Imahori and Lanigan’s (1989) intercultural relational model was used as the analytic framework for a better understanding of intercultural practice among international and American graduate students with their so-called culture other on a U.S. mid-sized college campus. Data were collected and analyzed in the two phases. In Phase I, the subjective views of intercultural practice on campus were collected from 12 research participants through semi-structured interviews. In Phase-II, Q methodology employed enabled 4 out of 12 participants to model their subjective views on the issues of intercultural interactions and relations on campus through operating three Q-sorts respectively. Each Q-sort was comprised of the 42 statements generated from the interview data in Phase I. These 42 statements were statistically grouped by factor analyses. By the end, there were three types of intercultural practice emerging: (a) action-oriented; (b) knowledge-skill oriented; (c) seeking intercultural field for self-fulfillment.

The research participants cut through the conventional conception of group identity bipolarized as “international” and “domestic” through unstable-othering for forging connection and developing relationships in an interchangeable interpersonal-intercultural manner. That promised them to move among different communities of practice and unnecessarily being the full membership of these communities. The current study made the theoretical contributions in the following perspectives: (a)
intercultural adaptation as a one-way relation; (b) “small culture” among students defining their communities of intercultural practice. By the end, the constructive suggestions were put forward for higher education institutions designing intercultural educational program for promoting intercultural interactions among students.

Key words: intercultural experience; international and American graduate students; unstable othering; community of intercultural practice; adaptation as a one-way relation