimize this challenge.

Another technology challenge arose when the technology mentors themselves did not have the client's type of device. These challenges were based on not knowing the interface of the client's device and not being able to guide them easily through sessions. Taylor describes this challenge below:

*Because I am working with older people, I have to be very specific when explaining. For example, if I say start sharing screen on Zoom to a senior who has an Apple device, she or he won't be able to follow, since its name on Apple or an iOS Zoom is 'start broadcast' [instead of what shows on Taylor's device]. This is a challenge when working with a system or device I don't have at home. I must research a lot. And this will take a lot longer and twice the effort to understand – Taylor*

The concern about how to teach a client about a device that they do not have or might have never used was shared among participants. It is worth noting that a few technology mentors discussed how they only met with clients that had the same devices as they had to alleviate this challenge.

Both technology challenges demonstrate that knowing technology devices and their general applications was essential for the role. Part of these challenges was expected, as the technology mentor work is assisting older adults with their technology. The technology
challenges were the most frequent of the three challenge themes discussed in part one and shown in Table 2 above.

The technology-related challenges were more specific to the work duties of the role and can be linked to the technology mentor's workplace adjustment (Lai et al., 2017). In other words, to be a technology mentor, a certain level of knowledge of technology and its uses are required to adjust to the work role and the workplace.

**Personal Challenges**

The personal challenges the technology mentors experienced were those challenges that fell outside of the communication or technology challenges. These included the technology mentors managing their expectations of successful sessions and logistical challenges involved with time management of their other commitments.

A few participants discussed difficulties understanding how a successful session should look like. They described how their beliefs about the technology mentor role and what a successful client session looks like changed over time. Darcy defined a successful session as the pull between solving the technical problem and getting to know the client:

> At the very least, it takes some time to discover the client's ability and how much I should focus on progressing and productivity versus how much I should focus on the connection and enjoyment of the session because this is not typical tech support, right? If it's your typical tech support, you're there to accomplish the task, at least in my opinion; with all the interactions I've had with tech support, that is the way the job is designed. It is to focus on the job and move on to the next client. With [OAC] it is very different. And I guess that is the part of the job that I found the most challenging – Darcy
Darcy described how finding the balance between productivity during the session and enjoyment would be different for each client. In Darcy's experience, clients came to the sessions with different expectations that Darcy had to figure out. These concerns about the specifics of the work role can partially be attributed to the variability of the work itself. As the clients come to OAC with their specific technology challenges and goals, the technical task varies greatly. However, the clients' expectations of the technology mentor can also vary. This aspect of ambiguity in the work role can contribute to this challenge. Although OAC is explicit about this variability to both the technology mentors and the clients and promotes technology mentors as allies for older adults’ technology learning, the ambiguity still created some challenges for technology mentors.

Some technology mentors described logistical challenges in the role. Namely, these were related to their time management between their technology mentor role and their other professional or personal commitments, as described by Erin:

*A great challenge is maybe managing the time because I also freelance with [another organization]. So, when they called me to say, 'are you available at 1', for example, I am already scheduled at one and already have a session. And then I find this is a challenge for me, because working as a freelancer and working with specific hours with another organization, it can be a struggle to satisfy both* – Erin

As the technology mentor role was a part-time paid position, many technology mentors held other jobs or had other time commitments (caretakers for their children, full-time students, etc.). As the sessions were scheduled catering to the client's availability, a few technology mentors described how managing their time effectively to satisfy all their commitments posed a challenge. Although OAC was flexible in accommodating their schedules, the technology
mentors did describe the efforts of managing their multiple commitments as an ongoing priority throughout the length of their internship.

The personal challenges identified in this research were primarily concerned with time management skills required on behalf of the participants involved in multiple ongoing commitments on top of their technology mentor role, such as their other work, parenting, or studying. The technology mentorship role is a short-term internship and part-time. It is no surprise that the participants were involved with several commitments to fulfill varying requirements related to their financial, parenting, settlement, or student obligations.

Not only does the nature of their positions require time management, but there is also literature to support different cultural approaches to time management (Leonard, 2008; Nonis et al., 2005; Hall, 1959) which may compound the difficulty. Time itself is a social construction in that individuals are socialized on how to define and give meaning to time (Leonard, 2008; Nonis et al., 2005). Individuals’ perceptions of time have been described as their temporal orientation. Hall's (1959) monochronic and polychronic are the dominant positivist constructs of cross-cultural temporal orientations on opposite ends of a spectrum. Individuals who have a monochronic view of time see it as linear and treat it as a commodity (i.e. time is money), generally focusing on one thing at a time. Polychronic individuals tie time with relationships, focus on multiple tasks, and associate their goals in line with their in-groups (Leonard, 2008; Nonis et al., 2005). Given the scope of this research, it cannot be determined what the participants' perceptions of time are and whether this impacted their time management in the technology mentor roles. However, what can be said was that for a few of the technology mentors, time management presented challenges in their work roles.
Topics for the Clean Spinning Coaching Intervention

The clean spinning intervention required participants to choose a topic related to their integration and work role to reflect upon. As part of the CAR method, halfway through the participant interviews, I began to ask participants to think of a topic they would like to reflect on prior to the interview. Before doing this, some participants had found it challenging to think of a topic for the clean spinning on the spot.

The topics chosen by participants fell into three categories: Workplace Adjustment, Intercultural Adjustment and Workforce Integration are summarized below in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Participants Topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workplace Adjustment</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>“I want to give my best”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Help them achieve their goals”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Explore this world more”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Challenge I’m facing during the work”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercultural Adjustment</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>“Lack of empathy”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Discussion with [researcher] about clearly speaking”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Homesickness”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workforce Integration</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>“Find my purpose and give me direction”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Helping women”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Find this opportunity”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Summary of Participants Topics for the Clean Spinning Intervention

Participants were asked to think about topics related to their integration that were important to them. Some topics were more directly related to adjustment to their work roles. In contrast, others chose topics outside of their OAC work, focusing on their overall workforce integration and intercultural adjustment in Canadian society. Most importantly, their topic was chosen freely and was something important to them.
Even though, at the onset of this study, the intention was to utilize clean spinning for the challenges the participants may have been experiencing in their intercultural and workplace adjustment, other topics related to their workforce integration were also brought forward. This presented an opportunity to explore clean spinning's role in not only the participants' intercultural and workplace adjustment but also, in some cases, their overall workforce integration.

These topics support the notion that the salient challenges that foreigners experience in a receiving country in their work and lives are varied and nuanced (Kim, 2001; Bennett, 1998). Although broad programming for immigrant settlement and adjustment is essential, it is equally important to provide individualized support for the unique aspects of their situations.

Following clean language principles, the excerpt of the topics in Table 3 above reflects the participant's exact wording to describe their topic during the interview. I used the participants' exact wording for their topics during clean spinning, following the non-directive approach of this coaching method (Dunbar, 2016). The three topics are discussed below.

**Workplace Adjustment**

Alex, Ariel, Blair, and Jamie chose topics relating to improving their client's experience during their client sessions for clean spinning. Their topics are directly related to addressing challenges they were experiencing as technology mentors to improve their performance in their roles. As a result, they were grouped under workplace adjustment.

Whereas Alex and Ariel wanted to explore how they could improve their sessions generally, Blair specifically focused on how to improve their technology proficiency. Jamie also had a specific challenge as they were navigating how to work from home while taking care of their young child simultaneously. These topics point to salient aspects of the technology
mentorship role that the participants found challenging. They could be addressed directly by OAC through training, practices, and policies to help enable their workplace adjustment. Some of these challenges relate to the previous communication and technology challenges described in the previous section of this chapter.

**Intercultural Adjustment**

Sam, Morgan, and Casey focused on goals related to their competencies and settlement in Canada. For an immigrant's intercultural adjustment and workplace adjustment, there is often overlap as they experience workplace adjustment issues that are also related to their intercultural adjustment. However, they can also happen separately. These topics reflect both intercultural adjustment challenges that overlap with their roles as technology mentors and outside of them in their overall adjustment to living in Canada.

For Sam, improving their English proficiency and learning Canadian nuances in conversation were seen as a top priority to improve their ability to communicate in all aspects of their life in Canada. Fluency in the receiving country's spoken language has been known to accelerate the intercultural adjustment process for foreigners. They are more likely to be exposed to intercultural interactions that they are required to adapt to (Kim, 2001). Although Sam's topic was related to their intercultural adjustment in their technology mentorship work, it was also considered a part of their overall intercultural adjustment as they described how they would like to work on this for every aspect of their life in Canada.

Morgan was more focused on finding ways to cope with the homesickness they were feeling, having arrived in Canada four years prior for their studies. This relates to the emotional aspect of intercultural adjustment, as foreigners have been described as experiencing feelings of
longing for their home country as they work to find strategies to cope with their new environments (Sobre-Denton & Hart, 2008).

Lastly, Casey was concerned with the lack of empathy that people had in general and discussed how they wanted to help promote this among their network and in all their interactions to promote inclusivity and appreciation for others. Even though the three topics are different, they relate to finding strategies and ways to help support better lives for themselves in Canada.

**Workforce Integration**

Finding careers commensurate with an immigrant's foreign qualifications, education, and work experience is a salient challenge for immigrants (Lai et al., 2017). This is due to structural challenges seen with the non-recognition of foreign experience and credentials, lack of Canadian work experience, and discrimination in the hiring process (Lai et al., 2017).

Initially, this research focused on the participants' intercultural and workplace adjustment in their technology mentor work roles. The participants who chose topics related to their workforce integration understood their work at OAC not to pose salient challenges that needed further reflection. As described previously, the technology mentor role was structured to be a short-term internship to provide the participants with Canadian working experience to increase their employability. It is understandable that a few participants chose to focus on aspects related to their long term workforce integration as they were thinking about their upcoming careers post internship.

Darcy, Erin, and Taylor chose topics related to their workforce integration, describing their career goals and professional competencies. Whereas Darcy was contemplating different career paths that they could take coming to the end of their undergraduate studies, Taylor had a
specific career they were working towards, given their experience prior to arriving in Canada. Erin discussed their overarching goal of having a career that involved helping immigrant women with technology to help them overcome technology barriers. Even though they are different, they were grouped due to their similarity related to their overall workforce integration in Canada.

**Clean Spinning Coaching Intervention**

Across all ten participants, a change related to their selected topics was found through clean spinning. This was determined by comparing the first round of their responses to the final seventh round. The two overarching types of change that they experienced were finding resource(s) to address their topic or reframing their perspective of their topic. The findings of the third stage are organized according to the two types of changes. An overview of participants' changes and insights from their final round is found in Table 4.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Type of Change</th>
<th>Participants Topic</th>
<th>Round 7 (shortened quote)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taylor</td>
<td>Resource(s) Found</td>
<td>Find this opportunity</td>
<td><em>This exercise gave me more than one idea of what I have to do and not just sit in front of the computer and send resumés to different companies</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam</td>
<td>Resource(s) Found</td>
<td>Discussion with [researcher] about clearly speaking</td>
<td><em>I think it can be helpful for many things. Maybe sometimes we have a goal, but we are not thinking it in different direction, of how can we achieve the goal</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darcy</td>
<td>Resource(s) Found</td>
<td>Find my purpose</td>
<td><em>I can choose the lens through which I see the world</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erin</td>
<td>Resource(s) Found</td>
<td>Helping women</td>
<td><em>I know how to hunt my opportunities and I want to make my way easier for the people who are at the beginning</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex</td>
<td>Resource(s) Found</td>
<td>I want to give my best</td>
<td><em>We can go in different directions, different ways, and sometimes that way is not the one that will make us keep our best</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamie</td>
<td>Reframing</td>
<td>Challenge I'm facing during the work</td>
<td><em>I know what to do now. But before I thought 'how I will do it, how I will manage that he’s not sleeping and I need the right environment’, but now I know what to do. It's much easier now than before</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casey</td>
<td>Reframing</td>
<td>Lack of empathy</td>
<td><em>As I said, now is more about me as well. It is not just about the other people that usually are whom I'm always trying to help before myself</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blair</td>
<td>Reframing</td>
<td>Explore this world more</td>
<td><em>OK, what I know compared to before is that it is easier to explore this world than I thought. It is not that difficult. My self-esteem improved a lot because I know that I'm more capable</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ariel</td>
<td>Reframing</td>
<td>Help them achieve their goals</td>
<td><em>Before, I used to think my weakness was language, and I always thought, the language barrier is holding me back. But now, I do not think so because I have the knowledge and the skills that make me capable for this position</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morgan</td>
<td>Reframing</td>
<td>Homesickness</td>
<td><em>In the beginning, I was OK with just talking about homesickness as a concept, but when you are feeling it, it’s more difficult to talk about it</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Summary of the Type of Positive Change Experienced by Participants Through the Clean Spinning Intervention
Resource(s) Found

Half of the participants found specific resources through clean spinning that could help address or manage the problems they identified. In coaching, resources are something that the client possesses or is within reach to help solve their challenge and work towards their goal (Lawley & Tompkins, 2012). Participants identified these resources as strategies and actionable steps that brought them closer to addressing their topics. As a result, part of their adjustment was better facilitated through the specific resources they identified during clean spinning. The resources provided them actionable steps towards addressing their goals or problems.

Taylor found multiple resources during clean spinning. Their topic was "find this opportunity" and was specific to finding a job in Canada that was directly in line with their previous work and education experience in engineering. As they had recently immigrated, the technology mentorship internship was their first paid work experience in Canada. Taylor's initial description of their topic is as follows:

Taylor: I try to find a job as an urban planning engineer. Because here in Canada, they need this type of specialization, but at the same time I can't find a job, I can't find this opportunity

In the final round of clean spinning, Taylor describes multiple strategies and actionable steps on their terms that they could take towards working towards their goal:

Taylor: OK, it has given me ideas. Maybe first, I always send my CV to the companies that ask for this type of work or specialization, but maybe I have to move in another direction, that I have to go by myself and ask if they want this type of specialization. I have to call a friend that works in the same field and ask him how I can follow different
steps to get this kind of job. I remember now that when I turned in a different direction, I had my neighbour, who is a civil engineer and is sixty-five years old. I'm sure he has a great experience about what I can do, and maybe he knows other companies that I don't know, not only those on "Indeed" or through the websites. Maybe he knows other companies here in [city] (...) This exercise gave me more than one idea of what I have to do and not just sit down in front of the computer and send resumes to different companies.

These strategies, reaching out to their network of friends and neighbours and approaching the job search in different ways, are resources found during clean spinning. This shift in strategies from sending their CVs in online applications to engaging with their community and networks mirrors a shift from a flight to a fight response in Bennett's (1998) intercultural adjustment model. The flight response focuses on observing their new cultural surroundings to learn appropriate behaviours and responses to cultural stressors, whereas fight responses are when individuals immerse themselves without hesitation (Sobre-Denton, 2008). Immersing oneself in the cultural contexts through fight responses has been known to increase intercultural adjustment (Sobre-Denton, 2008). As Taylor was shifting towards immersing themselves in their network to work towards obtaining their desired employment, this indicates a shift to a fight response.

Sam also found resources during clean spinning to help facilitate a change towards their goal. Sam's concerns going into clean spinning were focused on being able to effectively express themselves in English in all their interactions in their day-to-day life in Canada. They expressed difficulty in finding the right words and expressions while communicating with others, as they described in the beginning:
Sam: my goal is to clarify what I am saying or what I want to convey to others.

Sam directly referenced the piece of paper they had written their goal on "discussion with [researcher] about clearly speaking" in many of the rounds. They directed their attention toward the goal and provided explanations, resources, and outcomes. In the final round, they reflected on what they learned about their topic. Sam explained how they identified steps towards their goal through the process of clean spinning:

Sam: Well, when we started, I had a piece of paper and a goal and then when I turn back and turn or turn left and turn in front of you, gradually I was adding more steps and more information (...) I made it a plan.

This was followed by Sam articulating their learnings from clean spinning:

Sam: I think it can be helpful for many things. Maybe sometimes we have a goal, but we are not thinking it in different direction, of how can we achieve the goal. I think trying things in different ways and searching for different things does not limit myself to only one thing, only one approach, and adds more and more things for a single goal

The action of moving in different directions and exploring different aspects of how they could reach their goal was valuable learning for Sam. Sam's moving from their initial goal to an actionable plan was delineated as they moved through the rounds. Sam's plan was a resource they found through clean spinning and demonstrates the change they experienced.

An important point to make is that even though both Taylor and Sam experienced a similar type of change through clean spinning by finding resource(s) specific to their goals, the way they reached their result was different. Taylor shifted their attention from describing their surroundings to focusing on their topic in the fourth round. In comparison, Sam's responses built
on their plan to address their goal every round. Sam's progression through the third round to the sixth below demonstrates this:

[Third round] Sam: I know that I have a piece of paper right where I have a discussion with [researcher] about clear speaking and maybe I will have some schedule for practicing speaking

Here Sam identified an outcome of their goal, a schedule for practicing speaking. This plan was further explained in the fourth round as specific activities were identified to help reach their outcome:

[Fourth round] Sam: I know that I have a piece of paper where I have a discussion with [researcher] about the clear speaking and, I have a schedule and I think I can have some plans of what to do, like watching movies or listening to podcasts

This plan is confirmed in the fifth round,

[Fifth round] Sam: I have a piece of paper with discussion about clearly speaking with [researcher] and I have some schedule and I have some plan of watching movies and listening to podcasts

And resources they discovered are confirmed in the sixth round with their plans,

[Sixth round] Sam: Well, about the plans. I can list some name of the movies and podcast channel, which I may like to explore

This action of listing the movies and podcast channel names shows a direct link of how Sam can reach their outcome of clearly speaking. Compared to Taylor's fight responses outlined previously, the steps in Sam's plan more closely followed Bennett's (1998) flight strategy for
intercultural adjustment. Sam outlined the steps for watching movies and listening to podcasts to learn the culturally nuanced language and behavioural cues through observation.

Like Taylor and Sam, the three other participants, Alex, Erin, and Darcy, also found resource(s) through clean spinning and, as a result, experienced a change. As demonstrated by Taylor and Sam, by engaging with different perspectives, they found resources that were like what the intercultural adjustment literature describes as 'fight' or 'flight' responses to challenges that present themselves in new environments (Bennett, 1998). Overall, finding resources acts as a change since they are within the participants’ reach and are directly related to how they can help address or manage their problems or goals.

**Reframing**

The other half of the participants experienced a change by reframing the root problem and their understanding of their topics. Reframing involves looking at the problem from a different perspective and finding an alternate explanation that addresses and explains the problem.

Engaging with different perspectives is a part of intercultural coaching that promotes intercultural development (Van der Horst & Albertyn, 2018; Yip et al., 2020). As individuals engage with different perspectives, they are put in a position where they can begin comparing and thinking more critically of their perspective to understand better how it guides their behaviours and thoughts. This can, at times, cause a change in their initial perspective (Van der Horst & Albertyn, 2018). This change in their perspective can also be linked to an individual's transformative learning (Nardon, 2019; Shan & Butterwick, 2017). This is because transformative learning "is a process of revising our mental models, which results in change in our interpretation of experience and action" (Nardon, 2019, p.6).
Perspective-taking can help manage and make sense of conflicting identities (Yip et al., 2020). This can help explain Jamie's progression throughout clean spinning with their topic "challenge I'm facing during the work." They were finding it difficult to manage to care for their child while simultaneously running sessions with the clients, which can be related to experiencing a conflict between their role as a technology mentor and as a parent. Jamie explains further:

*Jamie: This is my goal. It's to prove to myself that I can do it. It's hard for me with an 11-month-old child at home because when he can't see me around him, he starts to cry. And when I'm sitting here, he will play and make sounds. And it's very, very stressful for me when I start with a new client.*

Through clean spinning, Jamie described how they felt about the topic and how they were generally feeling in their day to day while facing different directions. As they progressed through the rounds, they started describing effective strategies they had been doing to manage this challenge. Jamie confirmed this in their final round of clean spinning:

*Jamie: It's less stressful than before because I start to know what to do and how to deal with it (...) I know what to do now. But before I was thinking 'how I will do it, how I will manage that he is not sleeping and I need the right environment’, but now I know what to do. It's much easier now than before.*

Enabling different perspectives helped Jamie make sense of their ongoing experience and, as a result, created a new narrative to understand how they can successfully work as a technology mentor while caring for their child at the same time. This change in perspective was
solidified in the sixth round, as they realized that they had already solved the challenge of navigating the two roles with specific strategies:

*Jamie:* The challenge that I'm having with the work it's getting easier. I start to know what kind of things to do that makes him play, or when start our meeting, I put on his favorite show (...) For now, I have no problem. I know what to do now. First, when I start working, I put him to nap, and he starts to go to nap now. So, I found a solution. I started to find solutions for my challenge at work and it became easier each time. But the first time it was hard.

The change in Jamie's understanding of their challenge came through their realization that they have already come a long way in overcoming it with the specific strategies they described. This exemplifies one of the positive results of engaging with perspective-taking during clean spinning.

Casey's reframing their topic demonstrated another positive outcome of engaging with perspective-taking. As they moved through clean spinning, they better understood how their topic, which began as a broad general idea applicable to everyone, was a problem that was affecting them. Furthermore, they realized the importance of putting their own needs first and helping themselves before trying to help others.

Casey's topic began as "lack of empathy," which they saw as problematic. They wanted to explore ways to increase other people's empathy for a more accepting environment for new immigrants. Casey elaborates further here:

*Casey:* When a person discriminates another one because of her culture, it is a lack of empathy because he doesn't know how the other person must be feeling, of being an
immigrant to a new country with another language, have to run away from their country 
or whatever reason it is that brought them to another country.

Casey's reframing in the final round is close to what Van der Horst and Albertyn (2018) describe as contextual thinking in intercultural coaching when there is an increased understanding of the context's influence on the participant's behaviour. In the final round of clean questioning, Casey reframed their topic and spoke about how a lack of empathy can arise in the contexts that directly impact them and how it would negatively affect them:

Casey: at the beginning of our conversation, I was thinking more about the other people that are discriminated or not well treated because of a lack of empathy, and now I felt it myself. For example, if I'm sad or having an argument with my dad, and another person is not going to know but they're going to still be super with rude to me, I might break. And that lack of empathy will impact me directly.

Casey changing how they understood the lack of empathy affected themself through clean spinning led to a profound realization:

Casey: Well, it just made me realize that it's not always other people that I should be worried about. It is also me who I need to take care of more (...) and sometimes we don't give that attention to ourselves, of how do I feel doing this or not doing that. I think now I'm going to have to listen more to myself.

This conclusion was reached as Casey reflected on how their initial topic was focused on helping others with their lack of empathy. Casey realized the importance of addressing their own needs first. This exemplified a different positive outcome from reframing compared to Jamie's during clean spinning. Whereas Jamie's reframing involved changing their perspective on how
much their challenge impacted them, Casey's reframing focused on redefining their topic to focus inwards on themself instead of others. Although the intention and outcomes of the reframing were different between Jamie and Casey, they share the same underlying type of reframing change and demonstrate a positive outcome for both participants.

Both Jamie and Casey's experiences reflect aspects of intercultural development through reflection. This is because intercultural development through reflection has been understood as transformational learning (Nardon, 2019; Shan & Butterwick, 2017). As transformative learning is concerned with individuals engaging with a critical self-reflection that can change their mental models and perspectives, Jamie and Casey's experience during clean spinning engages with a seemingly similar process. A link can be made between the participants that engaged with the reframing type of change during clean spinning and their transformational learning. The participants that experienced reframing during clean spinning described a change in their understanding of their initial topic by the end. Transformative learning is a complex process for individuals, as it "involves a comprehensive and critical revaluation of oneself" (Kitchenham, 2008 as cited in Nardon, 2019, p.7). Several participants who engaged with reframing described clean spinning as difficult as they were asked to reflect on deeply self-embedded topics. Reframing during clean spinning could represent transformative learning experience for the participants who experienced it.

As exemplified through the excerpts of a few of the participants' experiences, all ten participants experienced a form of change through clean spinning by finding resources, seeing their challenges in different ways through different perspectives and resulting in an outcome on their terms. A further discussion of these findings' theoretical and practical outcomes is elaborated on in the final chapter.
Chapter 6: Discussion and Conclusion

My intention for this project was to engage in impactful research that made a difference to the research participants and the organization, OAC. This project sought to contribute to action by addressing the workplace and intercultural adjustment challenges for OAC’s technology mentors (Lai et al., 2017; Sobre-Denton & Hart, 2008). It also aimed to support their intercultural development (Lenartowicz et al., 2014; Reichard et al., 2015; Nardon, 2019). In addition, I contribute to the ongoing conversation around research with impact by demonstrating the feasibility and utility of small-scale transformative interventions (Nardon et al., 2021; Way et al., 2015; Li & Ross, 2020) as a possible approach to action research.

At the same time, this project contributed to research by exploring the feasibility of non-directive coaching methods, such as clean spinning (Dunbar, 2016; Grove, 2003), to support immigrants in their intercultural and workplace adjustment and act as a complement to traditional training and development interventions (Lai et al., 2017; Rajendran et al., 2017). In short, this research helps demonstrate how non-directive coaching methods can be an intercultural development tool for immigrants' workplace and intercultural adjustment. Its research contributions add to the alternative intercultural development literature (Lenartowicz et al., 2014; Mahadevan, 2017; Collier, 2015; Nardon, 2019).

Contributions to Action

The first research question, “What are the challenges of immigrants' intercultural and workplace adjustment in their technology mentorship work roles?” addresses the action component of this project (Ternblanche, 2019; Davidson, Martinsons & Ou; 2012). The communication, technology, and personal challenges described in chapter 5 can contribute to OAC’s practices. OAC can utilize this knowledge to improve their training processes and
practices to support immigrant technology mentors better. Many of the specific challenges participants described related to the themes of communication reflect the challenges in the intercultural and workplace adjustment literature (Lai et al., 2017; Rajendran et al., 2017). These aspects can be incorporated into OAC's training materials to help prepare immigrants for this role in the future. In addition, OAC may reconsider their processes and scheduling to better match technology mentors and clients based on their technology devices, technology knowledge, and communication styles.

**Contributions to Research**

The second research question, "What is the role of clean spinning in immigrants' intercultural and workplace adjustment?" addresses the research contributions. This study contributes to research by showing the value of non-directive coaching approaches for immigrants' workplace and intercultural adjustment (Dunbar, 2016; Grove, 2003). Non-directive coaching approaches can act as an alternative intercultural development tool and adds to intercultural development literature (Lenartowicz et al., 2014; Reichard et al., 2015; Collier, 2015; Nardon, 2019).

**Non-Directive Coaching Approaches**

In my research, I found that the problems the participants faced as technology mentors were unique and contextualized (Collier, 2015). I demonstrated how a non-directive coaching approach could help them explore their challenges on their terms. Non-directive coaching approaches promote participants' perspective-taking and self-reflection (Dunbar, 2016), which are known strategies in the intercultural development process (Reichard et al., 2015; Nardon, 2018; Nardon, 2019).
The intercultural development literature suggests that individuals immersed in culturally novel settings reflect and engage with different perspectives to recognize these settings' impacts on them (Reichard et al., 2015). After this, they can adapt their approach and mindset for their future experiences in intercultural environments (Nardon, 2018; Nardon, 2019). Therefore, I sought to promote their intercultural development through perspective-taking using a non-directive coaching approach.

Non-directive coaching approaches emphasize the facilitator as creating an environment free of the facilitator's biases. They work alongside the participant to support the exploration of the participant's assumptions, goals, and challenges without interfering (Dunbar, 2016; Grove, 2003). Although many coaching approaches follow the directive bias where the coach presents their opinions and solutions explicitly or implicitly, non-directive coaching approaches supports the participants to come to conclusions and identify solutions on their terms (Dunbar, 2016). This empowers the participant to take the initiative and address their topic themselves (Dunbar, 2016).

Non-directive coaching approaches can complement current intercultural development interventions for immigrants. For immigrants' workplace and intercultural adjustment, training programs that explicitly inform them how to act or communicate expectations for their work are the norm (Mahadevan, 2017; Morris et al., 2014). Mentoring programs are sometimes included to complement these training programs, where immigrants are paired with mentors familiar with the work context and cultural environments. These mentors help guide and support the immigrants' workplace and intercultural adjustment process by answering their questions, showing them resources, or offering support (Shan & Butterwick, 2017; Reeves, 2017). Although both interventions are beneficial for immigrants in learning how to behave and navigate their new cultural contexts, they can prevent empowering immigrants to identify and
find solutions to their questions and challenges on their terms (Collier, 2015; Mahadevan, 2017). Non-directive coaching approaches as an intercultural development tool can complement these popular training and mentoring interventions for immigrants by empowering them to decide how to manage best their challenges or goals (Dunbar, 2016).

By pivoting in the second phase using the non-directive approach of clean spinning, I honored participants' abilities to find outcomes to manage their challenges on their terms. The positive outcomes of employing the non-directive coaching approach in this research show its potential as an intercultural development tool for immigrant adjustment. They can complement training and development programs for immigrants in other organizations as they did for OAC. This points to several discussions critical researchers have regarding what interventions are helpful for immigrants (Mahadevan, 2017; Collier, 2015).

Critical researchers have argued that the typical cultural learning interventions in training tell foreigners what problems they should expect to experience. While adopting a nuanced view of culture, the challenges that arise in each intercultural interaction will vary across individuals (Mahadevan, 2017; Collier, 2015). Non-directive coaching approaches share similar intentions of critical cultural learning interventions. They work to empower participants to resolve the challenges they face or develop the skill set to resolve them independently (Dunbar, 2016; Mahadevan, 2017). These approaches place much of the power and direction of the outcome in the hands of the participants (Dunbar, 2016; Grove, 2003; Mahadevan, 2017; Collier, 2015). Critical cultural learning interventions are not common in practice, as most offerings employ a positivist perspective to understanding and teaching culture (Collier, 2015; Mahadevan, 2017). More research is needed to assess the relationship between non-directive approaches and critical cultural learning interventions.
The participants' topics for clean spinning also point to non-directive coaching approaches' role in supporting immigrants' workplace and intercultural adjustment. As described in chapter 5, their topics were related to their workforce integration in finding or obtaining their desired employment, their workplace adjustment and intercultural adjustment for challenges related to their technology mentorship roles and their general wellbeing in Canada.

The diversity of the topics shows that each participant prioritized addressing different aspects of their journey in Canada, even though they were all brought to OAC to work as technology mentors. Each topic the participants brought forward was individual and specific to their characteristics and situation. This supports the notion that the salient challenges in immigrants' intercultural adjustment (Kim, 2001; Bennett, 1998), workplace adjustment (Lai et al., 2017), and workforce integration are varied and nuanced (Kaushik & Drolet, 2018; Moffit et al., 2020). The nuanced nature of their topics supports the need for individualized interventions like non-directive coaching to help explore them (Dunbar, 2016; Grove, 2003).

Notably, only four out of ten participants chose topics specific to their technology mentorship role challenges, as these directly relate to their intercultural and workplace adjustment. This helps indicate the overall perceived difficulty of the intercultural and workplace adjustment challenges posed by the technology mentorship role at OAC. The other participants' topics related to their intercultural adjustment that were not directly related to their technology mentorship roles and workforce integration show that the non-directive coaching approach also played a positive role for immigrants outside of the technology mentorship role.

As this research was inductive and exploratory, there are many other topics that this research is involved with that require further investigation. Alternative forms of intercultural development outside of training programs are needed to support various learning approaches
Clean spinning as a non-directive coaching approach shows potential as one of these alternative approaches to a person's intercultural development (Dunbar, 2016; Grove, 2003). As clean spinning is one example of a non-directive coaching approach, future research can explore other non-directive coaching techniques to further contribute to the conversation of alternative intercultural development tools. This can help uncover approaches that suit the range of needs of all individuals, including immigrants, to best support their intercultural learning.

Clean spinning is also one of many clean language approaches (Grove, 2003). Clean language approaches use participants' exact wording in questions and invite them to pay attention to their underlying perceptions and assumptions in their responses (Grove, 2003). They have been gaining popularity in recent management research (Cairns-Lee, 2017; Cairns-Lee et al., 2021; Tosey et al., 2014; Nardon & Hari, 2021). The continuation of clean methods like clean spinning in management research presents research opportunities worth pursuing.

One of these is the long-term effects of clean methods on research participants, an under-researched area. Management research that uses Grove's (2003) clean language approaches is small in numbers and requires further research to explore its full potential in research contexts. Its applications in business research have focused on leadership and employee work-life balance (Cairns-Lee, 2018; Tosey et al., 2014). This research contributes to clean methods in management research and can be a reference for its use for immigrants' intercultural development. The range of management research topics using clean methods demonstrates its flexibility while also pointing to many other business areas that can be explored through this approach (Tosey et al., 2014; Nardon & Hari, 2021).
Culture's Role in Immigrants' Intercultural and Workplace Adjustment

This research also supports the literature that views culture as nuanced and contextual (Collier, 2015; Mahadevan, 2017; Weisinger & Salipante, 2000). While I started this research in phase one to explore if the immigrants' cultural differences impacted their technology mentorship roles, I noticed that these cultural differences were much more nuanced and contextualized (Collier, 2015; Mahadevan, 2017). Under this view of culture, individuals experience culture and cultural differences in the context, and it is a unique experience across individuals as a result (Weisinger & Salipante, 2000). This was demonstrated by the variety of challenges the technology mentors brought forward in this research.

Due to the variability of the challenges, I could not draw intercultural scenarios that could be incorporated into a training module for the immigrant technology mentors in the first phase. The participants required individualized support for their culturally nuanced challenges (Collier, 2015). Cultural training programs that explicitly inform immigrants how to act or communicate expectations for their work are standard (Mahadevan, 2017; Morris et al., 2014). However, this research suggests that even though cultural training programs may help provide immigrants with information at some stages of their integration and adjustment, it is insufficient because individuals experience culture, challenges, and adjustment in unique ways (Collier, 2015; Mahadevan, 2017).

This research also points to the conversation of culture's role in the immigrant workplace and intercultural adjustment literature, as sometimes it assumes that the more culturally different the immigrant is, the greater likelihood of difficulty in their adjustment (Lai et al., 2017; Rajendran et al., 2017; Gaur et al., 2017). While this research does not represent all immigrants adjusting to their work in receiving countries, the technology mentors described how their
cultural differences did not necessarily present a barrier in their client interactions in the first phase of this project. However, the role of the technology mentor's culture in their challenges was not tested in this case.

Cultural factors may have played into their challenge areas described in chapter 5, including their communication styles and challenges of managing clients' emotions, as these are considered cultural aspects (Kenesei & Stier, 2017; Gaur et al., 2017). As our perceptions of time are considered cultural practices, the time management challenges the technology mentors experience with managing their multiple priorities may have been another challenge where their cultural differences played a role (Leonard, 2008; Nonis et al., 2005; Hall, 1959). More research is needed to uncover the role culture played in these challenges.

Practicing Action Research

The CAR methodology utilized in this project follows the cyclical model of act – evaluate – reflect (Ternblanche, 2019; Davidson, Martinsons & Ou, 2012). The two phases of this research followed this general action research cycle of action, reflection, and learning to apply changes (Myers, 2020; Bryman et al., 2019).

In phase one, I began with the action of developing a training program to increase the intercultural fit of OAC's training program and proactively address the challenges immigrant technology mentors could face. After learning the nuanced nature of the technology mentor's challenges, I evaluated that the general training intervention was not ideal for supporting them in addressing these challenges (Collier, 2015). After reflecting on the situation, I explored whether the non-directive and individualized coaching intervention approach, clean spinning, would better support these participants in their challenges (Dunbar, 2016; Grove, 2003).
Across both phases, I maintained consistent communication with OAC's co-founders, briefing them on the ongoing process and seeking their approval for the proposed changes, as is common practice in action research (Eden & Huxham, 1996; Myers, 2020; Bryman et al., 2019). OAC's co-founders were very receptive to research in practice, which helped me better facilitate the action research process.

**Action Research on a Smaller Scale**

Action research is considered risky due to reasons like delays and reliance on the organization for data inputs, the potential lack of research relevance, and the difficulty of simultaneously doing action and research (Myers, 2020). As a result, novice researchers are sometimes warned against action research due to its risks (Raynor, 2019). However, action research appeals to researchers for its direct contribution to practice. Its impact is felt by those who most benefit from it outside of the scholarly community.

This action research project's manageable size and scope point to another contribution. Action research's impact and contributions are often described on larger scales, at the scholarly, policy, practical, societal, and educational levels (Wickert et al., 2020). In the context of an organization, the impact and outcomes of action research are often assumed to implement widespread change across it (Wickert et al., 2020; Myers, 2020).

In recent years, several researchers have argued that transformative change through dialogue in interviews can facilitate small-scale impact (Li & Ross, 2021; Way et al., 2015; Nardon et al., 2021; Cunliffe & Scaratti, 2017). This approach is linked to embedding impact in the research process in the interview (Nardon et al., 2021). It can support implementing action research on a smaller scale by achieving impact for a group or members of an organization. This is exemplified through this research, as clean spinning impacted the immigrant technology
mentors in helping them address their topics, producing positive outcomes through the interview
dialogue with their reframing and resource(s) found.

Clean spinning helped facilitate conversations that produced social impact for the
participants through the transformative dialogue in the research interview (Way et al., 2015;
Nardon et al., 2021). This helps show that small-scale focused projects like this one can
successfully contribute to action and still impact the organization. Utilizing research tools, such
as clean spinning that promote reflection, is a promising solution to incorporate impact into the
research process through interviews (Nardon et al., 2021).

This research also positively impacted OAC to help their understanding of how to better
manage and support this group of people in the organization. The impact may not reach across
OAC, but it impacted these participants and produced relevant information that benefits future
immigrant technology mentors joining the team. As novice researchers are sometimes warned
against action research due to its known challenges (Raynor, 2019), this research can be used as
a reference for future masters or Ph.D. students interested in small-scale action research.

Limitations

Like all research, some limitations need to be addressed. The first limitation involves the
long-term impacts of non-directive approaches and the two positive outcomes from the findings.
These outcomes experienced by the participants were only analyzed during the interview, as
there was no follow-up done afterwards with the participants to gauge the long-term effects of its
positive outcomes. Participants may have found deeper insights into their topics upon further
reflection post clean spinning or may have forgotten the insights gained in the exercise. Since the
intent was not to measure the effectiveness of clean spinning but rather to explore its feasibility,
I, as the researcher and my thesis supervisor, deemed this acceptable given the limitations of my timeline and thesis program.

Only four of the ten technology mentor participants chose technology mentor role topics for clean spinning. One limitation could be the timing of the interviews. In the second phase, the technology mentor's length of work varied from one to six months as three cohorts of technology mentors started in three-month intervals following OAC's programming. The interview timing could have influenced the participant's likelihood of choosing topics for the clean spinning directly related to their technology mentor role. Some technology mentors might have chosen topics directly related to their work roles had the interviews been performed earlier in their internships. Of those that chose topics related to their workplace adjustment, three technology mentors had been working in the role for one-three months.

Even still, for those four participants who chose topics related to the technology mentorship role, the identified challenges differed among each participant within this group. This reinforces the notion of the unique and nuanced nature of these challenges. The other six participants' topics related to their intercultural adjustment outside of their work roles or workforce integration in Canada.

Another variable that cannot be ignored is the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. It has significantly changed the day-to-day work environment for many individuals, as many are now working fully remote or partially remote. All their work with the clients and their day-to-day interactions with OAC's team members was online for the technology mentors. OAC's shift to providing technology support to older adults remotely was due to the onset of the pandemic.
Had this research been done before the pandemic or post-pandemic, their intercultural and workplace adjustment experiences and challenges might have been different. The need for intervention may have been heightened during COVID-19 because of limited opportunities for in-person conversations and work interactions from working remotely.

As many employers are now considering full-time remote working for their employees for the foreseeable future (Deng et al., 2020), it is reasonable to assume that future immigrants will be joining organizations in fully remote working environments and can benefit from this research. Conducting a research study using non-directive coaching approaches for immigrants' intercultural and workplace adjustment post-pandemic would be interesting to shed further light on which context they are most helpful.

Conclusion

Intercultural adjustment, workplace adjustment, and workforce integration still present salient challenges for Canadian immigrants to overcome. There is still a long way to address barriers to ease the process of integration. This research helped me better understand the nuanced nature of culture in practice and the challenges within these contexts while pointing to alternative forms of supporting immigrants' intercultural development. The participants' topics and insights brought forward through clean spinning helped enable my process of perspective-taking.

Although simple in its approach, perspective-taking is a technique that can have profound implications for all those who make an effort to engage with it. In my experience using clean spinning, I found that following the participants' topics and engaging in perspective-taking led to exciting and unexpected directions. Working with the participants and OAC and their openness to trying alternative forms of learning and development led to rich and insightful data to explore and learn from.
This research can act as a reference for novice researchers interested in implementing smaller-scale action research and adds to the works of clean research methods in business research. I believe that this approach to research and its application in practice can help produce alternative perspectives to explore various aspects and challenges in a new light. Lastly, I hope this research will motivate researchers and practitioners to look at alternative ways to support immigrants.
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Appendix A

Open-Ended Questions for Feedback Interview with Technology Mentors

1. Explain objectives of the study, review consent form and seek consent

2. Have you ever received any type of intercultural training or cross-cultural training before? Did you find the training helpful in preparing you to work in Canada? Give examples.

3. What was surprising to you during your internship as a technology mentor with this non-profit organization? (Ask for examples)
   a. About the work process?
   b. About working with clients?
   c. About working with other technology mentors?

4. What do you wish you knew before meeting with clients that would have been helpful for your success as a technology mentor that we did not discuss in the first two weeks of training?

5. Did you notice any cultural differences during this internship? Please provide examples.

6. Do you have any suggestions for how this non-profit organization can improve their training program? What topics would you like to see be included in the training program?

7. If you were advising other newcomers from your culture about to join this program, what would you tell them?

8. How do you believe this internship will help you as you take other positions in Canada?

Open-Ended Questions for Feedback Interview with Co-founders

1. Explain objectives of the study, review consent form and seek consent
2. In what capacity did you work with the technology mentors who were a part of the immigrant technology mentorship program or work with volunteer technology mentors who are new immigrants?

3. What was surprising to you while working with the technology mentors a part of the immigrant technology mentorship program? (Ask for examples)

4. Did you notice any cultural differences while working with the technology mentors? Please provide examples.

5. Is there anything you think would have been helpful to address during the training period for these technology mentors that you think would have contributed to their success in their interactions with you or your clients?

6. Is there anything else that these questions didn’t cover but that you’d like to discuss?
Appendix B

Step-by-step outline of the Clean Spinning Coaching Intervention

The following is a step-by-step guide for the clean spinning coaching intervention applied in the second and third stage of the interviews. The clean questions that the facilitator asks are in *italics*, where the subpoints provide reasoning for the questions and procedure. All the questions and information listed below are based on Grove (2003) and Dunbar (2016)’s insights on the clean spinning coaching intervention outlined in Chapter 3.

1. **Establish the topic that they would like to focus on during clean spinning**

   - *What is a topic you would like to reflect on?*
     - Be sure to mention that this topic can be anything: it can be a problem they want to solve, a goal they want to explore, or just something that they want to think more about.
   - *[USING EXACT WORDS FROM THEIR RESPONSE], what would you like to have happen?*
     - By using exact words from their response, this prevents you [as the facilitator] from implicitly biasing their response based on your interpretation of their response. The words that you choose in this follow up question are those that best relate to the topic they describe.
   - *Now put that on a piece of paper*
     - The participant will write down/draw on a piece of paper their topic they’ll focus on through the exercise.
   - *And how would you like me to refer to this piece of paper through the reflection exercise?*
     - This will provide you (as the facilitator) their topic statement that you can refer to during the exercise.
     - During the exercise this will be referred to as their [topic]

2. **Construct an alternative way forward**

   Invite participant to go through clean spinning to help address their topic.

   - *Okay. So, how about we move on, then, where we explore this, [topic] (their answer for what to call their piece of paper) through the guided reflection exercise?
3. The Clean Start Exercise

Explain clean spinning to the participant more thoroughly before beginning:

I would like to propose that we explore your topic with an approach called Emergent Knowledge. This approach is aimed at supporting you in thinking outside of the box and accessing your own knowledge.

I will be asking you repetitive questions – about six times each question – and encouraging you to explore the space around you. I will ask you to look in a different direction six times to explore your topic. Are you sitting in a spot where you can comfortably look around you? [confirm with the participant they are comfortable].

So this repetition of six times is to encourage you to explore other answers in additions to the ones that come easily to you. Just keep with the process with an open mind, noticing what comes up with curiosity. Seemingly random or irrelevant thoughts may become relevant later.

Some of the questions may seem unusual. Again, keep an open mind. Unusual questions may prompt unusual answers that may help you unlock hidden knowledge.

At times, you may feel confused or unsure, and that is a totally normal part of this process. You can just go with flow and most people find they end up with some clarity. The whole procedure should take about 30 minutes and it is most beneficial to go through the whole process once we start. Would you be willing to give it a try?

1) Participant places paper:
   - “And place [topic] somewhere in the space around you, in a space that feels / seems right”

2) Have the participant place themselves in the right space in relation to their topic:
   - And where would you be in relation to [topic]?
   - Place yourself in the right space in relation to [topic].
   - And is the distance right between you and [topic]?”

Clean Spinning

3) Emerge knowledge by spinning. Note that the participant can spin in any direction they choose at any time:
   - And turn around now, in whichever direction feels right, and keep turning until you stop. And what do you know from that ... direction?

   Follow up questions:
   - And [use their words from their response], and what do you know from that direction?
   - And is there anything else?
4) **Repeat 3) around six times:**

- *And turn again until you find a new direction that feels right.*
- *And what do you know from that ... direction?*

Use follow up questions if the participant seems like they’d like to say more:
- *And [use their words from their response], and what do you know from that direction?*
- *And is there anything else?*

5) **Finish the exercise:**

- *And what do you know about that ... [topic] ... now?*
- *And is there anything else you know about that [topic]?*

6) **Closure:**

- *How is this different than when we started?*
- *How was this conversation for you?*
- *Have you gained any ideas or insights that can help you better address your topic?*
- *Anything else you would like to share?*

*Thank the participant.*
Appendix C

Visual Representations of the Progression through Clean Spinning

Following Lawley & Tompkins (2012) visual representations of the participants progressions through the seven rounds of clean spinning are depicted below. The categories are the codebook I used for the data analysis which are a combination of Lawley and Tompkins (2012) and Harland’s (2012) work as described in chapter 4.

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Casey: A, B, C additional were follow up clean questioning at the end of the sixth round. At the time of Casey’s sixth round, they had ended with a problem unresolved. These clean questions rounds were added to further explore the problem of the sixth round and garner more insights.

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