

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 313 740

CS 506 945

AUTHOR Corder, Lloyd E.; And Others  
 TITLE Intercultural Training: An Overview, Program, and Evaluation.  
 PUB DATE 89  
 NOTE 40p.; Some pages contain small type.  
 PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052)  
 -- Information Analyses (070) -- Reports -  
 Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.  
 DESCRIPTORS \*Business Communication; \*Cross Cultural Training;  
 Cultural Awareness; Cultural Differences;  
 \*Intercultural Communication; \*Professional Training;  
 Training Methods; Training Objectives

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses aspects of intercultural training for business people. The first section introduces the topic, giving a general background to intercultural training and discussing the rationale for it. Section 2 offers training exercises. Section 3 deals with evaluation of nonverbal training exercises, and the fourth section considers the evaluation of training programs and includes the results of a study developed to evaluate such exercises. Twenty-two references and five appendixes are attached, including a questionnaire and examples of gestures practiced in different cultures. (SR)

\*\*\*\*\*  
 \* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made \*  
 \* from the original document. \*  
 \*\*\*\*\*

ED313740

Intercultural Training:  
An Overview, Program, and Evaluation

Lloyd E. Corder  
Department of Communication  
1117 Cathedral of Learning  
University of Pittsburgh  
Pittsburgh, PA 15260

William D. McLean  
Penn State University at Erie

Asli Gokhan  
Amy Palma-Walters  
Sheryl Tremblay  
University of Pittsburgh

CS506945

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS  
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Lloyd E. Corder

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Office of Educational Research and Improvement  
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION  
CENTER (ERIC)

- This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

\* Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

## Table of Contents

<u>Section:</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. Introduction: General Background to Intercultural Training . . . . .	1
Rational for Effective Intercultural Training . . . . .	2
Business Expenditures . . . . .	2
Personnel Satisfaction . . . . .	3
Success and Failure of Expatriates . . . . .	3
Culture Shock and Adjustment . . . . .	5
II. Training Exercises . . . . .	8
Initial Group Experience . . . . .	9
Clarification of Values . . . . .	12
Establishment of the Dynamics of Communication . . . . .	15
Identification of Attitudes and Feelings . . . . .	20
III. Evaluation of the Nonverbal Training Exercise . . . . .	22
Development of the Training Exercise . . . . .	22
Procedures . . . . .	23
Subjects . . . . .	23
Data Collection . . . . .	23
Data Analysis . . . . .	24
Conclusions and Discussion . . . . .	25
Results of the Critical Incident Report . . . . .	25
IV. Evaluating Training Programs . . . . .	28
Citations . . . . .	31
Appendix I . . . . .	33
Appendix II . . . . .	34
Appendix III . . . . .	35
Appendix IV . . . . .	36
Appendix V . . . . .	37

**Introduction: General Background to Intercultural Training**

Intercultural understanding involves the correct interpretation of uncommon situations and the ability of contrasting parties to interact with one another accordingly. Understanding communication concepts, in addition to learning about other cultures, enables us to learn about ourselves and discover new ways of thinking. As Triandis (1983), in his explanation of the Skaggs-Robinson hypothesis, puts it, doing the same thing in identical situations is very easy; doing something different in an uncommon situation is neither easy nor difficult. However, "doing something different when the situation is identical is hard" (p. x).

This is a problem most people face when they live and work for long periods in cultures other than their own. Even though the differences are viewed as fun and exciting at first, once the novelty is gone, the individual has to find ways to adjust to the new environment. He now has to generate a repertory of new patterns of thought, interpretations, and behavior. Rarely do individuals move through this process easily--many people find themselves unable to handle new situations.

American companies have been growing rapidly in recent years by extending to other countries for new markets, cheap labor, and resources. Even though these multinational corporations want to get the maximum profits from their overseas investments, many companies ignore the training needs of individuals who will have to engage in intercultural communication.

Some multinational corporations have learned that not

everybody can work both effectively and efficiently overseas. In addition, these companies have learned that cultural factors play a central role in expatriate's adaptation. Several years ago, it may have been possible to ignore the tremendous effects of culture shock. Today, the financial and personnel losses that these companies must sustain from expatriates returning early are overwhelming. Decision-makers are seeing a great need for intercultural training.

### **Rational for Effective Intercultural Training**

Most companies provide practical pre-departure information for the expatriates and their families but, in general, they do not offer much help in preparations to ease the process of adaptation and adjustment to the host country. Two studies have shown that only one-third of the time, the available programs consist of practical or legal advice, or practical training (Baker and Ivancevich, 1971; Lanier, 1975).

Many companies do not use any kind of formal training, because: A) there is uncertainty about the focus and design of the training programs, B) there is certain mistrust in the effectiveness of the existing training programs, and C) time is too short. There is usually less than three months (and often less than one month) for the preparation of the expatriate for his assignment (Robinson, 1973, p. 299). The following sections explain several major reasons for the need for effective intercultural training.

### **Business Expenditures**

One of the reasons why company decision-makers need to make

use of intercultural training is a financial one. Considering the cost of sending employees overseas (\$80,000 per employee in 1979), the multinational corporation executive is wise to select only the best qualified candidates for overseas assignments. Even though the companies cannot afford to make mistakes in their selections, about one-third of all personnel return prematurely (Lanier, 1979). This means that for each return, the cost of bringing a family back, selecting a new expatriate and transferring his family overseas can result in three times more than the original cost (\$150,000 to \$250,000 for a failed assignment). For these reasons, the company decision-makers have to make sure that the chosen employee can function properly in the new culture (Arbose, 1984).

#### Personnel Satisfaction

Another reason for intercultural training is for the personal satisfaction and the happiness of the employee. If the employee's job dissatisfaction becomes too great, it is likely that his or her performance will add additional cost to the organization. It is often difficult to measure the losses that occur due to job dissatisfaction. These employees "do not become statistics, since they do not come home prematurely, but there are many of them across the world, costing firms dearly in money and reputation" (Lanic, 1979, p. 160).

#### Success and Failure of Expatriates

Several researchers have found reasons for success and failure of expatriates during overseas assignments. Hays (1971, pp. 40-46) reports four general factors:

- I. Job ability factors: Technical skills, organizational ability, belief in mission.
- II. Relational abilities: Ability to deal with local nationals, cultural empathy.
- III. Family situation: An adaptive and supportive family.
- IV. Language ability.

Tung's (1981) study of 80 Fortune 500, American corporations found that the companies that subscribed to some kind of training program had low expatriate failure rates. However, these corporations constituted only 32 percent of the respondents surveyed. Her results showed that personal adaptability was more important than technical skills. But, "in light of these findings, it is all the more surprising that even though most personnel administrators recognize the importance of these factors, few companies have developed procedures for assessing and developing these abilities in their expatriate personnel" (p. 77). In addition, Ivancevich (1969) suggests that "no matter what their technical skills, people should not be chosen for key management or joint venture positions who cannot adapt readily to differences..."

Copeland (1985) also points out that the insensitivity to cultural variations costs American companies billions of dollars annually in lost contracts, ineffective contracts, and weak management. "U.S. multinational corporations are facing the reality that the U.S. work force does not have international or intercultural capabilities. An understanding of the host culture is required for success in international business. Those who are

moving overseas for extended assignments need the most intensive and thorough preparation. Those who will interact with people of a foreign culture - at any level - need extensive training to ensure success."

### Culture Shock and Adjustment

Because there are relatively few training programs for expatriates, often employees do not realize that there is a pattern of adjustment to other cultures. The literature suggests two different descriptions of this pattern.

For some researchers, the adjustment of an individual to another culture suggests a U-shaped adjustment curve. This curve was first described by Lysgaard (1955). Later, Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) suggested that after the return to the home country, the adjustment curve becomes a W (UU) with the developing of a new U-curve in readjustment. The individual undergoes a decrease in adjustment after going in to a foreign culture. Then, with the increase in adjustment, recovery starts. After returning home, the same process is experienced one more time, thus forming the W-curve. However, there are many differences among individual adjustment curves. Differences may depend upon the culture (both host and native), duration of stay, individual personality, and a number of other variables. "In some instances a sojourner may never quite fully recover from his initial difficulties, whereas others may experience a little more than a mild annoyance with no appreciable decrease in adjustment" (Brein and David, 1971, p. 216).

The second explanation of adjustment, culture shock, is the



same as U or W curve but it is in a verbal form as a series of phases explaining the curve. While Hill (1959) defines culture shock as "a removal or distortion of many of the familiar cues one encounters at home and substitutes for them other cues which are strange" (p. 156), Oberg (1960) puts it as an "occupational disease" of people who suddenly have to face cultures very different from their own. With the loss of cues to social interaction, the individual encounters difficulties in orientation to daily life. Oberg (1960) also suggests a 5-step culture shock model. His first four steps correspond to the U-curve and his last step is the second U-curve that occurs after the individual returns home. It is the culture shock in reverse but a little less serious than the first one.

Oberg's (1960) model was later revised, and Peter and Lesser (1958) provide the most common reinterpretation, which consists of four phases:

I. The Spectator Phase (The Tourist Phase): This is the period after the arrival to the host country. The individual is generally fascinated by the novelty and is curious about his surroundings. He ignores the problems and acts as an observer.

II. The Involvement Phase (The Culture Shock Phase): He can no longer ignore or postpone the interaction problems. He needs skills to create more meaningful relationships. He needs skills that will help him go beyond superficial contacts. As a result, he suffers tension and develops a hostile and negative attitude toward the conditions in the host country.

III. Coming-to-terms Phase (The Conformist Phase): He begins to develop an understanding of the host culture. He is more able to cope with the problems, is less tense, and realizes the advantages of adopting some certain norms and behaviors of the host culture.

IV. Pre-departure Phase (The Assimilation Phase): He accepts the various features of the host culture and views the overall experience with satisfaction.

Since these steps apply to all sojourners, the expatriates go through the same process as well. However, these steps present the ideal situation, whereas in reality the individuals may stay in one phase without progressing, resulting in premature returns to the native country. Both the culture shock and the U-curve are the expressions of a "fundamental psychological process of adaptation that is independent of external circumstances" (Torbiorn, 1982, p. 94). Therefore, any personal difficulties the expatriate faces will inevitably affect his ability to cope with problems at work.

## II

### Training Exercises

In the previous section, many reasons were given for the need for effective intercultural training. As Pfeiffer and Jones (1974) suggest, training programs should be structured as a "designed series of interactions that produce the data for learning (experience) and a method of extracting useful insights" (p. 1). It seems to follow that the most effective training programs should expose expatriates to a number of intercultural and communication experiences. The specific training exercises selected for this section were chosen using this criteria.

Five training exercises were selected: four from various authors and the other was developed by one of the group members. The training program includes: 1) an initial group experience (which will serve as a "breaking into" the training program), 2) a clarification of values, 3) an establishment of the dynamics of communication, 4) an identification of attitudes and feelings, and 5) an examination of differing nonverbal gestures. The first four exercises are found in the following pages; the nonverbal exercise is discussed in the exercise assessment section.

#### A note of caution:

The following exercises are not used as an attempt to have trainees discard all of their own values. Instead, we believe that a large benefit of the training exercises will be to allow the trainees a more complete understanding of their values and cultural systems--to the extent that they will become less intolerant and more understanding of cultural differences.

Strategy

## THE PARABLE

## An Introduction to Cultural Values

OBJECTIVES

This is a useful exercise for

1. helping participants get acquainted with each other
2. demonstrating, through the discoveries they will make themselves, how their decisions are determined by cultural values
3. acquainting participants with specific cultural differences and similarities among other members of the group
4. stimulating awareness of problems in transmitting one's own ideas and listening to others'.

This sort of novel beginning also tends to provide a congenial atmosphere which often leads to some laughter, informal conversation, as well as cultural understanding. Participants are likely to pursue their conversations after the session.

PARTICIPANTS

The size of the group is unimportant -- from 10 to as many as 100 people.

MATERIALS

1. Chalkboard and chalk. 2. Paper and pencils. 3. Comfortable seating arrangements, in which chairs can be moved into small groups.

TIME

About 25 minutes for the exercise itself.

PROCEDURE

The leader tells a simple yet somewhat ambiguous parable, in this case one involving 5 characters. He may draw stick figures on the board as "illustrations" of the story. The behavior of each of the characters is intended to suggest a number of different values. After the telling each participant is asked to select, in order of rank, the characters whose behavior he or she most approves; then the large group is divided into groups of four or five to discuss individual choices with the assignment to arrive, if possible, at unanimity of rank ordering. An open discussion follows, in which participants are asked to share on a voluntary basis what they have learned during the small group sessions.

Steps to Follow: 1. The leader tells the following parable to the group, illustrating with rough drawings if he chooses:

"Rosemary is a girl of about 21 years of age. For several months she has been engaged to a young man named -- let's call him Geoffrey. The problem she faces is that between her and her betrothed there lies a river. No ordinary river mind you, but a deep, wide river infested with hungry crocodiles.

"Rosemary ponders how she can cross the river. She thinks of a man she knows, who has a boat. We'll call him Sinbad. So she approaches Sinbad, asking him to take her across. He replies, 'Yes, I'll take you across if you'll spend the night with me.' Shocked at this offer, she turns to another acquaintance, a certain Frederick, and tells him her story. Frederick responds by saying, 'Yes, Rosemary, I understand your problem -- but -- it's your problem, not mine.' Rosemary decides to return to Sinbad, and spend the night with him. In the morning he takes her across the river.

"Her reunion with Geoffrey is warm. But on the evening before they are to be married, Rosemary feels compelled to tell Geoffrey how she succeeded in getting across the river. Geoffrey responds by saying, 'I wouldn't marry you if you were the last woman on earth.'

"Finally, at her wits' end, Rosemary turns to the last character, Dennis. Dennis listens to her story and says, 'Well, Rosemary, I don't love you . . . but I will marry you.' And that's all we know of the story."

2. The leader now asks the students to write down on a piece of paper, the five characters, listing them in a descending order from the person who's behavior is most approved to the person who's behavior is least approved.

3. Next, students are split into groups of four or five and asked to discuss the choices they made. Not more than 10 - 15 minutes should be allowed for this discussion; its main purpose is to sharpen the issues, not exhaust them.

4. Calling them back to the larger group, the instructor asks what results of their discussions have been. Some open discussion is allowed to get a full expression of value perspectives on the story.

5. The instructor may then ask the group; "Can anyone point to some place, some source within your own past where you learned the values that caused you to take the position that you did?" Students may have some difficulty with this question; no matter. It is intended to be a difficult question.

6. Next the leader says, "Now I would like you to ask yourselves -- I don't want an answer on this one, just want you to consider -- how many of you feel you could faithfully re-state, to the satisfaction of someone else in your small group, the point of view, the value being expressed by that person? Again, I don't want you to answer, just think about the question."

7. The leader may then summarize the session briefly, making the following points, preferably on chalkboard or newsprint:

a. Values come out of one's cultural background. They are difficult to track down to a particular source and are often part of a person's unconscious behavior.

b. Within any particular culture a person's values are usually very logical. They make sense in that culture.

c. For these reasons people should be very cautious about making moral judgment about other people's values.

d. If one really wants to understand someone else, one has to listen extremely well and try to "get inside" the other person. This is the reason for the question, "How accurately do you think you could re-state someone else's opinion?" Those of you who would have to answer "not very" have some work to do.

e. What are some other areas in life where people's values differ?

8. If the students keep a journal (which can be a useful aid to learning), they should be asked to record what they have learned during the session.

9. The leader should conclude the session almost as if it were the beginning, rather than the end, of a learning experience. One way to do this is simply to say that this is the end of the formal session and then join one of the small groups for conversation, rather than leave the room.

Source: Developed by Sidney Simon, Professor of Education, University of Massachusetts. First published in A Manual of Teaching Techniques for Intercultural Education, (UNESCO), Henry Holmes and Stephen Guild, editors, October, 1971.

Strategy

PROVERBS: CULTURE AND VALUES

OBJECTIVE

To explore cultural assumptions and values by examining proverbs - which usually express values and attitudes broadly accepted and understood within a culture group.

PARTICIPANTS

Any group.

MATERIALS

Paper, pencil and list of Proverbs

SETTING

No special requirements.

TIME

Variable.

PROCEDURE

Although we all know a proverb when we hear one, it is difficult to define the term precisely. The introduction of a specific culture can include a study of its proverbs: what they are and what purpose they serve in communication of attitudes, values, and beliefs. Proverbs can be defined as "short, pithy epigrammatic statements which set forth a general well-known truth." When viewed as part of a communicative act, they are vehicles for sending messages about opinions, feelings, manners or customs of a people. They serve as witnesses to the social, political, ethical and religious patterns of thinking and behaving of a culture group.

Proverbs are characterized by a touch of the fanciful in their unique turn of a phrase, the unusual use of a word, or perhaps a specific rhythm. Many are paradoxical, or antithetical, while others are strongly metaphorical. Here in an educational setting, we are concerned with how to use proverbs to get at underlying cultural assumptions. We can examine proverbs for their exaggeration of attitudes commonly held by a cultural group. Hyperbole, personification, and alliteration are common attributes of the proverb which give us an unforgettable phrase or kernel of thought. Each proverbial statement has a quality of permanence in the culture and recurs in its folk lore.

Give participants a sheet of paper containing the following proverbs:

1. "You got eyes to see and wisdom not to see."
- \* 2. "Muddy roads call the mile post a liar."

3. "Every bell ain't a dinner bell."
4. "A mule can tote so much goodness in his face that he don't have none left for his hind legs."
5. "The graveyard is the cheapest boarding house."

For each of the above proverbs, choose a phrase in your own language or dialect which approximates the meaning of the proverb. Use familiar language, and symbols, for example: "Kumquats are both sweet and sour," if you aren't familiar or comfortable with "kumquats," substitute "oranges."

What does the original proverb mean? What is its message?

What does the proverb indicate to you about the culture? Can you generalize about it, whether it is traditional, rural, submissive, dominant, happy-go-lucky, cautions, etc.?

What are the dominant values of the culture represented in the proverb?

Think of some parallel proverbs from your own culture. Convey a similar message if you can. If you cannot, why not? For example, "For the turtle to make progress, it must stick its neck out," is similar to "To learn to swim, you must first get your toes wet." The message is similar, the symbols are slightly different.

Try to identify the culture from which all five examples are drawn. What type of culture do you think it is, and some reasons why you characterize it that way ... elaborate.

At the end of the exercise, the trainer reveals that the culture we are looking at is Afro-American Slave - these are real examples of proverbs taken from the folk literature.

The first example, "You got eyes to see and wisdom not to see," is pointing to the slave culture's accurate perception of what goes on around the people, but the sense not to "see" or acknowledge the reality. Emphasis is placed on not knowing something which would upset you or get you into trouble if you acknowledged being aware of it.

In the next example, the muddy roads are relatively impassable, therefore the person traveling them cannot count on the mile posts to gauge how long his journey will take. We can tell this is a rural culture, and that its people are used to translating signals into their own particular knowledge about dealing with nature.

Number three indicates frequent conflicts between the dinner bell, a safe cue, and the bell calling slaves in from the fields, sometimes a warning of imminent danger. Again, the rural culture is reflected in the image of the bell.



The mule often looks like he will be a kind of helpful farm animal, but his legs still can kick you or refuse to budge - so don't be deceived by appearances. Again, an agricultural culture is reflected in the imagery, and a realism born of knowing the environment and what you can expect.

The graveyard, in the last example, is escape from the troubles of a hard life - so don't worry about death - death is a kind of freedom for the slave, rest from all the hard times.

Source: Sandra Tjitendero, University of Massachusetts.

A variation on this exercise is to ask a group to simply list the proverbs and axioms of mainstream American culture. A few examples can be supplied to get the group started, such as:

A woman's place is in the home.

Little children should be seen and not heard.

Then the group is asked to determine what value is being taught by the axiom.

Examples

Cleanliness is next to godliness  
Time is money  
A penny saved is a penny earned  
Birds of a feather flock together  
Don't cry over spilt milk  
Waste not; want not  
Early to bed, early to rise ...  
God helps those who help themselves  
It's not whether you win or lose, but...  
A man's home is his castle  
No rest for the wicked  
You've made your bed, now sleep in it

Values

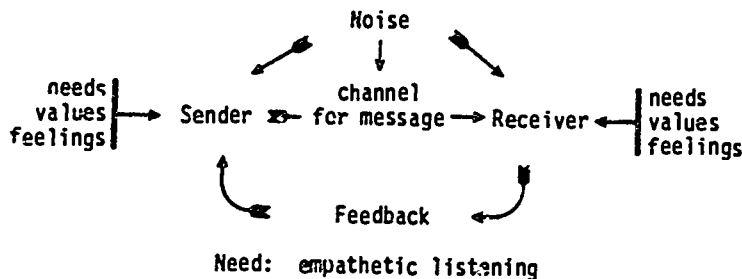
Cleanliness  
Value of time thriftiness  
Thriftiness  
Guilt through association  
Practicality  
Frugality  
Diligence  
Initiative  
Good sportsmanship  
Privacy; property  
Guilt; work ethic  
Responsibility

Many of these proverbs were brought from the more traditional societies of Europe. Discuss which no longer apply to mainstream society and why. List proverbs of other culture groups represented in the class and identify cultural meaning and values conveyed by them

Source: Robert Kohls, International Communication Agency.

### COMMUNICATION

There is an abundant supply of communication exercises available in various publications (see reference list). The eight included in this volume were originally constructed or have been adapted by the authors expressly to demonstrate how communication is influenced by culture. They also focus on practicing specific skills (giving feedback, listening, etc.) and exploring the process of communication that is simply illustrated by this model:



(Noise refers to any distraction or disturbance which distorts or interferes with the transmission of the message.)

**DEFINITION:** Communication is an exchange of meaning of information and ideas. The basic aim in communication is to transmit a message from a sender to a receiver with the least possible loss of meaning.

Basic communication theory suggests that the identification of similarities is the basis of communication or, expressed differently, that similarities constitute the matrix in which communication takes place. Differences are seen as barriers. In intercultural communication this is turned around and differences are not only not seen as barriers to communication but they themselves constitute the matrix in which communication occurs. Cultural differences are thus both a necessary medium of intercultural communication and a context for cross-cultural learning. They are also the pathway to the ultimate identification of similarities.

It is often difficult to get across the significance of the communication process. It seems so simple. It is so automatic. In fact, its seeming simplicity comes from the fact that it is such an unconscious behavior. It is, of course, one of the more complex of human functions and may need more attention than seems appropriate to clarify it to students.

Strategy

ONE WAY - TWO WAY COMMUNICATION

OBJECTIVE

To illustrate that one-way communication, while more efficient, is less accurate than two-way communication; also underscores the imprecision of language and the difficulty in describing one's experiences to others in a manner that leads to identical understanding by them.

PARTICIPANTS

Groups of up to forty people.

MATERIALS

Task sheets for the speaker and scoring sheets for students.

SETTING

No special requirements.

TIME

About forty-five minutes.

PROCEDURE

A pictogram is given to one student selected by the instructor. The student is asked to describe the picture while standing behind a screen (or being out of visual contact with the group) and the group is to try and draw the pictogram on the basis of the instructions given. People in the group are not permitted to ask questions or give any verbal cues to the speaker. When the speaker feels he/she has conveyed the drawing, the group is asked for an accuracy estimate (how many figures each person thinks he/she drew correctly) and this is recorded on the board. The elapsed time for the exercise is also recorded. The pictogram is then shown to the audience and the actual number of drawings drawn correctly recorded.

The second phase of the exercise calls for the same speaker to describe a different drawing while standing in front of the group. The group may ask any questions necessary for them to understand what the speaker is trying to communicate. When the speaker and group members are satisfied with the instructions given and they've drawn pictures, another accuracy estimate is taken and the elapsed time recorded. Again the pictogram is shown and an actual score is recorded.

The discussion and processing begins with a review of the accuracy rate and elapsed time. The usual result is that one-way communication takes less time but two-way communication is more effective. The person who described the pictogram is asked his/her feelings in both situations, what importance visual and verbal cues had in the communication process? The group is asked to discuss feelings of frustration or ease in understanding the instructions. An observer may also be used to record observations during the exercise and report them to the group.

Source: Readings in Intercultural Communication, Volume V, David S. Hoopes, editor.

SAMPLE SCORING SHEET

One-Way Communication

Elapsed Time \_\_\_\_\_

	<u>Estimate</u>	<u>Actual</u>
3 figures correct	_____	_____
2 figures correct	_____	_____
1 figure correct	_____	_____
0 figures correct	_____	_____
correct configuration	_____	_____

\*\*\*\*\*

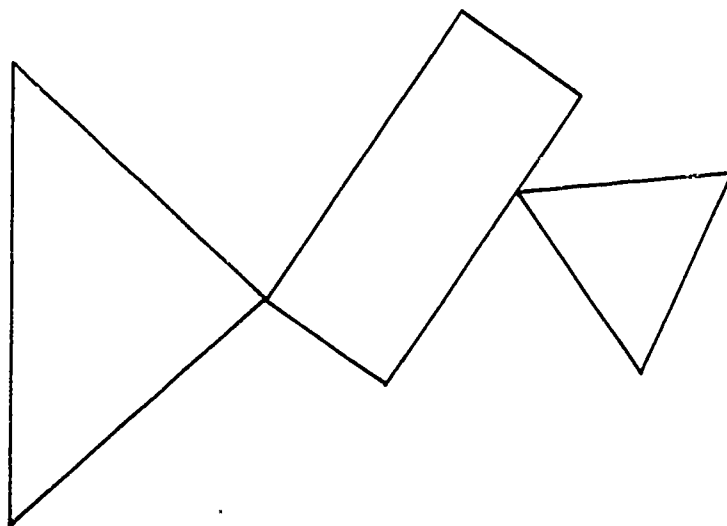
Two-Way Communication

Elapsed Time \_\_\_\_\_

	<u>Estimate</u>	<u>Actual</u>
3 figures correct	_____	_____
2 figures correct	_____	_____
1 figure correct	_____	_____
0 figures correct	_____	_____
correct configuration	_____	_____

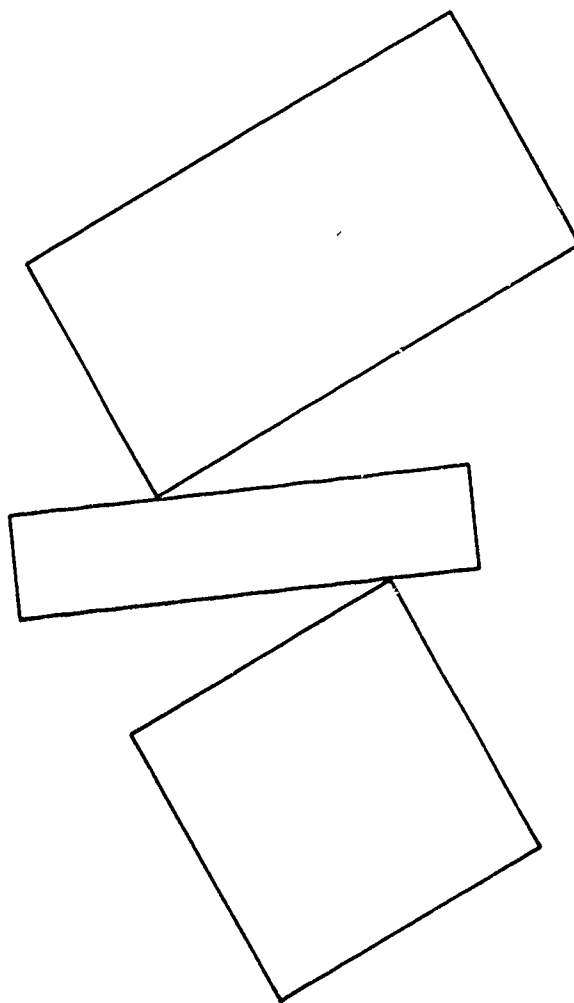
One-Way Communication

Your task is to communicate orally everything the other participants need to know in order to reproduce the pictogram illustrated below. Those drawing the figures are not allowed to ask you any questions, nor are they to see the diagram.



Two-Way Communication

Your task is to communicate orally everything the other participants need to know in order to reproduce the pictogram illustrated below. You are not allowed to use any gestures, but the participants may ask you any questions they wish in order to clarify your instructions to them.



Strategy

PREDICTION AND PERCEPTION

OBJECTIVE

To explore the manner in which misperception about a person and what that person will do results from making judgments and predictions based on insufficient information.

PARTICIPANTS

Group of 10 or fewer persons.

MATERIALS

Chalkboard or sheets of newsprint.

SETTING

Classroom or other meeting room.

TIME

Forty-five minutes to one hour.

PROCEDURE .

1. Ask for volunteer "subject" from the group. Instructor may use him- or herself if not too well known personally to the group.

2. Group may ask five questions of the subject (only five questions from the total group are permitted, not five questions from each participant).

3. Group members are then asked to write down their individual judgments as to:

a. aspects of the subject's personal background (three to five items) such as place of birth (city or country), economic status of the family, profession of father and/or mother, where the person attended school, family size, etc.

b. predictions as to the person's cultural or recreation preferences (music, art, sports, etc.), opinions about significant social issues (desegregation, restriction of Mexican immigration, rights of homemakers, etc.), and actions the person would take in certain circumstances (being fired arbitrarily from a job, hearing a woman scream "rape," watching a fight between groups of students in a school, etc.).

The instructor can provide specific examples of issues on which to make predictions or allow group members to select their own.

4. Ask some of the participants to read their judgments and predictions to the group and discuss why they made them.

5. Ask the subject to tell the group about his or her personal background and attitudes and, as much as possible, estimate what he or she would do under the circumstances that were presented. This should be dealt with cautiously. There may be some ambivalence about how the subject feels he or she might act or even in how strongly opinions or attitudes are held. Being sensitive to this is important and also provides an opportunity for discussing the problems involved in making accurate or "final" judgments and predictions about people.

6. The discussion that concludes this exercise uses on these questions:

How accurate were the predictions and perceptions?

How did they reflect the attitudes of the predictors?

What information or cues were used by the participants to form judgments or make predictions?

Did any stereotyping occur?

How frequently in real life do we make judgments and predictions on the basis of insufficient information?

Source: Adapted from "Prediction and Interpersonal Perception," Readings in Intercultural Communication, Volume V, David S. Hoopes, editor.



### Evaluation of the Nonverbal Training Exercise

The assessment of cross-cultural training is a complex process (Brislin, Landis, and Brandt, 1983). The effectiveness of a training program is often difficult to determine because of numerous variables: trainee selection, type of training, adjustment overseas, interpersonal skills, and professional effectiveness (Blake and Heslin, 1983). Moreover, assessments are often neglected. The purpose of this study was to evaluate a recently developed training exercise.

### Development of the Training Exercise

Krout (1942, 1971) has discovered several nonverbal gestures used by various cultures to communicate the same phenomena. For example, surprise is communicated by 1) gaping mouth and raised eyebrows (Europeans, Americans); 2) slapping hips (Eskimos, Tlingits, Brazilins); 3) lightly tapping nose or mouth (Ainus of Japan); 4) pinching cheek (Tibetans); 5) moving hand before mouth (Negro Bantus); and 6) protruding lips as if to whistle (Australians and West African pre-literates). Therefore, the thrust of the exercise was to demonstrate that nonverbal gestures are often culture specific as well as to increase positive attitudes on the part of the subjects toward individuals whose style of communication is different from their own.

Appendix I contains a list of the two sets of nonverbal gestures assigned for the communication exercise. Members of each culture were only allowed to communicate using their assigned gestures - verbalizations were not permitted. In addition, each member of culture A was also assigned a specific task that he/she

was to nonverbally ask a corresponding member of Culture B to perform. Appendix II contains the tasks that were assigned.

### Procedures

#### Subjects

Twenty-five college undergraduates participated in the study (M=9, F=16).

#### Data Collection

The data were collected in several stages. First, each student was asked to complete Schutz's (1958) FIRO-B questionnaire. As Blake and Heslin (1983) suggest, trainee selection may influence cross-cultural training effectiveness. The questionnaire was administered to determine if any relationships existed between interpersonal needs and the results obtained.

Second, each participant completed part 1 of the Perception of Interpersonal Ability (PIA) questionnaire. Appendix III contains a copy of the questionnaire. This questionnaire was designed to assess subjects' attitudes toward interacting with individuals whose communication style is different from their own. It was to be used as a predictor of subject behavior during an intercultural interaction.

Third, the students were separated into two cultures, given the rules of their respective cultures, and assigned various tasks. They were instructed not to speak to each other during the exercise.

Fourth, after the exercise was completed, each participant completed part 2 of the PIA questionnaire. Appendix IV contains a

copy of the questionnaire. This portion of the questionnaire was designed to assess subjects perceptions of their actual behavior during the simulated intercultural interaction.

Finally, two days later a critical incident questionnaire was administered to the participants to determine their views of the exercise.

### Data Analysis

Appendix V contains the results of the accuracy of Perception of Interpersonal Ability (range = 0-120) that was calculated for each participant. The scores were determined by subtracting part 1 of the questionnaire from part 2. A sign test was administered and it was determined that the results were due to chance alone. However, less than half of the participants could accurately predict their behavior at the 95% level.

A one-way ANOVA was run to determine if any relationships existed between the sex of the participants and their ability to predict their behavior. No significant differences emerged.

It was hoped that an additional series of one-way ANOVAs could be run to determine if any relationships existed between the FIRO-B scores and the participants ability to predict their behavior. Unfortunately for this population, the FIRO-B scores were very similar in nature (expressed inclusion, wanted control, and expressed affection). Therefore, no distinctions could be made between participants.

One final one-way ANOVA was run between each question from parts 1 and 2 and the sex of the participants. Males and Females differed significantly ( $p < .05$ ) on question 14, part 2. Females

felt more strongly than did males that they should not ignore behavior that seemed unusual to them. Question 5, part 2 slightly correlated ( $p < .10$ ) with these findings.

### Conclusions and Discussion

While less than half the participants could predict their behavior within the 95% level when dealing with a member of another culture, it was not determined if any demographic or interpersonal variables influenced these results. Perhaps additional demographic variables and attitudinal analyses would yield significant relationships.

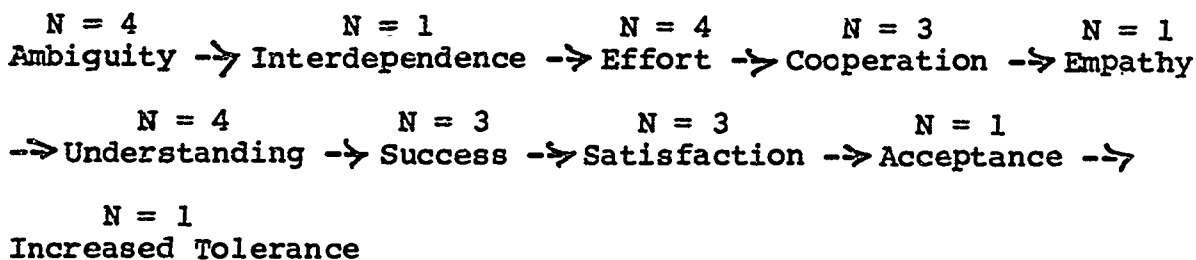
### Results of the Critical Incident Report

As mentioned above, two days following participation in the simulated intercultural exercise, a Critical Incident Report (CIR) was administered to the subjects. This CIR was designed to evaluate the simulated intercultural exercise in terms of its purpose. Specifically we asked the questions: What was particularly 1) effective or 2) ineffective about the exercise in increasing positive attitudes toward people whose communication styles are different from your own?

Results indicated that subjects considered the exercise to be particularly effective in the following respects:

<u>Category</u>	<u>N</u>
1. Enjoyment . . . . .	18
2. Use of Noverbals as Tool . . . . .	6
3. Opportunity to Experience Intercultural Communication . . . . .	4
4. Similarity of Subjects . . . . .	3
5. Introspection about Attitudes and Behavior . . . . .	3
6. Interaction with Other Subjects . . . . .	3
7. Methodology . . . . .	1
8. Appreciation Shown by Experimenter . . . . .	1
9. Other . . . . .	1

In addition, a tenth dimension of "Process of effectiveness" was also revealed. For this dimension, responses ranged over a complex set of overlapping and interrelated variables (N = 25). Perhaps this dimension can be best understood as an ideal process of what should happen in an intercultural communication exercise.



The following chart represents the aspects of the simulated intercultural exercise which subjects viewed as ineffective:

<u>Category</u>	<u>N</u>
1. Subjects Cheating . . . . .	13
2. Poor Organization . . . . .	5
3. Interpersonal Difficulties Between Subjects . . . . .	5
4. Similar Cultural Backgrounds of Subjects . . . . .	4
5. Lack of Realism . . . . .	3

Some subjects also expressed dissatisfaction with the ban on verbalizations (N=8). Confusion (N=14) during the exercise seemed related to embarrassment (N=9).

Subjects cheating during this exercise primarily consisted of subjects verbalizing and using familiar nonverbals. This problem as well as the problem of poor organization can be overcome easily in future exercises by having pairs of subjects interact by turn instead of having all subjects interact simultaneously.

Interpersonal difficulties were related to factors beyond the scope of the exercise or the control of the experimenters. These included lack of cooperation between partners and lack of continuation of interaction between partners.

Although there was mention of lack of realism in the exercise (i.e., people do not use these kinds of gestures in communication), the nonverbal components were actually derived from cultures reported in the Human Relations Area Files. This will be explained clearly to future participants.

### Evaluating Training Programs

The previous section discussed the results of an evaluation attempt for one specific exercise. Ultimately, the entire training program should be evaluated. The findings can then be used to improve future training programs. Following are a few questions that can be asked before an evaluation is undertaken.

#### I. Who should perform the evaluation?

From our standpoint, it appears that an "outsider" might be the best person to conduct an evaluation. Hopefully, this individual will add to the objectivity of the results obtained. If finding an "outsider" is not possible, the trainers should conduct the evaluation.

#### II. For whom is the evaluation completed?

From the literature we reviewed, it seems that training programs should be completed for the majority of people involved. In our program, expatriates, trainers, administrators, colleagues, and members of the host culture could be potential evaluators. Each of these participants could suggest a unique insight as to the effectiveness of the program.

#### III. When should the evaluation be completed?

Our program could be evaluated at several stages. First, an evaluation of the participants before the training may be useful. Changes in participants could be determined when compared to latter measurements. Second, a major evaluation could be conducted when the program is completed. Participants could explain how effective or ineffective they felt the program was. Finally, at some point after the program (when the expatriates are

in the host culture) additional evaluations could be conducted. Expatriates could help determine if the training program was relevant to the intercultural situations in which they found themselves.

#### IV. What should be measured?

As discussed throughout this paper, participant's abilities may influence successful stays over seas. Therefore, participants knowledge, perceptions, attitudes, skills, and patterns of behavior seem like important variables to measure. These variables can be compared to the success or failure of the expatriates.

#### V. How should the measurement be done?

A number of techniques exist. Of these techniques, three seem to be most useful: interview, questionnaires, and the critical incident technique. Obviously, the questionnaires provide quickly analyzable data, but unexpected observation may be found in either the critical incident technique or interviews. The best evaluation would try to triangulate these three tools for consistency of observation.

#### VI. How do you interpret the data?

Like all social science research (and even in the "hard" sciences) the results must be interpreted. We know of no serious scientist that believe numbers mean anything by themselves. Any data that is generated from questionnaires needs to be interpreted. Additional qualitative interpretations from interview and critical incident data need to be made as well. Often, grouping observations based on similarities provides useful



categories. These categories can then be given a name and discussed in the results sections of the training evaluation report.

VII. What should we do with the interpreted data?

If need be, revise the training program. Otherwise, stay the course.

## Citations

- Arbose, J. "Coping with the Ordeal of Executive Relocation," International Management, 39, No. 12, (Dec. 1984): 66-79.
- Baber, J., and Ivancevich, J., "The Assignment of American Executives Abroad: Systematic Haphazard or Chaotic," California Management Review, 8 No. 3, (1971).
- Blake, B., Heslin, R., "Evaluating Cross-Cultural Training," in Handbook of Intercultural Training, Vol. 1, Eds. Landis and Brislin, Pergamon Press, 1983, pp. 203-223.
- Brein, M., and David, K., "Intercultural Communication and the Adjustment of the Sojourner," Psychological Bulletin, 76, No.3 (1971): 215-230.
- Brislin, R., Landis, D., Brandt., M., "Conceptualizations of Intercultural Behavior and Training," in Handbook of Intercultural Training, Vol. 1, Eds. Landis and Brislin, Pergamon Press, 1983, pp. 1-35.
- Copeland, L., "Training Americans to Do Business Overseas," Training, 21, No. 7, (July, 1984): 22-23.
- Gullahorn, J., and Gullahorn, J., "An Extension of the U-curve Hypothesis," Journal of Social Issues, V. 19, No. 3, (1963): 33-47.
- Hays, R., "Ascribed Behavioral Determinants of Success-Failure Among U.S. Expatriate Managers," Journal of International Business, 2 (1971): 40-46.
- Hays, R., "Expatriate Selection: Insuring Success and Avoiding Failure," Journal of International Business, 5 No. 1 (1974): 25-37.
- Hill, R., "Coping with the Culture Shock of an Overseas Posting," International Management, March, 1959.
- Ivancevich, J., "Selection of American Managers for Overseas Assignment," Personnel Journal, 18, March, 1969.
- Krout, M., Introduction to Social Psychology, New York: Harper and Row, 1942..
- Krout, M., "Symbolism," in The Rhetoric of Nonverbal Communication, Ed. Bosmajian, Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman, 1971, pp. 19-22.
- Lanier, A., "Selecting and Preparing Personnel for Overseas Transfers," Personnel Journal, March, 1979, pp. 160-63.

- Lesser, S. and Peter, H., "Training Foreign Nationals in the U.S.," in Likert, R. and Hayes, S., eds., Some Applications of Behavioral Research, Basel: Unesco, 1958.
- Lysgarrd, S., "Adjustment in a Foreign Society: Norwegian Fulbright Grantees Visiting the U.S.," International Social Science Bulletin, 7 No. 1, 1955.
- Pfeiffer, W., and Jones, J., A Hand Book of Structural Experiences for Human Relations Training, Vol. IV, 1974, University Associates Publishers and Consultants.
- Oberg, K., "Culture Shock: Adjustment to New Cultural Environments," Practical Anthropology, 25, 1960.
- Schutz, W., Firo: A Three-Dimensional Theory of Interpersonal Behavior, New York: Rinehart, 1958.
- Torbiorn, I., Living Abroad, New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1982.
- Triandis, Handbook of Intercultural Training, Vol. I, eds. Landis, D., and Brislin, R., 1983.
- Tung, R., "Selection and Training of Personnel for Overseas Assignments," Columbia Journal of World Business, Spring, 1981, pp. 68-78.

## Appendix I

### CULTURE A

#### GESTURES:

POINTING: USE ONLY YOUR CHIN  
SAYING YES: WAVE YOUR ARMS UP AND DOWN BEHIND YOUR HEAD  
SAYING NO: POUND YOU CHEST  
SATISFACTION: MASSAGE YOUR STOMACH  
SURPRISE: LIGHTLY TAP YOUR NOSE OR MOUTH

### CULTURE B

#### GESTURES:

POINTING: USE ONLY YOUR LIPS  
SAYING YES: SLAP THE LEFT SIDE OF YOUR FACE SEVERAL TIMES  
SAYING NO: THROW YOUR HEAD BACK AND MAKE A CLUCKING NOISE  
WITH YOUR TONGUE  
SATISFACTION: STRIKE YOU HANDS TOGETHER  
SURPRISE: SLAP YOUR LIPS

Appendix II

CULTURE A TASKS

GET YOUR PARTNER TO:

1. TIE YOUR SHOE
2. SCRATCH YOUR BACK
3. GIVE YOU \$.05
4. GIVE YOU THEIR PHONE #
5. BE MAD
6. MOVE YOUR CHAIR TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROOM
7. GIVE YOU A PENCIL
8. PAT YOUR HEAD
9. WRITE YOUR NAME ON THE CHALKBOARD
10. GIVE YOU ONE OF THEIR BOOKS
11. LEAVE THE CLASSROOM - BUT YOU MUST STAY
12. SIGN A GRUNTING SONG
13. WALK BACKWARDS ACROSS THE ROOM
14. SIT DOWN
15. STAND BY THE DOOR

Appendix III

Part 1\*

1. I act friendly toward people who are different from me.
2. I tend to act cool and distant toward people whose behavior I can't predict.
3. I prefer to avoid interacting with people who act in ways that are difficult for me to understand.
4. When I am around people who communicate differently than me, I try to communicate with them in the way that they communicate.
5. People who behave in ways that seem unusual to me fascinates me.
6. I would rather associate with people who act similarly to me.
7. People ought to behave similarly in order to get along.
8. I feel awkward in situations that I am unfamiliar with.
9. I tend to behave in a friendly way toward people whose behavior I can't predict.
10. I try to act the way I think that others think I am supposed to act.
11. I prefer to pursue interactions with people who behave differently than I do.
12. I act cool and distant toward people who seem different from me.
13. I would prefer to associate with people who act different from the way I act.
14. I try to ignore people whose behavior seems unusual to me.
15. I feel comfortable in situations I am unfamiliar with.
16. I like interacting with people whose behavior seems unusual to me.
17. When I am around people whose communication is different from mine, I try to get them to communicate the way I communicate.
18. People ought to be flexible in order to get along.
19. I act the way I want to act in front of most anybody.
20. I dislike interacting with people whose behavior seems unusual to me.

\* Each question had the following scale:

strongly agree \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ strongly disagree

## Appendix IV

### Part 2\*

1. I acted friendly toward the people who were different from me in this exercise.
2. I tended to act cool and distant toward the people whose behavior I could not predict during this exercise.
3. I would have preferred to avoid interacting with the people who acted in ways that are difficult for me to understand during this exercise.
4. During this exercise, I tried to communicate with my partner in the way that my partner tried to communicate.
5. People's behavior during this exercise fascinated me.
6. I would have rather associated with people who were instructed to act similarly to me during this exercise.
7. People would have gotten along better during this exercise had they behaved similarly.
8. I felt awkward during this exercise because of its unfamiliarity.
9. I tended to behave in a friendly way toward people whose behavior I could not predict during this exercise.
10. During this exercise, I tried to act the way I believed that others thought I was supposed to act.
11. I preference was to pursue interactions with the people whose behavior was difficult for me to understand during the exercise.
12. I acted cool and distant toward the people who behaved differently than I did.
13. I preferred to associate with the people who acted different form the way I acted during the exercise.
14. I would rather have ignored the people whose behavior seemed unusual to me.
15. I felt comfortable during this exercise despite its unfamiliarity.
16. I like interacting with the people whose behavior seemed unusual to me.
17. During this exercise, I tried to get my partner to communicate the way I did.
18. People ought to be flexible in order to get along.
19. I acted the way I wanted to act during this exercise.
20. I dislike interacting with the people whose behavior seems unusual to me.

\* Each question had the following scale:

strongly agree \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ strongly disagree

## Appendix V

Predictability	Number of Participants
95%	11
90%	4
89% and below	19

ERIC  
Full Text Provided by ERIC