

Technical Report 1239

Navigating the Human Terrain: Development of Cross-Cultural Perspective Taking Skills

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**United States Army Research Institute
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NAVIGATING THE HUMAN TERRAIN: DEVELOPMENT OF CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE TAKING SKILLS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Research Requirement:

U.S. military missions often require that our troops work effectively with people from different cultures. The conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan provide the latest examples. When operating overseas, the U.S. military realizes that it can win military battles against insurgents, but to win the campaign it is critical to convince the local populace to deny sanctuary to the insurgents. To do this requires, at all levels of our force structure, an appreciation of the intricacies of societal and tribal cultures and the complexity of human-to-human interactions. In response to this need, the present Small Business Innovation Research effort outlined a concept for a culture-general training system that can enhance Soldier multicultural perspective taking.

Procedure:

A literature review was conducted to define the Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Other Attributes (KSAOs) to target in the training system. Existing sources of Soldier stories were also reviewed for their potential utility as scenarios for training, and critical incidents were gathered in interviews with Soldiers to develop an initial set of stories to incorporate.

Findings:

For this Phase I effort, a prototype training system was developed with two complimentary and integrated components to target both knowledge and skills. One component was instruction in intercultural knowledge and theory. Examples of topics include individualism and collectivism; time and space; gender differences across cultures; and how culture is shaped by history, religion, politics and economics. The second component was a cultural assimilator, a method shown to be one of the most engaging and effective tools for training intercultural skills. In a cultural assimilator, trainees read or listen to short stories describing realistic and challenging intercultural interactions and are then presented with four or five alternative explanations for the behavior of the individuals. After making a selection, the trainee receives feedback that incorporates learning points about cultural theory, attribution errors, and other factors. It was determined that existing sources of Soldier stories were insufficient for use in a cultural assimilator. Interviews with Soldiers were necessary to elicit critical incidents with appropriate and sufficiently detailed content.

Utilization and Dissemination of Findings:

These methods and findings can be used to help design cultural training with knowledge and scenario-based components. Suggestions for evaluating the effectiveness of training are also presented.

NAVIGATING THE HUMAN TERRAIN: DEVELOPMENT OF CROSS-CULTURAL
PERSPECTIVE TAKING SKILLS

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Introduction

Background

U.S. military missions often require that our troops work effectively with people from different cultures, and the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan provide the latest examples. As stated in the Quadrennial Defense Review Report (2006), “Developing broader linguistic capability and cultural understanding is critical to prevail in the long war and to meet 21st century challenges.” (p. 78). Likewise, in a recent *Military Review* article, Chiarelli and Michaelis (2005) noted that in Iraq, “Cultural awareness and an empathetic understanding of the impact of Western actions on Middle East society were constantly at the forefront of all operational considerations, regardless of the complexity.”

When operating overseas, the U.S. military realizes that it can win military battles against insurgents, but to win the campaign it is critical to convince the local populace to deny sanctuary to the insurgents. To do this requires, at all levels of our force structure, an appreciation of the intricacies of societal and tribal cultures and the complexity of human-to-human interactions. Not surprisingly, given the importance of cross-cultural skills, the Iraq Study Group (Baker & Hamilton, 2006) identified cultural training as one of the highest priorities in Iraq.

In response to this need, the United States Army Research Institute (ARI) directed Phase I SBIR efforts to design a cultural general training system that would enhance Soldier multicultural perspective taking. Job Performance Systems (JPS) was a recipient of one of the Phase I awards and this report describes our Phase I efforts.

Technical Objectives

The Phase I technical objectives were to:

1. Identify component knowledge and skills which support cross-cultural perspective taking, distinguishing between core components and secondary components.
2. Identify potential training delivery methods for initial knowledge acquisition and skill development.
3. Develop storyboards for one sequence of training, including one or more practical exercises, to demonstrate the viability of the desired approach.

In Phase I, JPS went a step beyond these objectives by also preparing a working prototype of the proposed training system to be built in Phase II.

Training System Overview

The automated training product was designed with two complimentary components. One component includes training in basic intercultural knowledge and theory. Examples of the topics to be taught include individualism and collectivism; time and space; gender differences across cultures; and how culture is shaped by history, religion, politics and economics.

The second component of the training tool is a cultural assimilator. Historically, cultural assimilators have been composed of:

- Short stories describing realistic interactions between two or more persons from different cultural backgrounds. These critical incidents (Flanagan, 1954) present real-life situations involving cross-cultural interactions with a conflict caused by cultural differences between the persons involved in the situation.
- Alternative explanations for the behavior of the individuals in each story with the alternatives varying in the degree to which they reflect an accurate, culturally-informed understanding of what drives the behavior of the people. The trainee is asked to select the alternative he/she feels is most appropriate.
- Feedback on the appropriateness of the alternative selected. The feedback can incorporate learning points about cultural theory, attribution errors, and other factors.

For the purposes of Phase I, a cultural assimilator was created that contains realistic stories about U.S. Army Soldiers working overseas. It is believed a training program containing such stories will appeal to Soldiers and will enhance the relevance of the training and therefore be more engaging.

In designing the full training system, ways to integrate the formal training in intercultural knowledge and theory with the learning from the cultural assimilator were identified. In this way, both components were designed to work synergistically to support the development of intercultural perspective taking.

Phase I Approach

Four major activities were performed to achieve the Phase I technical objectives.

1. Conduct a literature review
2. Collect critical incidents
3. Design the training system and develop a prototype
4. Develop plans for evaluating training effectiveness

Each of these topics is presented as a separate chapter in this report. The final chapter presents our recommendations for creating a full training system.

Review of the Literature

Definitions of the Construct

The review of the literature began by seeking articles that defined the concept of cross-cultural perspective taking. Sources such as PsycINFO (which covers publications across most of the behavioral and social sciences) and the Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC) for published articles and reports were searched using terms such as “cross-cultural perspective taking,” “cultural awareness,” “cultural sensitivity,” “cultural adaptability,” “cultural competence,” “perspective taking ability,” and “multi-perspective taking capability. Cultural experts were also asked to provide relevant sources, including (as yet) unpublished reports or papers. Early in the literature search it became apparent that multiple labels have been given to the same or very similar constructs, such as cultural sensitivity and cross-cultural perspective taking. Throughout this report we have therefore chosen to use these terms interchangeably.

As part of the review, we recorded instances in which cross-cultural perspective taking was related with other Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Other Attributes (KSAOs). Based on this work, Appendix A presents a list of KSAOs that have been identified as potentially relevant for interacting effectively with persons from another culture. The citations are not intended to provide an exhaustive list but rather to represent seminal papers that link KSAOs to cross-cultural competence.

It is important to note that some of the KSAOs included in Appendix A must be present at some baseline level in order for a person to exhibit *any* cross-cultural competence or cross-cultural perspective taking skills. These include stable human abilities and traits that are not impacted by training, for example cognitive ability and personality traits. Other KSAOs are general skills that can be impacted by training but are not specific to cross-cultural interactions, e.g., general problem-solving and interpersonal skills. Given the focus on *cross-cultural* perspective taking, the present effort does not focus on general skills, although it is possible that these skills may be indirectly improved through participation in our training program (Imai & Gelfand, in press). Instead, the training system focuses on the knowledge and skills that directly impact cross-cultural perspective taking.

Models Developed for the Military

The literature review also included a search for models of cultural expertise development, particularly ones that had been developed in a military context, including warfighting, stability, relief, and other operations. These models could potentially inform both the content and the design of the training program and would help to identify the KSAOs most germane to cross-cultural perspective-taking.

Two models developed by military researchers that address the topic of cross-cultural expertise were found. First, Wunderle’s (2006) model incorporates three components of culture – cultural influences, cultural values, and cultural manifestations and further argues that an understanding of all three is necessary for increasing cultural awareness.

- Cultural influences are major social or institutional factors, such as heritage, religion, traditions, and language that bind people together. Of particular importance is a culture's heritage or history, which can be critical in defining the culture's ethnic and national identity. What is most critical in terms of influence is typically not the factual history of a country or region, but the group's collective memory and interpretation of that past. This becomes an inherited remembrance that is passed from one generation to the next. In the U.S., one example is the impact and collective memory of World War II.
- Cultural variations include styles of behavior, values, and ways of thinking that are common to a culture. Behaviors are the outward, observable artifacts of a culture and consist of the language, social rules, customs, structures, and institutions of a given culture. Values are principles that members of a culture use to evaluate alternatives or consequences in decision making. For example, U.S. Americans tend to value individual choice and personal fulfillment, values which inform decisions about work and interpersonal relationships. Ways of thinking, or cognition, refer to preference-based strategies and processes used in decision making, perception, and knowledge representation of a given culture. Cognition is "the mental process of knowing, including aspects such as awareness, perception, reasoning, and judgment" (American Heritage Dictionary).
- Cultural manifestations are the concrete displays of a culture's thought and behavior, whether through its members' view of authority, negotiation style, willingness to compromise, embracing of risk, or some other form. The relatively direct communication style of U.S. Americans might be one example of a cultural manifestation.

According to Wunderle, cultural influences and variations explain *why* the culture is the way it is. Cultural manifestations, on the other hand, refer to *what* one encounters in the culture (pp. 11-12). Wunderle further argued that there is a progression of cultural awareness, from simply gathering information about a specific culture, to progressively deeper levels of understanding. He further posited that:

- Cultural awareness is not a "do" or "don't" type of knowledge. There are levels of cultural awareness ranging from very rudimentary to the most sophisticated and in-depth understanding.
- Not every Soldier needs to reach the highest levels of cultural awareness. Military personnel with different levels and types of responsibilities (commanders versus enlisted personnel) require different levels of cultural awareness.

The second model which addresses cross-cultural expertise was developed by Botsford and Wisecarver (2007). This model of interpersonal performance developed for the U.S. Army incorporates a variety of competencies, including cultural performance. In the model, there are two direct determinants of cultural competence: cultural skills and cultural knowledge. Cultural skills include verbal skills (e.g., active listening skills), nonverbal skills (e.g., recognizing universal nonverbal communication), and mental actions (demonstrating respect). Cultural knowledge is comprised of knowledge about the self and others that is embedded in a social and

cultural framework. This knowledge includes thoughts, feelings, and attitudes of oneself, others, and the cultural situation.

Models that are Not Specific to the Military

Other models of cultural expertise have been developed for other contexts, such as expatriates working abroad. Some of the most frequently cited of these models are reviewed below.

Bennett's (1986) model of cultural expertise development. Bennett (1986) was one of the first to publish a model explaining the process by which cultural expertise or cultural competence is developed. Bennett's model suggests that beliefs about a particular culture evolve over time, assuming continued exposure to that culture, leading to more complex and sophisticated views of that culture.

There are six stages in Bennett's model. The first three stages represent a less complex and ethnocentric perspective, in which a person's own culture is experienced as the primary reality. Theoretically, cultural competence can increase as a person progresses serially through the six dimensions. In the first stage, Denial, the person's own culture is viewed as the only real culture and other cultures are viewed as less than human. In the second stage, Defense, the person recognizes that other cultures are also real and often reacts as if the other cultures are a threat. The third stage, Minimizing, is characterized by a recognition that there are other cultures. However, individuals in this stage tend to overemphasize the similarities between cultures, for example, by focusing on the universality of certain needs and desires.

Bennett's last three stages represent a more complex cultural perspective, ethno relativism, in which the person's own culture is experienced within the context of other cultures. In the fourth stage, Acceptance, individuals accept that their own culture as just one of many legitimate cultures. The fifth stage, Adaptation, is a crystallization of the Acceptance stage, in which an individual's own cultural perspective begins to incorporate perspectives from other cultures. At this stage, a person can genuinely empathize with persons from another culture. In the final stage, Integration, the individual fully embraces a variety of cultural views into his/her own identity.

The Intercultural Development Inventory was designed to assess an individual's status on each of the six stages (Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003). The Denial and Defense stages were psychometrically indistinguishable, as were the Acceptance and Adaptation stages. Thus, empirical tests of the model yield only a subset of the original stages, but are generally consistent with the theory.

This model assumes that everyone progresses through the stages in the same order, but does not assume that everyone reaches the final stage(s). Clearly, some individuals may progress through the stages more quickly than others. Implicit in Bennett's model is the assumption that more complex beliefs about a culture are necessary for cultural competence. The model also assumes that the skills generalize to other cultures once they have occurred for at least one comparison culture, although this assumption has been called into question (Greenholtz, 2005).

One study has shown that the concepts may not readily transfer to other languages and cultures (Greenholtz).

Earley and Ang's (2003) model of cultural competence. Earley and Ang (2003) also published a model of cultural competence. Two components of their model parallel those of the Botsford & Wisecarver (2007) model. The first component, labeled as cognitive, describes general knowledge about cultures and shares similarities with the cultural knowledge component of Botsford and Wisecarver's model. The second component of Earley and Ang's model is behavioral and is similar to the notion of Botsford and Wisecarver's cultural skills in that the description of culturally-relevant behaviors includes the ability to exhibit verbal and nonverbal actions. The third component, meta-cognitive, is defined as the knowledge of *how* to learn about a culture and the ability to acquire and use processes conducive to interpersonal success when one is confronted with a new culture. The capability of 'learning to learn' subsumed under Earley and Ang's metacognitive competence has emerged as a necessary and critical factor to achieving general cultural competence (Hugh-Weiner, 1986).

Klein's (2004) cultural lens model. The cultural lens model (Klein, 2004) provides an explanation of the processes that interfere with achieving cultural expertise. The model starts with the premise that individuals from different cultural backgrounds experience "mismatches" in interpersonal interactions due to differences in how they have learned to think and behave. Klein described five contexts in which these mismatches can arise: defining problems, planning, predicting, coordinating, and training. In each of these contexts a mismatch can lead to conflict and misunderstanding. For example, cultures differ markedly in their willingness to accept ambiguity and these differences can lead to "mismatches" regarding the amount of planning that is necessary or desired. The cultural lens model can, therefore, help describe how people may differ in their approach to these contexts. To overcome mismatches Klein recommends very concrete training that allows trainees to learn how to overcome these mismatches.

Bhawuk's (1998) model of cross-cultural expertise development. This model, represented in Figure 1, is grounded in theories of how people develop expertise in any domain (Anderson, 1990) and theories of cultural learning (e.g., Howell, 1982). This model consists of four levels of cross-cultural expertise – lay person, novice, expert, and advanced expert – though these levels have not been confirmed empirically. At the top of the figure, Bhawuk demonstrates how the levels map onto four of the five stages in Howell's (1982) model of intercultural communication. A layperson behaves at the level of unconscious incompetence, meaning that he/she misinterprets others' behavior but is not even aware of it. When a person is at this level of competence, cross-cultural interactions do not work out the way he or she expects and the person is not sure why things are not working. A novice behaves at the level of conscious incompetence, meaning that he/she has become aware of his/her failure to behave correctly but is unable to make correct attributions because he/she lacks enough or sufficiently accurate knowledge about a particular culture.

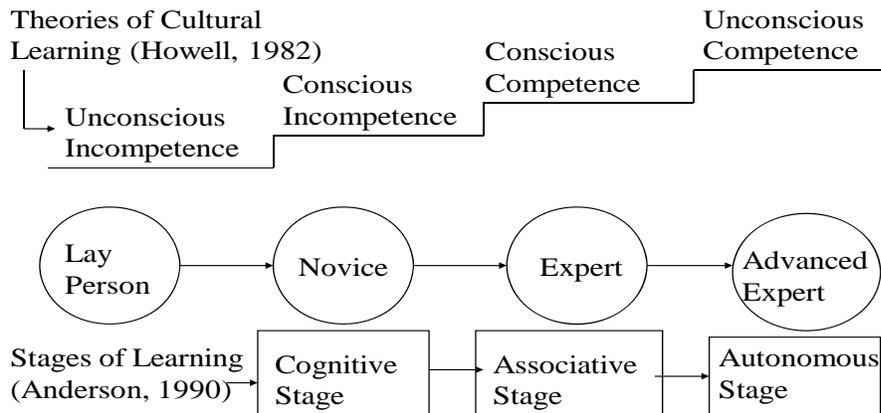


Figure 1. A Model of Cross-Cultural Expertise Development (Adapted with permission from Bhawuk (1998))

While the layperson must learn by trial and error, the novice tries to figure out cultural differences through direct experience or non-theory-based training programs. An expert behaves at the level of conscious competence. The crucial difference between this and the novice level of expertise is that the expert can interact with persons from other cultures with understanding and is aware that some things work while others do not work (i.e., understands the unobservable principles and theories behind observable behaviors). However, even at the expert level, the individual is still not naturally proficient when interacting with persons from another culture and must make a conscious effort to behave in culturally appropriate ways. Therefore, the expert is consciously competent. Only through a high level of exposure and practice can culturally-appropriate behaviors become part of an individual's habit structure, such that the individual does not need to make an effort to behave in a culturally appropriate way. This "advanced expert" has become so acculturated that he/she can almost pass as a native and thus has reached a level of unconscious competence.

In most military contexts, it may not be necessary, nor even desirable for Soldiers to reach the level of advanced expert. For example, Soldiers cannot become so empathetic with the viewpoint of the other culture that they lose their ability to accomplish missions that persons from another culture would not like, want, or approve.

At the bottom of Figure 1, Bhawuk maps the progression from layperson to advanced expert onto the stages of learning outlined in Anderson's (1990) theory of expertise development. The first stage is called "cognitive" because it involves learning a great deal of declarative knowledge about a target domain. The second stage is called associative and involves turning the declarative knowledge into proceduralized knowledge. The first two stages can co-exist. The final stage of developing expertise in any domain is called the autonomous stage. In this stage, the procedural knowledge has become automatic. It can be performed very quickly and requires little effortful cognitive processing.

Bhawuk’s adaptation of the cross-cultural learning-to-learn model. Hugh-Weiner (1986) presented a learning-how-to-learn model applicable to the field of intercultural communication and training, which was based on Kolb's (1977) learning styles model. Bhawuk synthesized Kolb and Hugh-Weiner’s ideas to demonstrate how disconfirmed expectations play a critical role in learning how to learn in a cross-cultural context (see Figure 2).

Disconfirmed expectations in this model appear to be similar to the “mismatches” that are a core part of Klein’s cultural lens model. Disconfirmed expectations represent a critical starting point in the learning-to-learn cycle. In the present context, disconfirmed expectations refer to situations in which Soldiers expect persons from another culture to behave in a certain way, but that is not what happens. When armed with little cultural knowledge, it is easy for Soldiers (or anyone) to reach inaccurate conclusions about why their expectations were disconfirmed (“those people are too lazy to care about timeliness”).

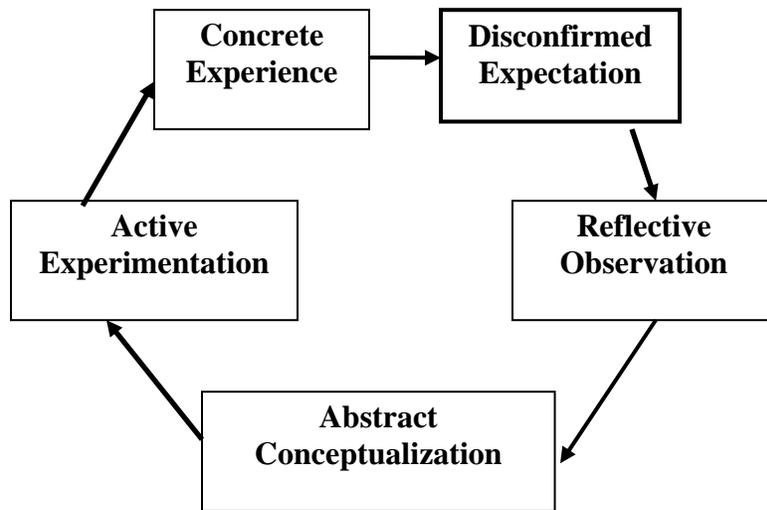


Figure 2. Learning-How-to-Learn Model

The key point, in terms of enhancing cross-cultural perspective taking, is to teach individuals to recognize that *cultural differences* may be causing the disconfirmed expectations and, when such situations arise, to think about how the situation would be viewed by a person from another culture, rather than relying on stereotypical attributions. In the interpersonal sphere, hasty application of a negative stereotype may prejudice future interactions with persons from other cultures, resulting in interpersonal problems. On the battleground, a hastily applied stereotype may lead to faulty decisions and casualties (Wunderle, 2006).

In Figure 2, the disconfirmed expectation occurs at the point of concrete experience, for example, when a foreign officer acts in an unexpected manner when directing a coalition mission. If the American Soldier stays at the level of the concrete experience, without attempting to reflect on how cultural differences might be impacting the foreign officer’s behavior, the Soldier is likely to make an attribution based on a stereotype and may continue to make the same

attribution in all subsequent interactions with that officer or persons who share the officer's cultural background.

If the Soldier uses the disconfirmed expectation as an opportunity to engage in reflective observation, he/she can learn about cultural differences, including learning about the Soldier's own culture, especially if the foreign officer's cultural practices are significantly different from his/her own. Therefore, reflective observation may lead to personal intercultural growth. However, stopping here will likely result in learning many do's and don'ts about a particular culture, that is, culture-specific knowledge, leading to stilted and cautious behavior that is well below the standard required for effective cross-cultural functioning (Wunderle, 2006).

If the Soldier goes beyond reflective observation, and develops abstract conceptualizations regarding cultural differences, he/she will acquire theoretical insights about cultural differences leading to culture-general knowledge and understanding. This level of learning also helps the Soldier understand that his/her own cultural practices are not universals but fit within a broader view of how cultures vary. In this phase of the learning cycle, learning is supplemented by deeper understanding. However, if the Soldier stops at this phase, he/she may possess insights about cultural differences but his/her behavior may not reflect or demonstrate that understanding. Learning must progress to the next phase of the learning-to-learn cycle – active experimentation.

Active experimentation completes the cycle in that the learner is now testing his/her knowledge and theories about cultural differences, not by trial and error, as in the early phases of learning, but by noticing when disconfirmed expectations occur and applying the learning-to-learn cycle to reach a full understanding of how cultural differences may help explain how others have behaved and, more importantly, predict how others will behave. An intercultural training program can teach Soldiers to anticipate and recognize disconfirmed expectations and can also provide knowledge of the ways in which cultures vary (based on culture theory), thus “jump-starting” the learning-to-learn cycle.

In Figure 2, Bhawuk places the process of making attributions as the center piece. If someone can cycle through all steps, then the chances of making errors in attributions are reduced. Why is it important to make accurate attributions? Broadly speaking, one can argue that a major source of problems across the range of human interaction results from individuals having different perceptions about the causes for specific behaviors, a potential problem for any interpersonal interaction, whether intercultural or not.

The fundamental attribution error is the tendency for individuals to underestimate the impact of situational factors (for example, cultural factors) and to overestimate the impact of dispositional factors as the explanation for others' behavior. There is a great deal of evidence demonstrating that this error is a function of human perceptual, memory, and information processing systems, which means that most people are subject to committing the fundamental attribution error (Kahneman, Slovic, & Tversky, 1982; Nisbett & Ross, 1980). The research also suggests that humans can overcome this error, at least to some degree, by making a conscious effort to do so. We posit that activation of the learning-to-learn cycle is one way to help individuals avoid or minimize the fundamental attribution error.

Cultural novices routinely commit attribution errors when interacting with persons from another culture because they do not understand what is causing an individual to behave in a particular way. They mistakenly assume that the cause lies in the individual ("being a lazy person who is always late for appointments") when it really lies in the situation ("in this culture, it is not expected that people are on time for appointments.") Therefore a key part of cross-cultural perspective taking occurs when a person is able to make *isomorphic* attributions or is able to make the same judgment about the cause of a cross-cultural behavior as the people from that culture.

When people make isomorphic attributions, they do not impose their own cultural perspective in deciding about the cause of a particular behavior. Instead, they use the perspective of the host culture in analyzing the behavior. A useful benefit from training would be to help trainees more rapidly and more frequently make isomorphic attributions, leading to completing the learning-to-learn cycle when stationed overseas.

Perspective Taking as a Social Cognitive Processing Capability

Another avenue of research we examined focused on the "perspective taking" aspect of cross-cultural perspective taking. The ability to view things from the perspective of another appears to be a universal human capability (Wu & Keysar, 2007), as embodied in the English-language adage to "walk a mile in another's shoes before judging him/her." It can be viewed as a social cognitive process or, more specifically, a type of person perception, based fundamentally on human information processing capabilities, but also influenced by knowledge and attitudes (Fiske & Taylor, 1985).

How, then, does cross-cultural perspective taking differ from perspective taking? Cross-cultural perspective taking could be viewed as an extension of the generalized ability to take the perspective of another person, that is, the perspective of a person from a different culture. In fact, a recent study (Imai & Gelfand, in press) demonstrated that the more proficient individuals were at taking the perspective of others, the better able they were to effectively negotiate and use nonverbal communication.

Cross-Cultural Perspective Taking as a Composite Skill

Our review of the literature suggests that although there are a number of models about cross-cultural perspective taking, there is not yet consensus about the underlying KSAOs or how these

KSAOs can best be developed. Thus, this effort drew from multiple models. For purposes of this effort, it was posited that cross-cultural perspective taking is a composite skill that includes such key KSAOs as:

- Social information processing capabilities (universal) that permit one to take the perspective of another.
- General problem-solving and interpersonal skills required to interact effectively with anyone, including persons from other cultures.
- Awareness that there are cultural differences and that those differences can impact the behavior of oneself and others.
- Meta-cognitive skills that help individuals regulate how they learn. Metacognition includes planning how one uses resources (e.g., how to allocate time, which strategies to select), monitoring one's progress toward a learning goal, and evaluating how well one has ultimately performed.
- Willingness to learn about and accept cultural differences.
- Knowledge of other cultures and of other factors that cause persons from different countries or parts of the world to behave differently.
- Ability to make isomorphic attritions.
- Preparedness for the type of emotions that typically occur during exposure to an unfamiliar culture, an experience that has been labeled "culture shock."

We further speculated that some of these components can be trained while others are stable personal qualities that do not change much after a person reaches adulthood.

Figure 3 displays this concept of cross-cultural perspective taking as a composite skill. The figure is surrounded by a circle to denote that the skill, by definition, will always be applied in a specific context – a specific type of mission involving interactions with persons from specific cultures. Our training program will not attempt to address exactly how cross-cultural perspective taking skills should be applied in a specific military mission, nor does it claim to provide detailed information about any specific culture. Rather, the goal is to enhance the trainable components of this composite skill so it can be applied in many different contexts.

KSAOs Targeted by The Training Program

Table 1 shows the KSAOs directly targeted in the training program. First, Soldiers will be taught about cultural theory and the economic, historical, political, and religious knowledge that impacts the behavior, values, and beliefs of persons from other cultures.

Second, an attempt will be made to influence the willingness of Soldiers to be open to learning about other cultures because individuals in general can be resistant to changing their behavior (e.g., Bennett, Aston, Colquhoun, 2000; Hannigan, 1990). In fact, Gooren (2006) stated that any successful cross-cultural training program for Soldiers must make explicit the importance of the training program. Thus, a sound training program should immediately engage Soldiers with how cross-cultural perspective taking is critical to their personal safety and effectiveness and to the success of their missions.

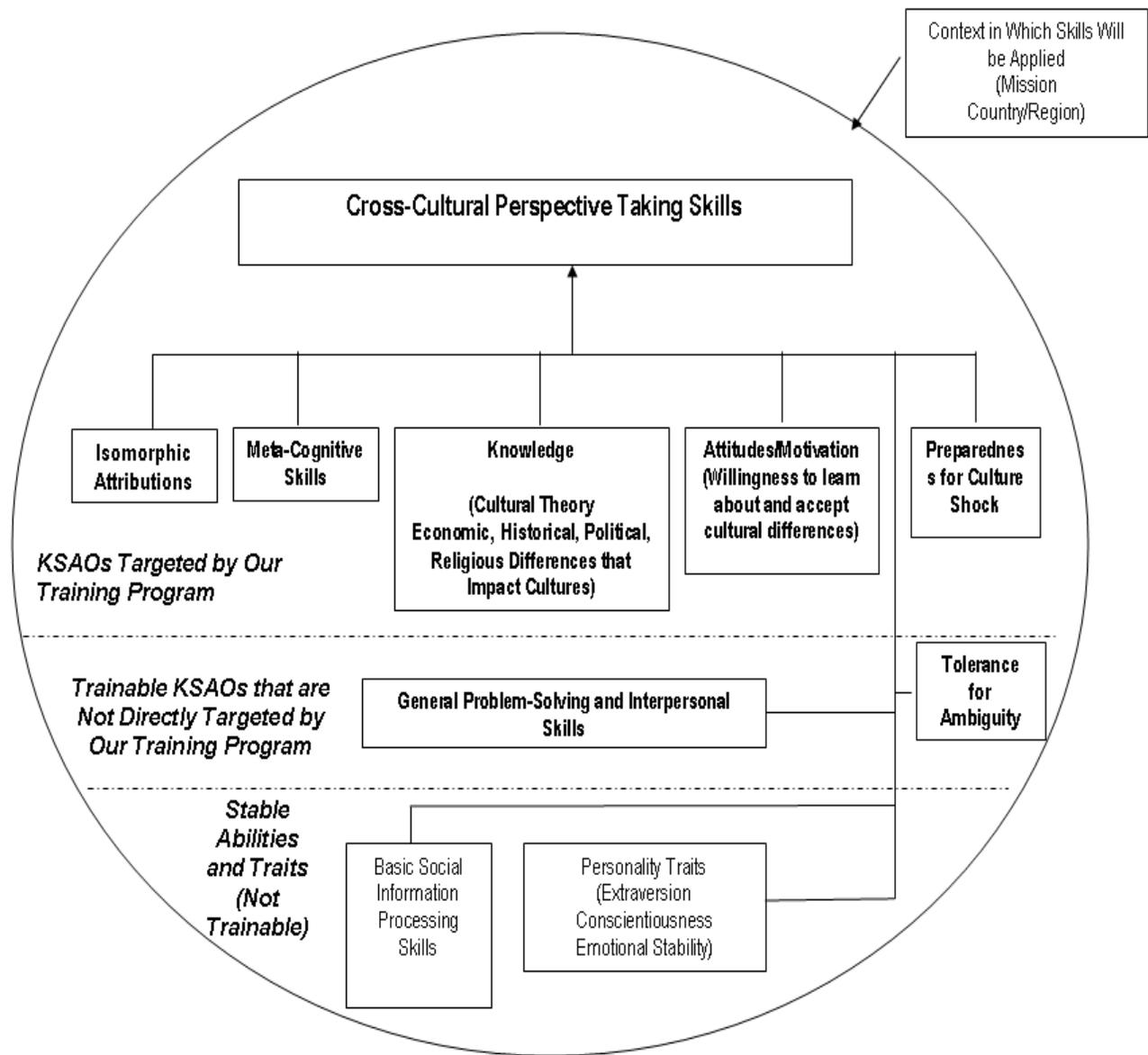


Figure 3. KSAOs that Contribute to Multicultural Perspective Taking

Table 1: KSAOs Directly Targeted in the Training Program.

KSAOs	Definitions / Examples of KSAOs	Type ¹	Citation ²
Cultural theory, for example, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • time-space • individualism-collectivism • gender roles 	Dimensions along which countries differ that arise from shared history and experiences	K	see section below on Cultural Theory
Impact of economic, historical, political, and religious factors on the behavior of self and others	Dimensions along which countries differ that arise from cultural structural systems or impact the behavior of persons from other countries in addition to or apart from cultural differences	K	Bhawuk, 2006
Willingness to learn about and adapt one's own behavior to other cultures	Willingness to change or adapt one's own behavior to a cultural situation	At	Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992
Skill at making isomorphic attributions	Explaining the behavior of others from the subjective perspective of those others (i.e., the actors)	S	Triandis, 1975
Metacognitive skills (learning to learn)	Planning how we will learn, monitoring how well one is learning, and evaluating the outcomes of learning	S	Earley & Ang, 2003; Glaser, 1984

Notes.

¹ K = Knowledge, S = Skill, At = Attitude

² The citations in this table represent key sources referencing each knowledge, skill, attitude, or similar constructs. The list is not exhaustive.

Several other KSAOs may be directly impacted by the program. Gains in these KSAOs accrue as Soldiers *experience* the learning-to-learn cycle, rather than explicitly learning *about* the learning-to-learn cycle. By introducing a series of disconfirmed expectations through use of the cultural assimilator, trainees will be forced to confront their attribution errors. By providing explanations about more and less culturally-appropriate responses to a disconfirmed expectation, Soldiers can be started on the path of reflective observation and, over the course of numerous examples, on to the phases of abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation that make up the learning-to-learn cycle. This learning-to-learn cycle models a type of meta-cognitive skill which strengthens the ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate one's progress toward cross-cultural competence. Another skill that will be implicitly taught by engaging the learning-to-learn cycle is skill at making isomorphic attributions.

In addition to the list in Table 1, the training program may indirectly impact other KSAOs. For example, it could strengthen problem-solving skills as Soldiers practice applying

their foundational cultural knowledge which leads to new heuristics and patterns that aid in solving new cross-cultural problems.

As trainees become proficient at cross-cultural perspective taking it is conceivable they could gain some knowledge and skills that apply across a variety of interpersonal situations (e.g., negotiation; using verbal and non-verbal skills; Imai & Gelfand, in press; see also Black and Mendenhall, 1990). One could speculate for example, that the training may lead Soldiers to become more sensitive to situations in which they make attribution errors when interacting with work colleagues, friends, and family members in their home country.

There are also abilities and personality traits that facilitate cross-cultural perspective taking but will be minimally impacted, if at all, by any training program because they represent stable individual traits. For example, a certain threshold of general cognitive ability and information processing capabilities must be present for Soldiers to understand and apply the cultural theory learning points. Because the learning points can be presented in fairly simple terms, we believe that most Soldiers possess the necessary level of these fundamental capabilities to benefit from the training program.

Other non-trainable characteristics include enduring personality traits such as extraversion and conscientiousness, which have been shown to be related to cross-cultural competence (Ang, Van Dyne, & Koh, 2006; Botsford & Wisecarver, 2007). However, although it may not be possible to change the levels of these traits themselves it is still possible for Soldiers with different levels of these personality traits (including low levels) to improve their cross-cultural perspective taking skills.

Research Basis for the Content of the Training Program

This section of the document provides more detail about the research basis for the topic areas on which the training program will explicitly target.

Willingness to Learn about Other Cultures and Change One's Own Behavior

Trainees' willingness to learn is critical to all training programs, and trainers should make every effort to motivate trainees to be willing to engage in mastering the training content (Goldstein & Ford, 2002). In cross-cultural training, however, the willingness attitude is essential. Individuals in cross-cultural training programs predictably offer resistance to changing their behaviors (Bennet, Aston, Colquhoun, 2000; Hannigan, 1990) and often wonder why it is incumbent upon them to change rather than the individuals from the other culture. This attitudinal challenge must be met before training can begin. Indeed, as noted above, the issue of eliciting willingness in Soldiers is particularly challenging in cross-cultural training programs (Gooren, 2006). To elicit willingness from Soldiers, the trainers must make explicit why perspective-taking is critical to their safety and missions – in humanitarian and in battle situations.

Cultural Theory

One critical area of foundational knowledge comes from cultural theory and research. There is a large body of research describing dimensions along which countries differ from each other. The cultural dimensions or typologies that have received the most research support (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, Gupta, 2004) are shown in Table 2 and are described briefly below. The citations included in the table represent hallmark studies delineating each dimension but are not an exhaustive list. Although each of these dimensions describe important differences across cultures, some researchers have noted that many of the current theories overlap in meaning and that individualism/collectivism as well as time and space are powerful dimensions that encompass many of the other theories and eliminate redundancy in measurement (Bhawuk, 2001). For this reason, our training curriculum will focus heavily on the dimensions of individualism/collectivism and time and space, while also providing information about each of the other dimensions. The concepts of individualism/collectivism and time-space are discussed in the next section of the report.

Table 2. Cultural Dimensions

Power Distance	Hofstede, 1980; 1984; Mulder, 1976;1977
Uncertainty Avoidance	Hofstede, 1980; 1984
Gender Egalitarianism	House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, Gupta, 2004
Contextualization (high context/low context)	Hall, 1966
Future Orientation	Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961
Performance Orientation	McClelland, 1961
Individualism/Collectivism	Hofstede, 1980; Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961; Mead, 1961; Triandis, 1975
Time and Space	Hall, 1959; 1966

Individualism and collectivism. Individualism and collectivism allude to individual- and collective-centric worldviews and ways of life. When people act to maximize their personal gains, they are referred to as individualists, whereas when people behave to help the community or society, they are referred to as collectivists. These concepts have developed over the years, notably through the work of Geert Hofstede, and Harry C. Triandis and his collaborators. Hundreds of journal articles have been published using these constructs, and many practical applications have been found in cross-cultural psychology, communication, marketing, and international management, making these constructs extremely useful for cross-cultural training (Bhawuk, 1998; 2001) and for measuring intercultural sensitivity (Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992). Bhawuk (2001) identified four defining attributes along which individualism and collectivism vary:

- Independent versus interdependent concepts of self
- Commitment to self versus in-groups
- Norm versus attitude driven behavior
- Rational versus relational foundations of social exchange

The first defining attribute focuses on the concept of self. Cross-cultural researchers have long known that people view themselves differently across cultures, and the concept of self has been the focus of anthropological, psychological, and sociological research for a long time (Rosenberger, 1992). The concept of self plays a central role in the definition of individualism and collectivism. (Triandis, 1995a, 1995b; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). In individualism, the concept of self tends not to include other people (i.e., the self is independent of others), whereas in collectivism the concept of self commonly includes other people, namely, members of family, friends, and people from the work place. People in the Western world (e.g., the U.S., Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand) have more sharply defined boundaries around the self, and they feel more autonomous and separate from others, including the immediate family. People in Asia, Africa, and Latin America tend to have a more interdependent concept of self with less rigid boundaries and, consequently, the individual views himself or herself in terms of relationships with parents, spouse, siblings, children, friends, neighbors, supervisor, and subordinate is small.

The second defining attribute along which individualism and collectivism varies, has to do with the relationship between self and groups of people. Depending on how people view themselves, they develop different types of affinity for groups. For example, those with the independent concept of self develop ties with other people to satisfy their self needs and may not give importance to the need of other people (i.e., everybody takes care of his or her own needs). Those with an interdependent concept of self, however, develop ties with other people to satisfy the needs of the self as well as the members of the collective included in the self. Haruki, Shigehisa, Nedate, and Ogawa (1984) provided some insight into how this is developed through socialization. They found that both American and Japanese students were motivated to learn when they were rewarded for learning. However, even when the teacher was not rewarding students, the Japanese students continued to be motivated to learn, whereas the American students were not. The authors explained this phenomenon by suggesting that the Japanese children are socialized to observe and respond to others' feelings early on. So a teacher may say "I am happy" or "I am sad" to provide positive or negative reinforcement rather than directly saying "You are right" or "You are wrong." Thus, differences in how one views relationships

with others leads to differences in how people relate to other people, which in turn influences goal selection and prioritization, both in work and social contexts.

One reason for this difference between individualists and collectivists lies in their definition of an in-group or an out-group (Triandis, 1984; Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai, & Lucas, 1988; Earley, 1993). When a certain group of people is accepted as trustworthy, collectivists cooperate with these people, are even willing to make self-sacrifices to be part of this group, and are less likely to indulge in social loafing (Earley, 1989). However, they are likely to indulge in exploitative exchange with people who are part of what they consider an out-group (Triandis et al., 1988). Individualists on the other hand do not make such strong distinctions between in-groups and out-groups.

The third defining attribute of individualism and collectivism focuses on how the concept of self is reflected in attitudes and behaviors. Persons with an independent concept of self tend to do what they think is good for them (i.e., they pursue their individual desires, attitudes, values, and beliefs). Thus, the individualistic society values letting people “do their own thing” even if it means straying from what social norms might dictate. In contrast, persons with an interdependent concept of self must deal with many interdependencies and part of managing the interdependencies is to develop goals that meet the need of more than one's own self. In the process of taking care of the needs of one's in-group members, a social mechanism evolves in collectivist cultures that are very strongly driven by social norms. Hence, the difference in following one's own attitudes versus social norms of the in-group defines a salient difference between individualist and collectivist cultures.

The fourth defining attribute of individualism and collectivism focuses on the nature of social exchange between self and others. When the self is viewed as independent, interpersonal relationships are developed to maximize the benefits to the self. Thus, social exchange is based on the principle of equal exchange, and people form new relationships to meet their changing needs based on a cost-benefit analysis. Thus, individualists are rational in their social exchange. On the other hand, those with an interdependent concept of self are likely to view their relationships as long-term in nature and, therefore, unlikely to break a relationship even if it is not cost effective. Thus, collectivists value relationships for their own sake and nurture them with unequal social exchanges over a long period of time.

Thus, the four defining attributes provide a framework to understand cultural differences in the concept of self and how it relates to groups, society at-large, and interpersonal and intergroup relationships. The theory of individualism and collectivism has been demonstrated as particularly useful for cross-cultural training (Bhawuk, 2001; 1998; Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992). Soldiers can be trained to understand where their own culture falls on this continuum (the U.S. is generally considered a highly individualistic culture), and how to gauge where another culture falls on the same continuum. This understanding can, in turn, be applied as Soldiers interact with international forces or citizens in the accomplishment of their military mission

Time and Space. Hall (1959; 1966) delineated differences across cultures in how people think about time and space. With respect to time, Hall (1959) proposed that conceptions of time (as well as many other aspects of culture) could be viewed at three levels – formal, informal, and

technical – since humans operate at all these levels. The formal level refers to behaviors or values that everyone within a group (or culture) knows about and takes for granted. For example, in the U.S., formal time refers to a shared understanding that meetings start on time, buses run according to a schedule, and people get upset if appointments are not kept. Within the U.S. culture, these formal aspects of time are taken for granted. Informal time refers to rather vague or imprecise references that vary from situation to situation, but are still understood to mean the same thing within a particular group or culture. Some examples of informal time would be “awhile,” “in a minute,” and “later” (Hall, 1959, p. 64). Technical time refers to how scientists and engineers define and use time, and is likely to be unknown to a lay person.

The first two levels of time – formal and informal – are particularly relevant to cross-cultural perspective taking because understanding how persons from another culture conceptualize and use both formal and informal time can make a tremendous difference in the success of cultural interactions. An incident described in an Army newsletter illustrates this point. When a joint mission to search Iraqi homes was planned between U.S. and Iraqi units, the Iraqi unit’s much looser concept of time meant that they did not show up at the designated meeting point at the agreed-upon time. As a consequence, the units were not able to complete the search in the allotted time frame. The incident was highly frustrating to U.S. military personnel but perhaps could have been avoided or better planned if the U.S. military personnel better understood how Iraqis tend to view time.

Hall (1966) also described how culture influences individuals’ use of space. There are several classifications of space but most relevant to the present training program is the notion that cultures differ in what is an acceptable personal social distance. Cultures vary a great deal in the distance between themselves and others that feels comfortable. For example, Americans prefer relatively large distances between themselves and others in social situations while Arabs require and prefer far less space. Because Arabs use olfaction and touch much more than Americans, they require a smaller social distance that accommodates these nonverbal cues. Hall has studied differences in space across many cultures and has provided extensive explanations of differences in the conceptualization and use of space. It is important that Soldiers are aware of these differences to guide their behavior in interpersonal interactions in Arab cultures.

Economic, Historical, Political, and Religious Differences

Some researchers (e.g., Kimmel, 2000; Klein, 2004) have noted that cultural theory provides an incomplete view of the factors that affect cross-cultural understanding. Other authors have noted that economic, historical, political, religious and even geographic differences affect how individuals interpret their worlds (e.g., Berry, 2004; Kimmel, 2004; Wunderle, 2006). For example, the geographic vastness of the U.S. (an ecological factor) has led to the development of freeways and the auto industry, with little emphasis on public transportation. The mountainous nature of many countries (e.g., Nepal) has led them to develop air transportation to connect the remote areas since building highways is simply not possible. In the Netherlands, people have developed a complex system of canals to take advantage of their ecology as the country is below sea level.

In the economic arena, Bhawuk (2006) presented a framework to capture the asymmetric economic conditions between nations. By categorizing countries as either developed or developing nations, it is possible to identify the distinct approaches people use to make decisions in these societies. For example, economic circumstances have profound effects on individuals and their work performance. Fundamental economic principles state that personal income constrains an individual's choice of economic activities. Holding the forces of culture constant, individuals from nations with higher levels of wealth generally enjoy greater levels of cosmopolitanism and participation in the global economy. Those from nations with lower levels of wealth tend to have a more insular life concerned with more immediate concerns of practicality. This does not imply that individuals from wealthier countries have higher levels of happiness. Rather, it implies that globalization is conceptualized more similarly in countries of similar economic status than in countries of dissimilar economic status.

Similarly, history shapes culture. For example, in the first half of the 19th century, the U.S. developed a "melting pot" culture. This made sense because, at that time, most immigrants to the U.S. were Europeans who could, with relative ease, assimilate into the "American" culture by simply accepting English as the means of communication. In the 20th century, there have been far more immigrants to the U.S. from Spanish-speaking countries and cultures, as well as Asian cultures (e.g., China and Japan). With these immigrants, the melting pot model did not work as well, and the nation has slowly moved away from the melting pot culture to incorporate increasing diversity among its citizens. It is plausible to think of the US government adopting a policy of more than one national language in the future like many other countries, which would change the national culture significantly. A history of colonization similarly shapes the culture of many countries in Asia and Africa, traces of which can be found in their art, music, literature, food, way of life, and thinking. Thus, ecology and history shape how people behave in these countries and regions.

Religion is a major influence that crosses national borders and cultural boundaries. Followers of particular religious traditions may feel more in common with, and thus behave more similarly to, their fellow practitioners in a different country than with persons from their same country who practice a different religion. Religious beliefs impact everything from gender roles to dietary habits to schedules. Understanding such differences is crucial for interacting effectively with persons of differing religious beliefs. For example, the primary day of worship falls on different days of the week depending on the religion. Failure to take this into account can lead to persons taking offense when military operations (or meetings) are scheduled on a day reserved for worship.

The economic, historical, and religious context provides Soldiers with a better understanding of the culture, and therefore of the people with whom they will interact in the operating environment.

Meta-Cognitive Skills (Learning to Learn)

We would argue that willingness to learn about other cultures and knowledge of cultural differences are necessary but not sufficient conditions for cross-cultural perspective taking to

occur. It is the learning-to-learn process itself, when incorporating cultural principles, that builds the meta-cognitive skills necessary for cross-cultural perspective taking.

Earley and Ang (2003) proposed that training individuals how to be flexible and learn from their experiences was a meta-cognitive skill essential to cross-cultural competence. Indeed, the training literature demonstrates that trainees with higher metacognitive abilities learn more and are also able to apply new skills in practical settings (Ford, Smith, Weissbein, Gully, & Salas, 1998). Implementation of the learning-to-learn cycle in our training program will take trainees through a series of realistic disconfirmed expectations during which they must actively work to make sense of these disconfirmations. Trainees will engage in active learning while applying the fundamental principles (e.g., cultural theory, religious differences) that lead to disconfirmed expectations.

Design and Development of a Cultural Assimilator

Description of Cultural Assimilators

A cultural assimilator is a scenario-based method for teaching about cultural differences. The culture-general assimilator provides trainees realistic and concrete learning-to-learn training experiences. The culture-general assimilator has been demonstrated as an effective method of teaching cross-cultural competence (Bhawuk & Brislin, 2000; Cushner, 1989; Cushner & Brislin, 1996; McIlveen-Yarbro, 1989). Therefore, the cultural assimilator was selected for incorporation in to the training system as ideally suited for enhancing cross-cultural perspective taking skills by Soldiers.

A cultural assimilator consists of several critical incidents (i.e., vignettes, episodes, scenarios, or short cases) that have three parts:

1. A short story describing a realistic interaction between persons from different cultural backgrounds. These stories present real-life situations describing cross-cultural interactions between a sojourner (a person living in or visiting another country) and a host country (the country that a sojourner is visiting) that depicts a misunderstanding because of cultural differences between the two or more people or groups.
2. Four or five alternative explanations for the behavior of the individuals in the situation, with the alternatives varying in the degree to which they reflect an accurate, culturally-informed understanding of what drives the behavior of persons from other cultures (i.e., attributions about behaviors). Most of the explanations appear somewhat plausible to the trainee as they reflect a Western perspective. One response however, reflects the perspective of the comparison culture (e.g., the host culture) and deviates from a typical Western way of thinking. Thus, the alternatives present situations in which trainees can make attributional errors due to reliance on their own cultural perspective, rather than thinking of how the situation may appear from the perspective of people from another culture.
3. Feedback on the appropriateness of the alternative selected, as well as a guided process to review information about the other alternatives. The feedback incorporates learning points about cultural theory, attribution errors, and other factors that are likely to impact behavior in a given scenario. In other words, the trainee is not simply told that his/her response is correct or incorrect. Rather, the trainee is provided information about *why* the alternative selected is more or less appropriate in a given culture, and how that type of cultural knowledge may be applied in other situations.

The early culture assimilators were developed with a pair of cultures in mind, usually to prepare Americans to live in a specific country (e.g., Thailand, Iran, or Honduras) and were referred to as culture-specific assimilators (Fiedler, Mitchell, & Triandis, 1971). Culture-specific assimilators help the trainees learn inductively to avoid certain behaviors that are not acceptable in the host culture. In other words, the trainee learns a number of dos and don'ts that are grounded in behavioral settings or social contexts. When asked to explain, a trainee is likely to offer an aspect of the culture as an explanation for the differences in behaviors (e.g., he or she

may say that “A man greets a female in Thailand without touching her” or “One does not criticize a colleague in Honduras”). Clearly, these are merely dos and don’ts, and a weakness is that they do not provide a cognitive framework for understanding cultural differences.

A culture-general assimilator incorporates scenarios that occur in more than one comparison culture. The situations themselves are often ones that could happen in a variety of cultures, e.g., interacting with members of a multi-national peacekeeping force or searching for enemy combatants in an area that also includes innocent members of the host country. The explanation of alternatives provides information about broad ways in which cultures differ from each other, for example, information about individualism and collectivism, rather than specific customs and norms about a particular country or region.

When trainees are working with a culture-general assimilator, they are, in a sense, acting out how they would react in that situation. This gives the trainees an opportunity to learn from a mistake (i.e., disconfirmed expectations) and receive feedback on how they could have behaved in a more culturally-appropriate manner. Learning is therefore considered two-fold: from the information presented and from the trial-and-error process necessary to choose appropriate responses.

Collection of Critical Incidents

Several potential sources of critical incidents for the cultural assimilator were explored. Specifically, we reviewed military blogs and military publications that might contain relevant stories and stories were gathered directly from Soldiers who had recently returned from overseas.

Military blogs. Military blogs are easily accessible with over 1,500 located on <http://www.military.com/blog>. Not surprisingly, a majority of the blogs are written by people located in the U.S and Iraq. Though all services of the military are represented (as are spouses and veterans), close to 40% of the blogs are written by U.S. Soldiers. The military blogs enable readers to obtain Soldiers’ day-to-day experiences, feelings and insights regarding the country where they are stationed. This information can be attained unobtrusively, without burdening Soldiers.

There were a number of challenges in finding useful critical incidents from military blogs. One challenge resulted from the sheer magnitude of blogs posted by various military members as well as the number of postings within each blog. Even with the option to search the website to filter the blogs, it is difficult to parse out which blogs are most likely to contain a useful story. Another challenge was finding stories with enough information of the right information to suit our purposes. Stories with sufficient information to relate the challenge or conflict to a cultural difference were rare, and, overall, the hit rates for relevant stories were very low.

In summary, blogs occasionally yield information adequate for use in a cultural assimilator. However, a low hit rate for stories and the lack of enough information describing the role of cultural differences generally limited the utility of blogs as a source of critical incidents.

Military publications. Various military publications, such as *Military Review*, *Army Times*, and *Soldier Magazine*, were also scanned for critical incidents. Although there are several military publications written by reporters and Soldiers alike, we found few stories that could be used in a cultural assimilator. For example, articles generally discussed the role of culture in military operations and how the Army was training Soldiers about cultures instead of providing a specific cultural incident or interaction. It is possible that some publications might contain articles with material useful in constructing a few critical incidents.

Meetings with Soldiers. The third strategy involved collecting critical incidents directly from Soldiers. Our team interviewed three Soldiers currently stationed in the Washington D.C. area who had performed overseas assignments. In the interviews, Soldiers described interactions that happened to them overseas and were in some way surprising, shocking, or unsettling. Five stories were collected. Additionally, Soldiers reviewed some critical incidents from an earlier research effort in 1995 with Special Forces. Upon review, the Soldiers indicated that the stories were too specific to Special Forces and would likely be relevant to only 10 percent of our target audience. In order to use these stories, they suggested that the stories be made more generic.

A follow-up meeting with one of the Soldiers who had recently returned from extended duty in Iraq provided additional details to the stories and several additional stories. This set of stories appears in Appendix B.

In addition, stories used in another cultural assimilator (Cushner & Brislin, 1996) were adapted for a military context. A senior enlisted Soldier reviewed the stories for face validity. This set of stories appears in Appendix C.

These two sources, the Soldier stories and the stories adapted from an existing cultural assimilator, provided the scenarios for the current training system. In combination, the stories covered four broad areas of a Soldier's overseas experiences: 1) settling in and adjusting, 2) training foreign troops, 3) touring the area, and 4) assignments and missions.

Design and Development of the Training Prototype

JPS developed a prototype training system as part of the Phase I effort to help us further define and communicate the vision of the product we propose building in Phase II.¹ The training is designed to be viewed using Internet Explorer, version 7.0 or higher, with the screen resolution set at 1024 by 768. Following is a brief description of the prototype. The training system combines formal training in intercultural knowledge and theory with a cultural assimilator to build skill in applying that knowledge.

Below is a screen capture of the product's opening page. It describes the propose of the product and indicates it was developed as a Phase I SBIR. From here the Soldier can access the login screen. Once logged in, the Soldier is taken to the main menu.

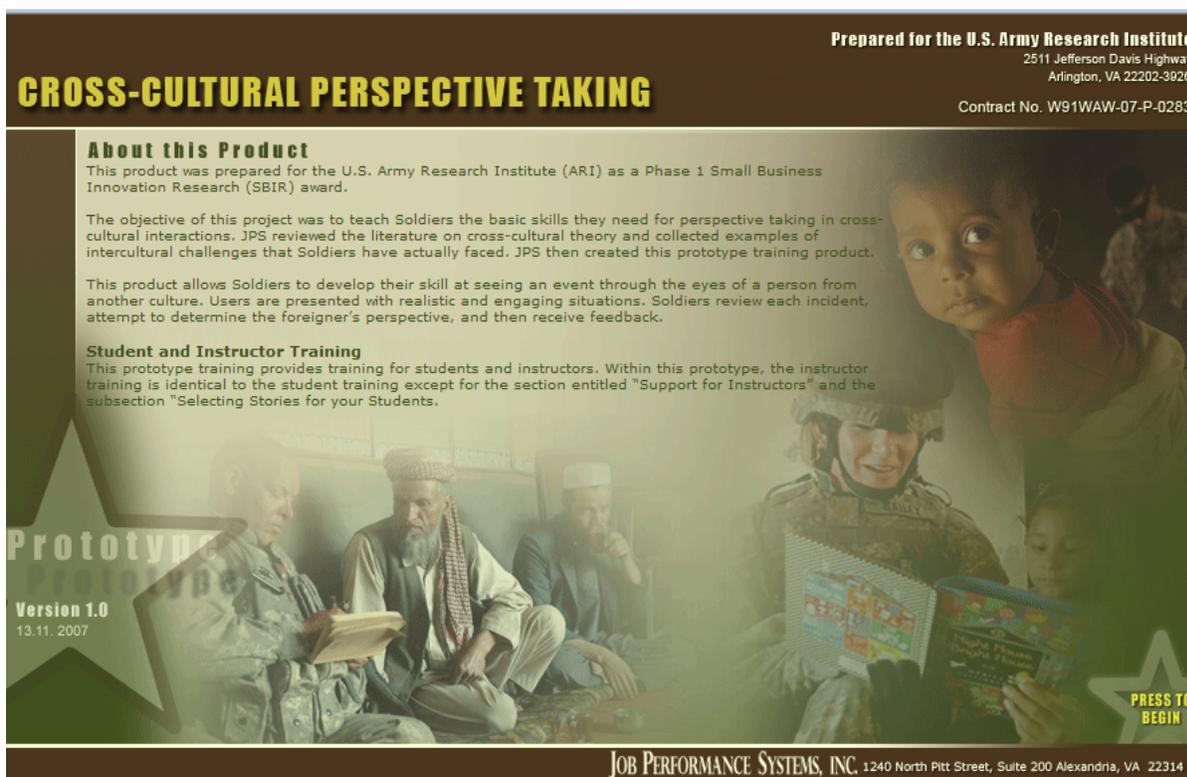


Figure 4. Screen capture of prototype tool

The tools within this training system include 1) stories within the cultural assimilator, 2) a series of training modules covering relevant concepts and principles, and 3) suggestions for further development of Soldiers' intercultural skills. A final option provides Soldiers with the opportunity to compose and submit their own stories to the Army.

¹ Given the time and resources available in Phase I, this prototype has minimal actual functionality and training content.

In the “Stories” module, four categories of stories are presented: Training foreign troops, interacting with local citizens, assignments and missions, and returning home. Stories will be presented through some combination of text, narration, pictures and even video in which actors play out some stories. Upon reading or listening to each story, four possible explanations for the story will appear on the right side of the screen. Soldiers must select the explanation they believe is correct. Feedback is then provided to explain why each option is appropriate or inappropriate for the situation described.

In another module, basic intercultural concepts and principles are addressed for the following six content areas:

- What is culture?
- Individualism and collectivism
- Time and space
- Gender issues
- Impact of Economy, Religion, History, and Politics
- Preparation for culture shock

The trainee would listen to a series of narrated lectures while following the on-screen slides.

This product could be built either as a stand alone tool for use by Soldiers or as a component of an existing course. The current prototype includes a section for an instructor that mirrors the student section. Instructors can select specific stories that are relevant for particular courses and/or students to read.

A significant portion of the training would cover the important concepts and principles that Soldiers should learn, which would provide 4 to 8 hours of instruction that includes narrated lectures with on-screen text/pictures that the Soldier would follow.

Throughout this instruction, relevant stories would be referenced that illustrate the concept or principle being taught. Hyperlinks would enable the learner to quickly read the stories, and then return back to the conceptual instruction module. For Soldiers who do not have time to complete the full training program, a streamlined path through this instruction could be completed in 1 to 2 hours. Instructors could also create their own customized subset of the training for their students to take.

Strategies to Evaluate Training Effectiveness

In addition to developing the training program using sound principles of instructional design (e.g., Bloom's taxonomy, 1956), it is important to evaluate how well it works. This seemingly simple statement actually requires careful thought and planning. As Kraiger (2002) pointed out, it is very important to consider the purpose of the evaluation, obstacles to evaluation, and the content of the evaluation.

Evaluation information will be helpful to training program participants and instructors (if the training program is used to supplement instructor-led training), allowing both parties to gauge, in a reliable and accurate manner, the extent to which cross-cultural perspective-taking skills have improved as a result of participating in this training program. Evaluation information will also help instructional designers identify areas or topics in need of improvement and to refresh the training course content over time. Finally it is important to compile and summarize evaluation information in a manner that can be used by Army decision makers to assess the usefulness of the training program.

Bhawuk and Brislin (2000) reviewed several ways in which cross-cultural training programs have been evaluated in the past. Generally, the methods map onto commonly used training evaluation frameworks, such as the one developed by Kirkpatrick (1975/1994) and adapted by Phillips (1997), as shown in Table 3. Although this framework has been criticized (Kraiger, 2002) it continues to be the most widely recognized framework.

Table 3. Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Framework

Four-Level Framework of Training Evaluation	
1. Reaction	Participant reaction to the program
2. Learning	The extent to which participants change attitudes, improve knowledge, and/or increase skills
3. Behavior	The extent to which change in behavior occurs
4. Results	The changes in business results

Most organizations collect data for the first two levels, Reaction and Learning. Far fewer organizations collect information relevant for Levels Three (Behavior) and Four (Results).

Reaction (Level One) Evaluation Data

Reaction data is typically collected at the end of the training program by administering a brief survey to training participants. Reaction survey questions focus on Soldiers' intent to use the information covered in the training program, their perception of its relevance and importance to upcoming missions or deployment, the amount of information in the course that was new to them, and whether they would recommend the training program to others. Other questions to be

asked will help instructional designers improve the training program, for example, asking for feedback about the structure of the program, course materials, and the extent to which the program engaged their interest, and suggestions for improvements. Finally, a brief survey should be administered to instructors who use this training program as part of their curriculum. Instructors can provide invaluable feedback about the relevance, structure, and content of the training program.

The method of administering the reaction survey will depend on how the training program itself is administered. If Soldiers interact with the training program online, either as part of an instructor-led session or in a self-paced learning environment, reaction questions can easily be included on the website and responses automatically stored in a centralized database for summary reporting or further analyses. If the materials are used in a stand-alone fashion, e.g., via CD or as a supplement for instructor-led training sessions without online access, it will likely be much more difficult to collect reaction evaluations from students. One possibility would be to distribute evaluation surveys to instructors and ask them to collect the information and transmit it to the training design team. At a minimum, an effort should be made to obtain instructor feedback, for example, by asking for their contact information when they download the training program or request a CD, then sending a follow-up survey at some later point.

Learning (Level Two) Evaluation Data

At level two, the focus is on whether there is evidence of learning after the training program has been completed. Learning can include changes in attitudes as well as changes in knowledge or skills. This is important because, as noted in earlier sections of the report, we believe that the training program will impact attitudes as well as knowledge.

These data can be collected using a variety of collection methods, including testing, self-assessment, facilitator assessment, and portfolio assessment. Regardless of the data collection method used, a pre-test, post-test design and/or a research design that allows for a control group is recommended. Specifically, we suggest development of test questions (using various formats) and a measure of intercultural sensitivity. Each type of measure is described below.

Measuring knowledge using test questions. A common way to evaluate learning is to administer a set of test questions tapping knowledge of topics covered during training, using a pre-test, post-test research design. In this case, test questions will tap important concepts covered in the training program. The number of test questions devoted to various topics will correspond to the level and type of coverage specified in the training curriculum. Some of the test questions may be multiple-choice because this is a very cost-effective way to measure factual recall, however to the extent possible other item formats, for example fill-in-the blank, matching, or drop-and-drag may be utilized. Our goals in selecting item formats are to (a) mirror the type of learning incorporated in the training program and (b) engage the interest of the learner. Enough questions should be developed to create equated or parallel pre-training and post-training versions of the tests.

The scenarios included in the cultural assimilator (Bhawuk, 1998) can also be used as a measure of learning. As trainees encounter the first few scenarios related to each major topic area, their performance will be recorded, that is, their ability to select the most culturally-

appropriate response choice for each scenario. These scenarios will still include the explanation of alternatives, just as for any other scenario, so they will not be “wasted” learning opportunities. At the end of the training program, several additional scenarios will be administered that cover the same key points, once again recording each trainee’s performance. The primary challenge in using training scenarios as part of the evaluation process is making certain that the scenarios used for evaluation purposes are at an appropriate level of difficulty. Scenarios that are too transparent would enable trainees to easily identify the most appropriate response choice, with or without a high level of cultural knowledge or cross-cultural perspective taking skills. If the evaluation scenarios are too transparent, then many Soldiers will get a high score on the pre-training evaluation scenarios, making it impossible to show any improvement in performance on the post-training scenarios. (For training purposes, it may be appropriate to have some transparent scenarios. These transparent scenarios should not be used for evaluation purposes.)

Once the test questions and evaluation scenarios have been developed, pilot testing should be conducted on a sample of individuals as similar as possible to actual trainees. Ideally, a large sample of enlisted personnel and officers (or officer candidates) would complete the scenarios, and the psychometric properties of each item or scenario would be evaluated. Items exhibiting weak psychometric properties (e.g., too easy or too difficult, no variability in responses) would either be revised or discarded. After pilot testing, performance feedback can be provided to Soldiers. At first, only information such as the percentage of items/scenarios answered correctly could be provided. However, over time, a normative database of responses could be compiled, at which point comparative feedback can be provided to Soldiers, for example, how their performance compares with that of other Soldiers who completed the same training.

Measuring attitude change. An individual’s willingness to change their views of other cultures and their willingness to tolerate ambiguity should also be assessed, as these attitudes may contribute to the composite cross-cultural perspective taking skill. Pre- and post-training responses should be collected. This information could also be provided as feedback to trainees, although the implications of such feedback should be examined carefully before providing it. For example, what is a Soldier supposed to do if he/she learns that he/she is not very open to learning about other cultures or is not very willing to tolerate ambiguity? Feedback should be provided only if accompanied by suggestions for further development.

Behavioral (Level Three) Evaluation Data

Behavioral evaluation data is almost always collected at some point after the training program has been completed. Typically, data are collected from persons who have had an opportunity to observe the trainees apply (or fail to apply) their new skills. When this level of data can be reliably and accurately captured, it provides invaluable evidence of the degree to which training knowledge is transferred to operational settings. The challenge is in identifying which aspects of behavior *should* be impacted by the training program and then finding reliable and accurate ways to measure those aspects of behavior and also have a reasonable level of confidence that the cause for any change in behavior is the training program itself and not other factors.

Level Three evaluation data can be collected using various methods, including direct observation, focus groups, interviews, or standardized rating scales. Because this training program focuses on cultural perspective-taking, it makes sense to collect Level Three data while the Soldier is living and working in a culture other than the home culture. However, this may be very difficult to accomplish logistically and it may be virtually impossible to isolate the impact of our training program from the impact of other cultural training programs or from on-the-job learning that occurs during a deployment. In the following sections, we describe several options that could be pursued.

Critical incidents focusing on impact of training. One relatively straightforward option would be to contact Soldiers who participated in the training program and interview them about or ask them to write descriptions of how the training program impacted their behavior before, during, and after deployment. Yorks, Beechler, & Ciporen (2007) successfully used this method to evaluate the impact of open-enrollment executive training programs. This option offers the benefit of gaining concrete examples of how the training helped (or did not help) when interacting with persons from another culture. It may also be possible to ask about barriers to using cross-cultural perspective taking skills. The information gained using this method could both inform decision makers and provide new and highly relevant material for refreshing or revising the training program itself.

Performance ratings. Another option would be to gather performance ratings from persons who are familiar with each trainee's performance. The intercultural performance categories developed by HumRRO for the US Army Special Forces (SF) could serve as a starting point for creating behaviorally-anchored rating scales (Russell, Crafts, & Brooks, 1994). The dimensions identified in this effort, along with examples of effective and weak performance are shown in Table 4. These performance dimensions and rating scale anchors would need further review for relevance to Army personnel other than Special Forces personnel.

The challenge in implementing this option is tracking the Soldiers who attended training until they are deployed, then identifying persons who have had an opportunity to observe their behavior in cultural situations, and finding a way to administer the rating scales in a manner that ensures confidential, accurate, and reliable evaluations. This method would also require a control group sample to isolate the impact of this particular training program from other possible influences. In the ideal research design, the control group would not have received any cultural training prior to deployment, would have a demographic profile similar to the Soldiers who were trained (to increase the odds that the baseline level of cross-cultural perspective-taking skills is similar across the training and control groups), would have been deployed to the same region(s), and would be evaluated at the same point in their deployment (within a few months of deployment).

Table 4. Performance Dimensions Involving Cultural Interactions

Skill	Examples of Effective & Weak Performance
<p>Using Non-Verbal Communication: Acquiring and applying knowledge of cultural differences in body language to communicate when verbal language is not shared; interpreting meaning of gestures and other non-verbal cues; improvising and using novel methods to communicate.</p>	<p>Effective: interpreting body posture or “body language” to judge an individual’s true intentions</p> <p>Weak: making culturally inappropriate, unacceptable, or offensive gestures</p>
<p>Engaging in Culture-Appropriate Customs: Applying knowledge of appropriate customs and accepted practices to smooth interactions with indigenous people; blending into the cultural setting by adopting local customs.</p>	<p>Effective: taking culture-specific personal space and touch practices into account with dealing with indigenous people</p> <p>Weak: refusing food or drink offered in good will by indigenous people</p>
<p>Building Rapport: Establishing and maintaining mutually-satisfying interpersonal relationships with indigenous people; devoting time and effort to build familiarity with individuals; showing consideration of, respect for, and responsiveness to the viewpoints, welfare, and feelings of indigenous people.</p>	<p>Effective: building mutual regard by spending time with indigenous people</p> <p>Weak: “talking down” to indigenous counterparts</p>
<p>Negotiating: Using appropriate diplomatic or persuasive techniques in dealings with coalition forces and indigenous people; promoting cooperation through interactions.</p>	<p>Effective: listening to needs of indigenous people to better understand and work within customs, courtesies, and taboos</p> <p>Weak: assigning inappropriate work to coalition or indigenous personnel</p>
<p>Dealing with Stressful Cultural Situations: Attempting to reduce or to avoid unnecessary conflict; setting an example of culturally-appropriate emotional control in the context of confrontation or hostility.</p>	<p>Effective: keeping negative personal feelings about other coalition members to oneself to avoid conflict</p> <p>Weak: provoking an argument or getting into a fight with an indigenous person</p>

Simulations of intercultural situations. Yet another option would be to develop simulations of intercultural interactions. The advantage of simulations is that they can be standardized and the data could possibly be collected before deployment actually occurs (but at some time after training). Simulations, of course, vary in their level of fidelity. A high level of fidelity could be reached by developing standardized role plays that involve live actors who portray a person from another culture. Like the scenarios in the proposed training tool, each role play would involve the potential for a disconfirmed expectation, with an actor who is knowledgeable about another culture behaving in a manner consistent with that culture. (If the goal is to provide culture-general knowledge, the country/culture should vary across role play exercises to avoid over-emphasis of culture-specific knowledge.) Ideally, the role plays would involve actors who are intimately familiar with various target cultures, for example, the type of

role players who participate in training exercises at the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) and the National Training Center (NTC). Using a live role-play method would allow one to evaluate the extent to which the Soldier recognized that cultural differences are impacting the actor's behavior and how the Soldier applies his/her knowledge of culture theory to interact with the individual. At the end of the role play there could be direct questions about how the role-player (representing a person from another culture) would have interpreted the situation.

A moderate level of fidelity could possibly be achieved by administering the role plays online using video and voice capabilities. The concept would be the same as that above, but the level of interactivity would, by definition, be lower. There could also be bandwidth issues when administering video and voice capabilities with real-time interactions. Finally, a low fidelity simulation would be a written or video-based Situational Judgment Test (SJT) (Motowidlo, Hanson, & Crafts, 1997). SJTs present a situation and then several response actions the respondent could take in the situation. In many ways, an SJT would be similar to the cultural assimilator items included in the cross-cultural perspective taking training program. The primary difference is that, given the focus on evaluating performance, feedback would not include explanations of why various response choices are more and less appropriate. The test would simply assess the extent to which Soldiers can identify more and less culturally-appropriate *behaviors*. There are a number of different response formats that can be used for an SJT. Some ask the respondent to rate the effectiveness of all the actions or to select the best and worst actions. Video clips, photographs, and sound could be used to enhance the realism of the situations presented.

Results (Level Four) Evaluation Data

For organizational-level outcomes, one option would be to interview persons in key positions who are knowledgeable about how cultural training impacts actual mission success. These individuals could help us identify indicators that should be impacted by training.

Conclusion

In this Phase 1 effort we identified the components of cross-cultural perspective taking including the knowledge, skills, and attitudes we plan to target in the culture-general training program. A combination of cultural knowledge training with a cultural assimilator was determined to be an ideal way to improve culture-general skills. We designed a training system that incorporates a cultural assimilator training tool. Procedures to obtain the assimilator stories from Soldiers were developed, and a preliminary set of scenarios for the training system were identified. To further support and generalize the learning from the cultural assimilator, we developed a series of computer based modules that teach basic intercultural concepts. Finally, an initial prototype training system with limited functionality was developed to further refine and describe the system we propose to build in Phase II. Methods for and challenges in establishing training effectiveness were also discussed.

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Appendix A
KSAOs Linked to Cross-Cultural Perspective-Taking

KSAOs Related to Culture-General Competence and Perspective Taking	KSAOs			Source
	Knowledge	Skills	Abilities	
				Other Characteristics
cognitive ability			X	Botsford & Wisecarver, 2007; Lievens, Harris, Van Keer and Bisqueret, 2003
cultural knowledge	X			Botsford & Wisecarver, 2007
uncertainty avoidance	X			Cyert & March, 1963; Hofstede, 1980
power distance	X			Hofstede, 1980
individualism	X			Hofstede, 1980
time	X			Hall, 1959
space	X			Hall, 1966
institutional collectivism	X			House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, Gupta, 2004
group collectivism	X			Triandis, 1995a
in-group collectivism	X			House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, Gupta, 2004
institutional collectivism	X			House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, Gupta, 2004
conformity	X			Berry, 2004
masculinity	X			Hofstede, 1980
gender egalitarianism	X			House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, Gupta, 2004
assertiveness	X			House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, Gupta, 2004
past, present, future orientation	X			Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961
Confucian work dynamism	X			Hofstede & Bond, 1988
long-term orientation	X			Hofstede, 2001
performance orientation	X			House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, Gupta, 2004
humane orientation	X			House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, Gupta, 2004
knowledge of others	X			Botsford & Wisecarver, 2007
knowledge of self	X			Botsford & Wisecarver, 2007
socio, political, economic, religious knowledge (self and others)	X			Bhawuk, 2006; 2007
diversity	X			Berry, 2004
wealth	X			Berry, 2004

equality	X		Berry, 2004
interpersonal skills		X	Botsford & Wisecarver, 2007
informing others		X	Botsford & Wisecarver, 2007
gathering information		X	Botsford & Wisecarver, 2007
managing perceptions		X	Botsford & Wisecarver, 2007
demonstrating respect		X	Botsford & Wisecarver, 2007
helping others		X	Botsford & Wisecarver, 2007
socializing		X	Botsford & Wisecarver, 2007
adapting		X	Botsford & Wisecarver, 2007
managing other relationships		X	Botsford & Wisecarver, 2007
negotiation		X	Botsford & Wisecarver, 2007
communication		X	Hannigan, 1990; Lievens, Harris, Van Keer and Bisqueret, 2003
teamwork		X	Lievens, Harris, Van Keer and Bisqueret, 2003
persuasion techniques		X	Botsford & Wisecarver, 2007
attributions		X	Brislin & Hovarth, 1997
isomorphic attribution		X	Triandis, 1975
fundamental attribution error		X	Ross, 1977; Cushner & Brislin, 1996
problem-solving skills		X	Glaser, 1984; Cushner & Brislin, 1996
critical-thinking skills	X	X	Rentsch, Gunderson, Abbe, & Goodwin, 2007
metacognitive skills		X	Earley & Ang, 2003; Glaser, 1984
open-mindedness		X	Bennett, 1986; 1993 ; Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992
willingness to change		X	Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992
tolerance for ambiguity		X	Black & Mendenhall, 1889 Cushner & Brislin, 1996
empathy		X	Ascalon, Schleicher, & Born, 2006; Carpenter, 2007; Hannigan, 1990
motivation		X	Botsford & Wisecarver, 2007
managing stress		X	Hannigan, 1990
self-efficacy		X	Botsford & Wisecarver, 2007; Carpenter, 2007
positive affectivity		X	Carpenter, 2007
social confidence		X	Botsford & Wisecarver, 2007
extraversion		X	Fleming & Courtney, 1984
agreeableness		X	Ang, Van Dyne, & Koh, 2006; Botsford & Wisecarver, 2007
conscientiousness		X	Ang, Van Dyne, & Koh, 2006; Botsford & Wisecarver, 2007
emotional stability		X	Ang, Van Dyne, & Koh, 2006; Botsford & Wisecarver, 2007
openness		X	Ang, Van Dyne, & Koh, 2006; Botsford & Wisecarver, 2007; Lievens, Harris, Van Keer and Bisqueret, 2003
locus of control		X	Black & Mendenhall, 1990

cognitive flexibility	X	Black & Mendenhall, 1990
flexibility	X	Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992
		Lievens, Harris, Van Keer and
adaptability	X	Bisqueret, 2003

Appendix B

Stories Collected From Soldiers

1. Missing weapon parts and supplies

Assignments/Mission

SFC Johnson has just returned from a routine patrol in central Iraq. Most members of his patrol are Iraqis. No contact was made with the enemy and no shots were fired. Johnson decides to perform a function check on everyone's weapons before letting anyone go. Johnson discovers that parts are missing from one of the Iraqi soldier's AK-47. When Johnson checked one of the soldier's ammunition, he discovered expended casings filled with dirt hidden within the magazine. Upon further investigation, he discovered weapon parts and live ammunition in the soldier's pockets. Johnson has known this soldier for many months, and he had always performed well. What could explain the soldier's actions?

1. The soldier is an insurgent. He is stealing the parts to give to his comrades and has removed ammunition as a form of sabotage.
2. The soldier's family and friends have been threatened. He fears for his safety and is taking steps to protect himself. He wants the ammunition and weapons parts to replace damaged parts on his personal weapons.
3. The Iraqi soldier had identified problems with his weapons upon return from the patrol. He was disassembling the weapons to diagnose the problem. He hadn't completed the task before the function check was performed.
4. The soldier is planning to sell the weapon parts and ammunition on the black market to make some money.

Explanation of alternatives:

1. There have been a number of instances in which insurgents have successfully infiltrated the Iraqi Military/Law Enforcement. Johnson would be wise to consider this a possibility. However, the soldier's prior actions do not make this as likely an explanation as some others. Please choose again.
2. This is a good possibility. Iraq is a collectivist society in which people form tight bonds with those they consider part of their extended family or ethnic group. Threats of violence and actual acts of violence between groups are all too common. Many Iraqis would feel a sense of duty to help protect members of their own group. Please continue as there is another explanation that is also likely.
3. Even if the Iraqi soldier was checking and repairing his weapons, it seems unlikely the weapon parts would end up in the soldier's pockets. This explanation also fails to explain

why the soldier apparently took the ammunition and replaced it with dirt filled casings. Please choose again.

4. This is also a likely explanation. Iraq is a relatively poor country and the average Iraqi makes very little money. One should not be surprised to discover that many Iraqis are preoccupied with finding ways to supplement their income. In addition, Iraqis see the abundance of military weapons and other materials brought in by the U.S. and know that many of these items readily make their way to the black market. Because of this, some Iraqis have concluded that stealing weapons and ammunition is an acceptable practice. As this incident suggests, Iraqis who steal weapons may also develop creative means to avoid detection. The soldier apparently replaced the ammunition with dirt filled casings so the weight of the ammunition remained the same. He was hoping this action would reduce the chances that someone would detect his actions.

2. Meaning of weapons

Assignments/Mission

Charlie Company entered a village looking for insurgents. At one point, villagers began to crowd around them. Some members of the crowd were angry and shouted words that appeared to incite the others. The Army's interpreter explained to the crowd that the Soldiers were on a routine mission; however, the interpreter's words did not calm the crowd. At one point, the Soldiers raised their M-16 rifles to try and warn off the crowd; but this did not have any effect. The company's senior commander then drew a pistol and waved it in front of the crowd. The villagers become quiet and move back.

Why did the pistol affect the crowd more than the other weapons?

1. The Iraqis have never seen a pistol before and did not recognize it.
2. Waving an arm in front on oneself is a recognized signal for peace in Iraq. The crowd acknowledged the action even through the commander held a pistol in his hand.
3. Pistols are associated with assassinations.
4. The villagers interpreted the waving of the pistol as an offer to them. They would be given pistols and other weapons if they calmed down and supported the Soldiers.

Explanation of alternatives:

1. Most Iraqis would have no trouble recognizing a pistol. Please choose again.
2. Waving an arm is not a signal of peace. Please choose again.

3. This is the best answer. Assassinations were a fact of life under the previous regime and pistols were commonly known to be the weapon of choice. When the senior commander drew his pistol, members of the group thought they were being threatened and were about to be taken away and executed. This incident points out how something as basic as a type of weapon can be interpreted so differently across cultures. Rifles and machine guns are common in Iraq and carry no special significance. Pistols however are different. As another example, it has been reported that Iraqis react to shotguns as especially powerful and dangerous weapons. This is because such weapons are rare in Iraq and what Iraqis know about them comes from watching American movies. Such movies unrealistically portray shotguns as being so powerful they physically launch anyone they hit backwards across rooms into walls.
4. It is unlikely that the townspeople would think the Soldiers were offering them weapons. Please choose again.

3. Women in charge

Touring the area

At the end of a long duty week in Germany, a female Master Sergeant agrees to take five male NCOs in her platoon to town for drinks and dinner. At the restaurant, the MSG explained nicely to the waiter that she was in charge and would be responsible for paying the bill. However, when the waiter brought the bill, he set it in front of one of the male Soldiers.

Why was the MSG unable to effectively make her point with the waiter?

1. The waiter was accustomed to men taking the bill.
2. The MSG had spoken in English and the waiter did not understand what the MSG said.
3. The waiter had simply forgotten the MSG's request.
4. In Germany, where the waiter places a bill bears no relationship to the person the waiter thinks will pay the bill.

Explanation of alternatives:

1. This is the most likely answer. Many countries outside the United States make firm distinctions between what behavior that is acceptable for men and for women. In Germany, it is more common for men to pay the bill than women. The waiter did not feel comfortable giving the bill to a woman.

2. It is always possible that the waiter did not understand what the MSG had asked because his understanding of English was not good. However, nothing in the incident suggested the waiter had problems understanding her. Please choose again.
3. This is certainly possible, but is not the most likely explanation. Please choose again.
4. As is true for waiters around the world, German waiters usually try to place the bill near the person they expect will pay. Please choose again.

4. Hand Gestures

Assignment/Mission

SPC Garrison Milford recently arrived in Iraq. His assignment was to train a group of Iraqi soldiers. Milford had been thoroughly impressed with the soldiers' obvious dedication and hard work. He freely gave out compliments to those that deserved it. During a series of field exercises involving noisy, live weapons firing, he signaled to the soldiers that they had successfully completed the exercise by giving them the A-OK signal with his thumb and fore finger. The next day, one of the Iraqi soldiers asked Milford what they had done to make him unhappy. What could explain the soldier's question?

1. In Muslim countries, it is common for subordinates to act subservient to their bosses by saying they are not performing well and to ask their bosses to correct their behaviors.
2. Iraqis feel that Americans often push them too hard to meet Western standards. The Iraqi soldier's question was meant to make Milford rethink how hard he was pushing them in the training.
3. Milford's repeated compliments raised the soldier's expectations that Milford would do something special for them like giving money or some other valuable gift. When this did not happen one of them was sent to ask Milford what was wrong.
4. The A-OK signal that Milford gave them was interpreted as an insult.

Explanation of alternatives:

1. It is true that in many Middle Eastern and Asian countries, one's place in an organization carries clear-cut restrictions on what one is permitted to say and do. But, this does not mean one is expected to profess their inadequacies to their boss. Please select another response.
2. There is nothing in the incident to suggest the soldiers felt they were being pushed too hard or held to a standard that was too high. Please choose again.

3. There is no expectation in Iraq that compliments or repeated praise should be followed by some kind of monetary gift. Please choose again.
4. This is the correct answer. Hand gestures that mean one thing in the United States can have a very different meaning in other countries. The A-OK hand signal in the United States is a signal of approval. But in the Arab culture, using this gesture and with a shaking motion toward another person symbolizes the sign of the evil eye. It may be used in conjunction with verbal curses.

5. Soldier gear

Assignment/Mission

SGT Thomas Becker and his platoon spent the morning outside patrolling the streets of Kirkuk on a blistering hot, sunny day. They went house to house asking the locals if they had seen any suspicious behavior – such as non-locals roaming around with guns. At each house, the Soldiers explain that their purpose was to help protect the neighborhood. The resident of the third house invited them to stay and have some tea. The Soldiers accepted the invitation, but let the resident know they could only stay a few minutes. The Soldiers continued to wear all their gear (e.g., flak jackets, helmets, sunglasses). Their host became uncomfortable and seemed relieved when the Soldiers got up to leave. Why could explain the host's reactions?

1. As a rule, Iraqis fear American Soldiers and do not want them in their homes.
2. When the Iraqis saw the Soldiers' guns, they became afraid for their lives. Since this was a peacekeeping mission, the Soldiers should have left their guns in their truck.
3. There were insurgents hiding in the house and the family was concerned that the Soldiers would discover them.
4. The fact that the Soldiers did not take off their sunglasses upset their Iraqi host.

Explanation of alternatives:

1. This may sometimes be true in certain locations, but in this case the Iraqi invited the Soldiers to stay for tea. Please choose again.
2. Most Iraqis would expect Soldiers to keep their weapons with them on patrol, even when entering a house. Such an action in itself would be unlikely to cause offense as long as the weapons remain held in a non-threatening manner. Please choose again.
3. There is nothing in the story to suggest this resident was hiding insurgents. If he was, it seems unlikely he would have invited the Soldiers to stay. Please try again.

4. This is the best answer. If someone wore sunglasses indoors in the U.S. we would probably think it odd. But we might also interpret such behavior as an attempt on the person's part to appear cool (e.g., some Western musicians wear sun glasses during indoor performances as part of a fashion statement). In any event, we probably would not feel threatened by it. Iraqis on the other hand would likely interpret such behavior as a provocative act. They may think the Soldiers had chosen to hide their eyes to mask their reactions, intimidate them, or wanted to scan the room undetected. The Soldiers would have had a better chance of building rapport if they had removed their sunglasses.

6. Where is everyone?

Assignment / Mission

SGT Thomas Brown was ordered to increase the frequency with which he went on routine patrol in a small city composed mostly of Sunni Arabs. He had been briefed about the possibility of increased insurgency. Brown was familiar with the city since he had been leading patrols there for the past several months. One day while on patrol, Brown chatted with shopkeepers and others he had come to know on the outskirts of the city. Brown then winds his way through local streets to the central area of the city which contains a park. Each time he had been there before he saw young children playing under the watchful eye of their mothers or other family members. But on this particular day, there were no children present. In fact, the whole park is strangely deserted. What could be happening?

1. An attack against Brown and his patrol is imminent. Those in the park had been warned by the insurgents to go out of the area for their own safety.
2. It was an unusually hot day and the locals decided to stay home and inside rather than fight the heat.
3. This day was a holiday. All the locals were spending the day in prayer at the town Mosque.
4. A dust storm was predicted for today, the locals had moved indoors to avoid it.

Explanation of alternatives:

1. This is a good answer. In collectivist societies, members of a group put a premium on supporting and protecting each other. Brown should be alert to the possibility that Sunni insurgents had warned the people in the park to leave as the insurgents were about to mount an attack against the patrol.
2. Nothing in the incident would suggest that the heat was unusual today. Please choose again.

3. This is a possibility. It certainly could be a holiday and the people had simply gone to their local Mosque. However, Brown found people out and about on the outskirts of the city. Please choose again.
4. Dust storms can be a problem in certain parts of the Middle East. However, there is nothing in the incident to suggest that this was the reason that the park was deserted today. Please choose again.

7. Contractors within the Forward Operating Base (FOB)

Settling in

SPC Annette Briggs flew in late that night to the FOB in Iraq. It was her first deployment to the Middle East. She was directed to her barracks and went to bed. However, she was unable to get much sleep so she got up early and took a short walk outside. She noticed a small group of men quietly digging a hole behind her barracks. The men did not look like Americans or Arabs. She thought they maybe looked Asian. In her pre-arrival training, Soldiers were advised to be alert to suspicious activity, and Briggs took this advice seriously. She hurried off to report the incident to her commanding officer. Her commanding officer was amused by her story. What could explain the situation?

1. There are no Asians in the green zone. Briggs must have misread their nationality.
2. Her commanding officer had assigned several Soldiers the task of digging holes outside the barracks as a punishment for poor behavior. The Soldiers happened to be Americans of Asian descent.
3. The Asians were members of a contractor workforce from the Philippines. The workers were doing some type of excavation work as the part of a larger task.
4. Japan has some of the world's best specialists in the detection and removal of IEDs. The people Briggs observed were some of these people that had come to the FOB to train Americans. This morning they were planting some devices to be used later that day as part of a training exercise.

Explanation of alternatives:

1. Typically there is a mix of Soldiers and civilians from many different countries in the green zone, including Asians. Please choose again.
2. While this is a possible answer, it is not the best explanation for the officer not showing concern about the incident. Please choose again.
3. This is the best answer. It is a common practice in the Middle East to hire contractors from other countries to perform service jobs. This practice also occurs in the green zone

of Iraq. Many of the laborers you might find there come from the Philippines and India. These are typically not high paying jobs. Most people do the work out of necessity to make a little money for themselves and to support their families back home.

4. The Japanese have no particular expertise in this subject. It is unlikely they would be in Iraq training Americans. Please choose again.

8. Need for civilian workers

Assignment / Mission

The Army was conducting a public works project to rebuild a school in a small town in Iraq. The Army had funds to hire local citizens to perform much of the actual labor. Captain Sheldon Smith approached the town's local official to explain the project and ask him to provide strong, capable people with the right experience to do the work. The official readily agreed to help the Captain. The official explained that paid work was scarce so he would have no problem finding good workers. The next day Smith went to the worksite and discovered the official had brought people with him that were clearly unsuited for the job - an elderly man who could barely walk, a man who appeared to have trouble seeing, and two boys who appeared to be around 8 and 12 years old. None of the people had any experience in construction or the building trades. The Captain explained to the official he needed strong men in their 20's and 30's who could accomplish the job in a relatively short timeframe. The local official continued to argue that the Captain should hire the people he brought to the worksite because he personally knew these people, they were dependable, and that it was the right thing to do to hire them. The Captain had to threaten to end the project before the official helped him find people truly capable of doing the work.

What guidance would you give the Captain on how to interpret the local leader's actions?

1. The local leader presented people who did not meet the captain's requirements because they do not want the Army's help and would rather build up their infrastructure on their own.
2. The locals do not want the Army to succeed so the leader was giving them help from the weakest members.
3. The local leader was giving the Captain people that were personally important to him.
4. The Captain asked the wrong leader, one who did not know well the young, strong men who were looking for work.

Explanation of alternatives:

1. Most Army Soldiers find that Iraqis appreciate the support they get from Americans on public works projects, especially when it provides paying jobs. Please choose again.

2. Iraqis have a range of different feelings about the presence of U.S. Soldiers in their country. However, nothing in this incident suggests the locals were purposely trying to sabotage the school rebuilding project. Please choose again.
3. This is the right choice. In collectivist cultures, people place a premium on exchanging favors with family members, relatives, and others that are part of their own group. When asked who should get the work, the local leader turned first to his family, relatives, and friends rather than to those most qualified to perform the work.
4. This seems unlikely. When the Captain finally forced the issue, the leader was able to find capable workers. Please choose again.

9. Need for local Soldiers

Mission/assignment

Civil Military Operations Center (CMOC) has need for a small military group. Captain James Wright contacted the local village mayor to tell him that the Army was planning an open recruiting day for Iraqi police, and that they need people in the age range of 17-35, and that no military experience is required. Additionally, the mayor is told he may pre-screen people within their village who might fit the criteria for some leadership positions. When the actual day came, there were two distinct groups – one group of people who barely met the criteria, but possessing the desire to join the military, largely because they needed the money. The screened group was clearly from a higher economic group and well to do, none of whom were appropriate for the military. What happened?

1. The mayor did not understand the request.
2. The mayor told only family and close friends about the opportunity and those were the people who showed up so he would have influence in that military unit, and gives his family and friends in a position where they have their own village security force.
3. The mayor deliberately chose the wealthy people to negatively affect the recruiting process to adversely affect the military efforts.
4. The friends and family were there because they heard about the project from the mayor and asked to be considered and said if they were accepted, they would pay the mayor to get a job with the military.

Explanation of alternatives:

1. There is nothing in the story to suggest that the village mayor did not understand the request. Please choose again.

2. This is the right choice. In collectivist cultures, people place a premium on exchanging favors with family members, relatives, and others that are part of their own group. When asked who should get the work, the local leader turned first to his family, relatives, and friends rather than to those most qualified to perform the work.
3. There is no indication in the story that the mayor was trying to sabotage the Army's efforts, in fact they identify a suggested group of people who showed up on the appointed day rather than ignoring the request. Please choose again.
4. There is the tendency to pay for favors in this culture, there is another choice that better fits the circumstances. Please choose again.

Appendix C
Critical Incidents Adapted from Cushner and Brislin (1996)

Proposal Process to Develop a Joint Training Exercise
Cushner & Brislin, No. 58 (p. 152)
Training Foreign Military

When working as part of a UN peacekeeping mission, involving troops from many different countries, SFC Stan Jones became friends with a senior NCO from the Philippine national forces, Jose Diaz. Jose was ordered to develop an exercise for potential use in a joint-training exercise to be conducted in two months. A short time later, Stan attended meeting in which Jose presented his plan to several NCOs as a pre-cursor to presenting it to the commanding officer. Stan felt that Jose had developed a good exercise but that there were some areas in need of improvement. He asked some difficult questions that forced Jose to think quickly on his feet and to outline and defend some of his assumptions. Eventually, all of the NCOs approved the exercise. Stan felt the exercise had been improved and was happy for his friend that it had been accepted. After the meeting, Jose told Stan that he would not be able to meet the next day for dinner as they had earlier planned. Stan was puzzled because Jose seemed upset when informing him that they could not meet.

Of these four alternatives, which provides the greatest insight into the reasons for Jose's cancellation of the dinner appointment?

1. Jose wanted to spend the time preparing to present his exercise to the commanding officer.
2. Jose was jealous that Stan's ideas seemed to be better than his.
3. Jose felt that Stan withdrew his friendship at the meeting.
4. The outcome of the meeting implied that Jose needed to sharpen his thinking about his proposal.

Explanation of alternatives:

1. It is possible that Jose wanted to improve his proposal, but this does not mean that he would have to cancel their dinner plans. Please choose again.
2. Jealousy is always a possible reaction whenever one person has success, but this does not constitute such a general reaction in the Philippines as to provide a good explanation here. In addition, as Stan's proposal was well known among the people at the meeting, because of prior communications among the principals, Stan, and the rest of the people, Jose probably had known for some time that the proposal would be approved for its next step toward implementation. Please choose again.
3. This is the best answer. In his own country, New Zealand, Stan is familiar with the fact that a person can be both a friend and a critic who makes constructive suggestions (this ability to be a friend and a critic is in general true of English-speaking countries). In fact, if Stan did not make constructive suggestions that in the long run would improve a friend's proposal, that friend could criticize Stan for not helping out when he could. In the Philippines, the roles of friend and critic are differentiated, or separate. The same person cannot easily be both a friend and a critic who makes suggestions about the

friend's work, at least in public. People in the Philippines have a set of expectations about what a friend is, and Stan's behavior violated these expectations. It is possible that if Stan had made his suggestions in private, when the NCOs were absent, Jose might not have reacted as he did. Even then, however, Stan would want to be sure that he was making his suggestions in a style acceptable in the Philippines (and, in general Southeast Asia). That style would include saying a number of good things about the proposal, being much more indirect than he would in his own country, and keeping the tone of the meeting light, with jokes and anecdotes.

4. It is possible that Jose needed to sharpen his thinking skills, but that is not apparent from the story. There is a better answer. Please choose again.

Development Project
Cushner & Brislin, No. 60 (pp. 154-155)

Assignment/Mission

US Army engineers spent two years assisting a developing country in building a water treatment plant. Unlike some other situations they had been in, this time they were able to acquire excellent materials for building the plant. It was functioning well and was an important point of interest for host country officials who visited regularly to check on progress and described the plant with great pride to visitors from other countries.

However, 5 years after completion, the water treatment plant was not functioning very well. Parts had rusted, and no one seemed able to replace worn-out parts or otherwise look after system maintenance. Host country officials stopped praising the plant and, in fact, started to complain about the U.S. military's efforts.

What is the mostly likely problem?

1. The materials they thought were excellent were really cheap knock-offs that had been purchased on the black market. Eventually, these materials wore out.
2. The Army engineers had not trained Nigerians in the skills necessary to carry on work at the sewage treatment system.
3. The hosts resented the development assistance from the U.S. military because this put them in the embarrassing role of being the recipient of aid from outside.
4. The Army engineers had to rely on local labor when building the plant and these laborers consistently did very shoddy work. As a consequence, the plant was beginning to fall apart.

Explanation of alternatives:

1. The story specifically says that the engineers were able to acquire excellent materials. Just because materials wear out, this does not mean they were inadequate. Maintenance, including the replacement of worn-out parts, is part of the long-range success of any construction project. Please choose again.

2. This is the best answer. The U. S. Army engineers may have done an excellent job in supervising construction of the system, but they did not transfer their skills to their Nigerian hosts, especially skills concerning maintenance. Research coming out of the Canadian International Development Agency has shown that transfer of skills is one of the major components of the long-range success of technical assistance advisers. Hosts are sensitive to this problem. In their judgments concerning good versus poor sojourners, they incorporate observations of who makes sure or does not make sure that hosts learn technical skills that allow them to maintain the current project and construction of others. The conclusion from this research is that excellent training and experience in engineering are not enough. Technical assistance advisers must also have enough human relations skills and cultural knowledge to be able to develop procedures by which hosts learn engineering skills from them.
3. Although occasionally this is a problem it is not widespread enough to constitute an answer as to why the water system became nonfunctioning. The reasoning behind choosing this explanation would be that host resentment could be expected to cause purposeful sabotage. But the story indicates that the Nigerians were proud of the project. They would not be expected to sabotage something they valued, even if they were not completely happy with its source. Please choose again.
4. There is no evidence to suggest this is the case. The U.S. Army engineers are known to be good and from all accounts they left behind an excellent piece of construction. Just because the system developed problems, it does not mean that the original construction was poor. Careful maintenance is necessary for the smooth functioning of any complex project. Please choose again.

A Few Beers

Cushner & Brislin, No. 4, page 60

Touring the area

SFC Whitten had been stationed in Indonesia on a humanitarian relief mission for about six months and had befriended some of the locals. On one of his days off, he went to a nearby marketplace with two of the locals whom he had come to know. The older of the two Indonesians was named Soleh. After walking around for some time observing the local crafts and food items that were for sale, the men stopped for a few beers. The conversation swayed between such topics as aid to developing nations and the role of women in society. Just after initiating a discussion of local politics, Whitten excused himself to go buy a round of beers, thus treating everyone at the table. He returned clutching three bottles in his right hand. While still holding the bottles, John suddenly remembered a point he wanted to stress with Soleh. Leaning forward and reaching for Soleh's shoulder with his hand before sitting down, he proceeded to talk. Soleh and his companion began to appear uncomfortable. The conversation began to move away from John. When the two Indonesians finished their beer, they politely excused themselves and left. Neither made contact with SFC Whitten again. How can you explain this incident?

1. Touching a person of the same sex is understood to mean a sexual advance in the local culture. Both men were put off by Whitten's apparent advance.

2. The left hand is considered unclean in some cultures, and there is a taboo against personal contact with it. Both Indonesian men were insulted when Whitten touched Soleh with his left hand.
3. Soleh perceived Whitten as flaunting his wealth by paying for the drinks. He was obviously insulted by Whitten's purchase.
4. Both men were insulted that Whitten would get up and leave just after initiating a discussion. It is preferable to signal to the waiter rather than leave your friends.

Explanation of alternatives:

1. On the contrary, in Indonesia physical contact is often acceptable between members of the same sex. Neither would have been insulted merely because he was touched. Please select a better response.
2. This is the best answer. There is a taboo about personal contact with the left hand in many nations of Asia and Africa. The left hand is considered hygienically unclean and should not contact either people or food. An individual could expect a similar reaction if he or she is seen eating with the left hand.
3. There is no indication in the incident that this would be the case. In fact, it is common practice to share the purchase of beer. Please select a better response.
4. This could be a possible explanation. One should be aware of social customs when interacting with host nationals. However, this is not the overriding issue as there is a much more critical point. Please select a better response.

Foreign Bureaucracy

Cushner & Brislin No. 7, page 63

Assignment/Mission

CWO Briggs has just arrived in Iraq and is responsible for overseeing the reconstruction of a water plant in a small town in southern Iraq. Prior to starting construction, he was required to obtain a permit so he presents himself at the appropriate government office to apply. He was told to fill out a form and return in a few days. When he returned and asked if the permit was granted, he was told there are some problems and that he should return in a few days. On two more visits he met the same response and exasperatedly asked another officer if this is normal. He was told that such delaying tactics are frequent and that he could avoid them by giving the official a small amount of money to expedite the process. Briggs became frustrated at this because he was trying to help the locals and yet they were creating unnecessary roadblocks. He did not think that the U. S. military should be subjected to bribery, and particularly not when they were providing the manpower to improve the infrastructure for the locals. Nevertheless, after several more fruitless visits he slipped the official some money and was subsequently granted his permit. Briggs felt bitter about the incident, however, and constantly denounced the corruption of "these people" to his fellow Soldiers.

How would you interpret the official's action so as to make it more acceptable to Briggs?

1. The official was not being discriminatory, as everybody is obliged to pay such bribes. CWO Briggs should not take it so personally.
2. The payment could be regarded as equivalent to a tip or services, such as that given to a waiter or porter.
3. Such behavior is probably not seen as unethical by the official. So Briggs should not try to impose his culturally influenced values upon someone from another culture.
4. The official does not demand any large sums of money, so he is not really doing anything seriously wrong.

Explanation of alternatives:

1. This is a partial explanation CWO Briggs' negative reaction is more a result of a perceived violation of his ethics than because he feels discriminated against. Such practices are very common in many countries, and Briggs probably realizes this. However, this knowledge probably will not go far toward making the actions acceptable to him. There is another explanation. Please choose again.
2. This could be the best way to view such behavior. If one can relate certain customs to actions that are similar or parallel to some in one's own culture, one may see previously unacceptable behaviors in a better light. Tipping for various services is very common in the United States and in some Western European countries and is accepted as an ethical practice, yet visitors from countries that do not have such practices feel very uneasy at being obliged to tip. The reason for such financial supplements is generally to compensate the worker for a low basic remuneration. The official in the Middle Eastern country probably requested such supplementary payments for the same reason.
3. This alternative has a good deal of merit. This explanation, however, will probably not help reduce Briggs' feeling that his values are being violated. Although such explanations are often given to attempt to endorse such behaviors, they are very abstract – it is preferable to find an explanation that Briggs can relate to more specifically. In light of this, please try again.
4. It is unlikely that the size of the sum will decrease Briggs' perception of the act as corrupt. There is a better suggestion.

Healing Wounds

Cushner & Brislin No. 8, pages 68-69

Assignment/Mission

Colonel Halim Mohamed, a Saudi soldier who had been supporting the U.S. mission near Baghdad was part of an international armed forces unit that encountered a roadside IED. Several Soldiers were killed, and Mohamed lost one of his legs. Colonel Mohamed was flown home to Riyadh and a few months later entered a U. S. military medical facility to get help with rehabilitation exercises, as well as help with bathing and using the restroom. The senior medical officer assigned a fairly new medic, SPC Brenda Waters to the task. Waters, who had worked with Saudis since her arrival in Riyadh a few months ago approached her work with Mr. Mohamed with her usual enthusiasm. However, by the end of her first day with Col. Mohamed, she is exhausted. Col. Mohamed seems to fight her every step of the way. Waters told Col.

Mohamed that his rehabilitation could not possibly be a success without his willing cooperation, but he reacted violently to her suggestions, even swearing at her at times. Waters left for the day feeling utterly defeated, with no ideas of how to improve the situation. The next morning, the senior medical officer told Waters that Col. Mohamed had complained about her incompetence and demanded a new medic, a young man who really knew what he was doing. The senior medical officer reassigned Waters to other patients, explaining that she would suffer no repercussions. That day, the senior medical officer assigned Col. Mohamed to a young male medic and heard no complaints from either party.

Why did Waters' attempts to assist Col. Mohamed fail?

1. If the senior medical officer had introduced Waters to Col. Mohamed properly, he would not have become so upset. Introductions are very important in Saudi Arabian culture.
2. Waters did not explain sufficiently to Col. Mohamed how he would benefit from the therapy. He thought the entire procedure useless.
3. It is unacceptable for an Arab man to be assisted in such tasks as bathing and dressing by any woman other than a family member.
4. Col. Mohamed is clearly a sexist individual and prefers males to females. There was no way that the senior medical officer or SPC Waters could have known this ahead of time.
5. Waters was not a competent medic, and so Col. Mohamed demanded someone with more experience and expertise.

Explanation of alternatives:

1. It may be true that introductions are important in Saudi Arabia, but this hardly seems to be the issue in this situation. The therapist is responsible for bathing Col. Mohamed and helping him use the restroom. There are much more important, delicate concerns in this incident than whether or not the therapist and patient were properly introduced. Please make another selection.
2. Given that Col. Mohamed has lost one of his legs and is almost certainly eager to regain mobility, it is extremely unlikely that he did not understand the purpose and importance of physical therapy. Moreover, we are told that Waters explained to him her need for his cooperation. Please choose again.
3. This is the best response. It is unacceptable for an Arab man to be assisted in such personal, private tasks by a young woman not in his family. Col. Mohamed, already frustrated and embarrassed by his immobility, could not stand that a woman who is a complete stranger was been sent to help him. As often happens in cross cultural clashes, he reacted with an intense emotional response to this total violation of his cultural norms.
4. There is some truth to the first statement – Col. Mohamed clearly preferred males to females – but with one addition: in this particular context. We cannot assume this to be true in any situation. If the supervisor had cross-cultural experience, he would have known that a young woman would not be the appropriate therapist for this patient, and she would have assigned a male therapist in the first place. There is a better response.
5. We have no reason to believe, based on the incident, that SSG Waters was not a competent medic. The conflict here clearly centers on the issue of gender. SSG Waters' youth and relative inexperience may seem to have been additional factors in upsetting

Col. Mohamed, yet the senior medical officer heard no complaints about the new young male medic assigned to the case. There is a better explanation.

A Natural Disaster?

Cushner & Brislin No. 17, page 77

Assignment/Mission

Captain Franks, a U. S. Army engineer, was assigned to a 6 month program in Guatemala to help develop disaster preparedness programs following a particularly severe earthquake. Although he had some success in convincing local government leaders of the necessity for the measures, he was continually frustrated in trying to initiate building and health programs among the rural population, most of whom were native Indians. Franks was impressed with their rebuilding efforts after a disaster, but could not get them interested in preparing for future disasters. These people were passionate Catholics and believed that natural disasters were acts of God and that their survival was determined absolutely by God's will. Army preparations to minimize the effects of future calamities thus seemed futile, as no person could subvert God's will. Franks was also Catholic and respected the strong faith of the natives in this region, but he could not accept or understand what seemed like blind fatalism to him.

How could you help Franks interpret the most significant reason the Franks could not get the natives interested in preparing for possible future disasters?

1. The Guatemalan natives did not have sufficient education or sophistication to appreciate his viewpoint.
2. The Guatemalan natives had been repressed so long by political and economic forces that they had lost the will to act on their own behalf.
3. The Guatemalan natives probably had an inherent distrust of outsiders and were using their religious beliefs as an excuse not to cooperate.
4. The Guatemalan natives had an intense religiosity that pervaded their lives to a degree that Franks had never before experienced.

Explanation of alternatives:

1. This is a rather simplistic viewpoint. Despite their lack of education, the native Guatemalans were certainly smart enough to understand Franks' arguments. However, they felt there were forces operating that made the logic of his arguments irrelevant. There is a more thoughtful explanation. Please choose again.
2. Although this may seem plausible, Franks himself noticed the will and determination of the people to reconstruct their communities following disasters. Because of inadequate government assistance, most of this reconstruction was done on a self-help basis. There is a better explanation. Please choose again.
3. There is little evidence or this in the story. If the Guatemalan natives could have seen some benefit in the programs, they would probably have been quite willing to accept aid. Please choose again.

4. This is the best response. Although Franks and the Guatemalans share a Christian faith, cultural and historical influences have created very different interpretations of the relationship between God and man. Over the centuries, Western European and U. S. cultures have been strongly influenced by science as well as by religion. In these cultures, there is generally a strong belief in mankind's ability to use technology to control nature and a strong belief that humans have some degree of control over their own fate. Even Christians such as Captain Franks, who accepts the will of his Christian faith, still has a fundamental faith in his own self-will and is less inclined to see God's hand in all that happens in the natural world. The Guatemalan natives, on the other hand, have had little exposure to these scientific and technological influences and also have a very long history of being subject to the powers of god(s) – initially Maya gods and, more recently, the Catholic, Christian God. Their culture has never really experienced or accepted forces (such as technology) that suggest nature can be controlled by mankind so they continue to have an intense belief that their fate is in the hands of God. Therefore, they see little logic in preparing for things that they cannot control.

Next-Door Neighbors
Cushner & Brislin, No. 27, page 86

Settling in and adjusting

Major Mary Kingley and MSG Jeremy Kingley were married, stationed in Vicenza, Italy, and lived in a small but comfortable apartment in a building near the city. They were pleased to find that their neighbors (on the same floor) often stopped to exchange pleasantries on the stairs. The Kingleys felt they should get to know their neighbors better, and on several occasions they invited neighbors over to their apartment for a drink or a meal. Although the neighbors thanked them for their offers, none of them ever came over. Further, although the neighbors seem to be very social – often entertaining large gatherings of their relatives during the weekends – the Kingleys were never invited to these functions. After a while, the Kingleys began to feel uneasy in any interactions with their neighbors, believing that they are not really liked or wanted in the building.

How would you explain to the Kingleys the neighbors' apparent unwillingness to have any extensive personal interaction with them?

1. The neighbors were accustomed to restricting home-based social activities to those involving family.
2. The neighbors were probably wary of any intimate contact with foreigners.
3. The neighbors probably felt that they would not know how to talk to or entertain foreigners and so were reluctant to invite them over.
4. The Kingleys have probably unwittingly offended their neighbors in some way.

Explanation of alternatives:

1. This is the best choice. In Mediterranean and many other cultures there is a strong identification with the family and less concern for others outside of it (familism). Social

bonds and activities are thus generally restricted to the extended family group, especially when the activities take place in the home. People are greatly defined by their roles within their families, which constitute a complex support network that becomes both self-supporting and exclusive. Relationships with people such as neighbors or work colleagues are thus de-emphasized, and although friendships may develop, these friends are generally not invited to participate in family activities. Thus, although the neighbors did not dislike or seek to avoid contact with the Kingleys, they would likely feel very uneasy about inviting them into their homes or entering the Kingleys' home, considering that they hardly knew them.

2. Although this may appear to be the case, it does not explain why the neighbors are reluctant to socialize. There is a more specific and helpful explanation.
3. There is little evidence for this in the story. The neighbors appear willing to chat with the Kingleys on an informal basis, but apparently did not wish to become more intimately involved. There is a more adequate explanation. Please choose again.
4. This seems unlikely, and if it were the case, the neighbors probably would have shunned or ignored the Kingleys when they ran into them. Please choose again.

Using the Local Language
Cushner & Brislin No. 33, pages 91-92

Settling in and adjusting

Lieutenant Corkers received his first overseas assignment to Japan. He had studied the Japanese language in college and had done very well in his courses. After Corkers arrived in Japan, he began immediately talking to the local people to get a better understanding of the area. Although Corkers spoke Japanese, he noticed that the local people would usually giggle and then answer him in English, even if they only knew a little. As part of his job, he continued talking to various Japanese individuals about different aspects of the mission to his counterparts in Japan. Often when Corkers was trying to explain a relatively complex or intricate aspect of his mission, the local people, in a smiling manner, would encourage him to use English. Even when Corkers was confident that what he was saying was correct, people would laugh, grin, nod their heads, and then encourage him to continue. This left Corkers very discouraged and confused as to whether or not people really understood him when he spoke Japanese.

What is a good explanation of what was happening? Take into account as much information as possible in choosing your answer.

1. The local people were offended that Corkers thought they did not know any English, and wanted to prove their ability by speaking.
2. The local people wanted to learn English, and so were trying to use conversations with Corkers as an opportunity to practice their English.
3. The local people simply did not understand Corkers' attempts to speak their language.
4. The local people were trying to be polite and considerate of Corkers by letting him use a language (English) more comfortable to him.
5. The local people were reacting to a strange thing -- a foreigner who could actually speak their language. They were not accustomed to this, and their smiles and giggles

demonstrated both pleasure at his ability to speak Japanese and the fact that they were not accustomed to such foreigners.

Explanation of alternatives:

1. People in various countries do have the ability to speak English and welcome opportunities to use it or to show a native speaker that they have that ability. However, it is unlikely that they would take offense at a foreigner speaking their language. There is a better answer; please choose again.
2. This is partially correct. In most developing countries where people are trying to learn English, any person speaking English is often a target for practice and authentic usage. However, this does not explain the cases in which Corkers persisted in trying to speak Japanese and was met with giggles and more English. There is something more going on here. Please choose again.
3. In some cases, this explanation will contribute to an understanding of communication difficulties. Many times, English speakers study other languages in language training courses and feel that they are pretty competent. However, when they find themselves in places where the language they studied is spoken, they find that the local people actually cannot understand them. This can be caused by the English speakers' poor accent or by their use of unnatural (or bookish) forms of the language they are attempting to speak. This does not explain all the information represented in this incident, however. Please choose again.
4. This is also partially correct. The large majority of people in countries who sometimes use English, or at least understand it, are aware of the awkward situations English speakers find themselves in when they cannot speak or understand that local language. If the local people have the ability to use English, they might do so in deference to an English speaker who is present. However, Corkers did display some knowledge of the local peoples' language in this scenario. Please choose again.
5. This is the best answer in light of all the data given. Foreigners do not often speak the "local" language. When they do, the people are surprised and do not know how to take it. In many cultures such as Asian ones, laughter or giggling is an outlet to expressing such awkwardness, but it also expresses delight that someone has invested the time in learning their language. Learning and using a language in an unfamiliar environment requires many hours of hard work and discipline, and it can be very tedious and unrewarding. Soldiers should be aware of this fact so that they can be prepared to deal with it.

Building a School

Cushner & Brislin No. 43, pages 91-92

Settling in and Adjusting

Lt. Col. Georgia Roberts was part of Charlie Company in the Fourth Brigade which had just arrived in Iraq to begin some reconstruction work. They had been assigned the task to rebuild a school for the children in a fairly large city in northern Iraq which his orders indicated would take about 3 months. He learned that they needed a permit before they could start construction, so Roberts took the construction plans to the local government office and requested the permit.

He met with the local official who took the plans and said Roberts should return in one week. When Roberts returned, the official told him he would have to get a letter from the local water department saying they would supply the water. After waiting a few weeks for the letter from the water department, he delivered it to the official who said to come back in one week. Upon returning one week later, the manager told Roberts he would have to get a letter from the local power plant. Frustrated and wishing he had known this when he had to get the letter from the water department, Roberts left to find someone at the local power plant to write a letter indicating they would supply the necessary power. Finally, upon returning with that letter, the local official again said to return in one week. Roberts left the office, growing more and more frustrated by these demands and the continuing delays. He did as instructed, though, and returned one week later at which time the official said he needed a letter from the local police department. At this request, Roberts stormed out of the office and went immediately to his superior officer to see if he could help cut through the red tape.

If you were the superior officer, how would you interpret this situation?

1. Roberts was bothered that he did not control when construction would start.
2. Roberts was reacting to the red tape he was being put through.
3. Roberts was upset because the time this was taking was making his unit fall behind in building the school.
4. The local official resented having foreigners in his community and was doing all that he could to discourage Roberts' unit from remaining there.

Explanation of alternatives:

1. Army officers are expected to meet deadlines. Although Roberts may have reported the delays to his superior officer, this is likely to be only a partial reason for Roberts' frustration. However, there is a better explanation, so please choose again.
2. This is the best answer. Accepting and abiding by another country's bureaucratic demands can be somewhat disturbing, especially if one is new to the country and not familiar with the demands usually placed on foreign residents. It is common in many countries for foreign nationals to be asked to register and to be put through experiences similar to Roberts'. It is not uncommon to come away from this type of experience feeling exasperated and angry, and perhaps even humiliated. A suggested preparation or defense for such a situation might be to check with others who have been in the same position to see if, in fact, the demands are commonly encountered. Being prepared for things to take longer than they might in the home culture, where you know what to expect, is also wise, because this will help one to avoid being frustrated. It might also help to approach the situation with the acknowledgement that you must abide by the local rules, no matter how complicated or seemingly silly they are. After all, every location has its own rules and regulations.
3. There is an indication that the project is being delayed, but this is only a partial answer. Please choose again.
4. There is no evidence in the story that the local official resented Roberts and what the Army was doing. On the contrary, many of the Iraqis, and particularly the Kurds in the north, have been grateful to the Americans for their reconstruction efforts and are usually

welcoming of their help. While the local official could have all the permits he needed at the first meeting, he is merely performing his role. Please select again.

Visit to the Public Market
Cushner & Brislin, No. 53, page 140

Touring the area

NOTE: We changed two of the distracters and associated explanations, at the risk of introducing cultural inaccuracies, to make them more plausible in light of the scenario.

SFC Jane Thompson was recently assigned to a South American country and wanted to see something of the local culture. On her day off, she went to the public market by herself, stopped at one stall, and looked at some dresses, chatting with the owner of the stall in her high school level Spanish. Upon leaving the stall without buying anything, the owner shouted at Thompson in an unpleasant tone, but Thompson couldn't understand what he said. She immediately returned to the base. Based on this experience, Thompson began to develop negative feelings about her entire assignment and about the country.

What could be going on here?

1. SFC Thompson's limited knowledge of Spanish could be a major obstacle in her ability to adapt to this country's culture.
2. SFC Thompson was the target of prejudice, possibly of jealousy, on the part of the stall owner.
3. The stall owner was angry that SFC Thompson did not buy at least one dress after she touched them.
4. The owner of the stall was having a bad day, and this was the cause of his anger.
5. SFC Thompson was overreacting to a very vivid, personal, but probably atypical event.

Explanation of alternatives:

1. Lack of language skills may have contributed to the problem, but does not explain why SFC Thompson is having negative feelings about the entire assignment and country. There is a better explanation. Please choose again.
2. This is possible. Visitors from highly industrialized countries, especially where the average standard of living is high, sometimes report that they are the targets of jealousy when they go abroad. But it is rarely true that all or even most people in any given culture display such jealousy, and there is no evidence in this story that the stall owner felt this way. Please choose again.
3. This could be true, but seems somewhat unlikely since people in public markets typically examine goods without obligation to buy them. Please choose again.
4. This is a possibility, and is the sort of thought SFC Thompson should explore before coming up with a more general conclusion about the country and the people as a whole. There is another explanation that involves Thompson's thinking. Please choose again.

5. This is the best explanation. There is a strong tendency to react to vivid events that involve a person in a very direct way. The fact that SFC Thompson herself was the target of what seemed like anger is a much stronger influence than less vivid, perhaps dull, information. For instance, Thompson might have read a report describing how most visitors to this country find it very pleasant to live in and its citizen's cooperative. Because the report was not experienced in a highly personal and vivid manner, it could have less influence on SFC Thompson's emotions than the one negative event in which she was directly involved. Given that Thompson was a recent arrival and was still getting settled, the negative event probably was one of her first experiences with the local population, and this would make it stand out even more in her mind. Soldiers would be well advised to ask themselves in such situations, "Am I over interpreting a vivid, colorful event in which I was directly involved? Is there other information I should seek out before coming to a conclusion?"

The Shopper and the Vendor
Cushner & Brislin, No. 54, pages 140-141

Touring the area

SPC Brian Shige, an American of Chinese-Japanese heritage who grew up in Hawaii, was TDY in Singapore. In shopping around, trying to buy some fruit and souvenirs, he was trying out a few local words he had learned from the tour guide. He noticed many people staring at him as he walked along in the marketplace. As he was bargaining with a vendor, the vendor asked, "You from Philippine?" "No," Shige replied, "I'm from Hawaii!" "Oh, Hawaii, you Hawaiian!" the vendor commented, very pleased with himself. "No, I'm Chinese-Japanese," said Shige.

"Oh? You Chinese?" repeated the vendor in a questioning manner.

"No! Actually I'm Chinese-Japanese, my mother is Chinese and my father is Japanese!" replied Brian, beginning to be irritated.

"Oh! You Japanese!" the vendor stated definitely. Frustrated, Shige shrugged his shoulders and walked off without getting the fruit he was looking at.

What best explains this situation?

1. The vendor did not understand much English, and so did not really understand what Shige was saying.
2. The vendor was tired of visitors haggling over his wares and was trying to tease Shige.
3. The vendor was trying to find out more information from Shige to see if he was rich so he could charge him more for the fruit.
4. The vendor was not used to mixed races, and because Shige had familiar features, the vendor identified him with some of the local people.

Explanation of alternatives:

1. Although the vendor's English may not have been standard, he was able to carry on his business with tourists and others. He was already communicating enough to elicit correct answers from Shige. There is a better explanation.
2. In many Asian countries, haggling or bargaining is quite acceptable. The vendor may not like the extent to which some visitors push the system, but it is his business to participate in the system. Some vendors may decide to give some visitors a hard time, but there are other factors involved here. There is a more reasonable explanation.
3. In many bargain-system countries the vendors often try to discern how much a person is able and willing to pay for an item and charge that amount. However, the questions this vendor was asking, even though they had to do with Shige's background and family, were more related to other factors. There is a better explanation.
4. This is the best response. In many Asian countries, although a broad mix of nationalities and peoples is often present, there is still very little intermarrying and there are large distinctions among people. The vendor was trying to place Shige in a category that was familiar to him.