

A CENTRAL CONCERN: DEVELOPING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

Alvino E. Fantini

ABSTRACT

Our institution has long understood the importance of cross-cultural preparation to ensure intercultural effectiveness when living, traveling, or working abroad. Today, many other organizations are also learning of its importance. In countries where ethnic diversity is on the rise, successful relationships with friends and neighbors and intercultural partners depend on the ability to deal effectively with differences in a positive manner. This article explores current thinking about the nature of intercultural competence and its implications for education and training, especially for those who choose to work in international and intercultural contexts. For this reason, the development of both intercultural competence and second language proficiency remain a central concern of all of World Learning's programs and activities, beginning with The Experiment in 1932 and even more explicitly so today.



*How shall I talk of the sea to the frog,
if it has never left his pond?
How shall I talk of the frost to the bird of the summerland,
if it has never left the land of its birth?
How shall I talk of life with the sage,
if he is prisoner of his doctrine?*

Chung Tsu, 4th Century B.C.

OVERVIEW

Educational exchange institutions like World Learning, the School for International Training, and The Experiment in International Living, have long understood the importance of cross-cultural preparation to ensure intercultural effectiveness when living, traveling, or working abroad. Today, many other organizations are also learning this important lesson. Multinational corporations, for example, increasingly recognize that success in a global marketplace depends, to a large degree, on their employees' ability to deal in the international arena. And many domestic corporations also agree that maximum efficiency in the workplace depends on good ethnic relations among their employees (*Newsweek* 1990). Other fields, like medicine and social work, are also realizing that effective care requires sensitivity to cultural differences when dealing with patients and clients of various ethnic backgrounds.

In countries where ethnic diversity is on the rise — whether due to political upheavals, economic conditions, climactic catastrophes, shifting populations, or simply increased contact among people of different backgrounds — successful relationships with friends, neighbors and intercultural partners depend on an ability to deal with differences in a positive manner. From the arena of international business to the intimacy of family life, there is an increasing need to be able to deal effectively and appropriately with diversity, whether ethnic, racial, religious, or cultural.

Within this scenario, international and intercultural educational organizations play an important role. Such organizations provide not only pleasant and productive educational experiences for their participants, but they also indirectly affect the participants' families, neighbors, and communities. Because of this impact, program activities (even if of short duration and conducted in a specific context) become opportunities to effect changes in individuals, extending beyond the duration of the program to their lives once back home. Viewed this way, programs are not an end in themselves, but rather a means of producing life-long changes in individuals. The popular slogan: "think globally, act locally" can be restated as: "participate globally, act locally." For this reason, organizations like World Learning provide important intercultural educational experiences out of which participants develop intercultural competencies that help them become more effective in their chosen fields — whether in social work, education, politics, business, or others.

ORGANIZATIONAL AIMS AND INDIVIDUAL COMPETENCIES

We need to distinguish, however, between organizational aims and the individual competencies to be developed in program participants that ensure their ability to contribute towards the stated mission. In other words, in addition to the institutional mission (stated in collective terms), we need to be equally explicit about individual competencies, or the outcomes of program objectives. These individual competencies are increasingly understood to be "intercultural competencies" that include second language proficiency in addition to whatever other abilities are needed for the chosen field. In fact, both intercultural competence and language proficiency are areas which have transcended all of World Learning's programs and activities, from the very beginning of The Experiment in 1932, and even more explicitly so today.

Although the term intercultural competence is now widely used in the field of intercultural communication; it is still not widely understood, nor do interculturalists agree upon a common definition. What most do agree upon is the "double-edged" nature of the intercultural experience; that is, that development of competence in another culture and proficiency in its language provide the opportunity for powerful reflections into one's own native world view. This notion is captured in the expression "looking out is looking in," an idea that has permeated the field of intercultural education and has been reiterated throughout the history of education, echoed in disciplines like philosophy, psychology, anthropology, and linguistics, and captured in the lines above by the Chinese philosopher Chung Tsu, written so many years ago.

WHAT IS INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE?

Because the notion of intercultural communicative competence (or intercultural competence or ICC, for short) is fairly new, a special focus issue of SIETAR's *International Journal of Intercultural*

Relations (Martin 1989) and a subsequent endeavor (Wiseman and Koester 1993) gathered studies on just this topic. Researchers explored questions like: What is intercultural competence? What are its characteristics? How is it manifested? Can individuals be trained or educated for increased intercultural effectiveness? And, more recently in 1995, a task force at World Learning furthered this work by exploring the concept of intercultural competence as the basis for establishing institutional standards for its attainment. Such clarity, with resultant standards, is sorely needed by all institutions wishing to develop intercultural competence in their participants. Explicit understanding of ICC is needed to ensure the development of such competence through programs and activities and to be able to monitor its development.

Although researchers characterize ICC in various ways, three principal themes (or domains of ability) emerge: 1) the ability to develop and maintain relationships, 2) the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with minimal loss or distortion, and 3) the ability to attain compliance and obtain cooperation with others. Stated this way, it becomes obvious that similar abilities are desirable, if not altogether necessary, for everyone everywhere — interculturally and culturally. That is, not only do these domains form part of “intercultural” relations, they are equally germane to “interpersonal” relations. The intercultural level, however, is further complicated when people interact across cultures because their commonalities diminish while differences increase dramatically:

$$\text{Interpersonal} < \text{-----} > \text{Intercultural} \\ \text{[- Variables +]}$$

Increased variables on the intercultural level are generated by differences in languages, cultures, and world view, all greatly affecting the interactions.

A goal of ICC development, then, requires insights drawn from both language and intercultural areas. With rare exception (cf. Ting-Toomey and Korzenny 1989), however, interculturalists often overlook (or leave to language teachers) the task of developing language competence, just as language teachers overlook (or leave to interculturalists) the task of developing intercultural abilities; this, despite wide acknowledgment that language and culture are dimensions of each other, interrelated and inseparable. Language, in fact, both reflects and affects one’s world view, serving as a sort of road map to how one perceives, interprets, thinks about, and expresses one’s view of the world. This intertwining invites a fresh look at how we conceptualize what is meant by world view, its components, and their interrelationships; and at how language and culture mediate (inter)cultural processes. World Learning fosters important learning in both areas through all of its programs and activities.

CONSTRUCTS OF ICC

Given the many approaches to explaining intercultural competence, we will consider one characterization that builds upon the domains established above. This construct reveals the complexity that obscures a clearer understanding of intercultural competence. For example, in addition to the three domains, ICC is also

- often described with a variety of traits
- in at least five dimensions, and
- may be viewed as a developmental process.

Each of these areas is explored below.

TRAITS

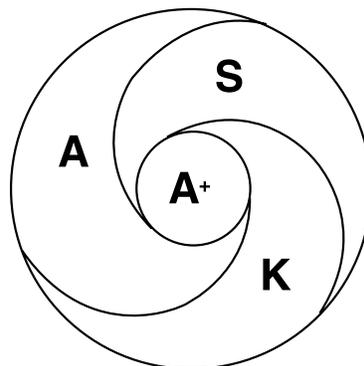
Intercultural abilities are often evidenced through behavioral manifestations or traits. Commonly cited attributes include: respect, empathy, flexibility, patience, interest, curiosity, openness, motivation, a sense of humor, tolerance for ambiguity, and a willingness to suspend judgment, among others. That is, when describing the profile of an interculturally successful individual, these are among the most commonly mentioned descriptors (see e.g., Kealey 1990, p. 5; Kohls 1979, p. 72) and are often found in cross-cultural inventories as well (e.g., Kelley and Meyers 1992). Such lists frequently guide the objectives on which program and training plans are designed. A related but unanswered question, however, has to do with whether these traits can be developed — or trained — into someone who does not already possess such qualities?

DIMENSIONS

In this construct of ICC, there are also five dimensions. These are awareness, attitudes, skills, knowledge (A+ASK), and proficiency in the host tongue. A word of explanation about each will be helpful. For example, one often hears ICC described as host culture “knowledge” while others may stress certain needed “skills.” Both knowledge and skills are customarily addressed in traditional educational settings. And because they are quantifiable, they can also be easily assessed (and expressed in terms of grades or numbers). On the other hand, anyone who has been in a intercultural situation knows that positive attitudes and awareness are just as important, if not more so, to intercultural success. Let us examine these further.

Most educators are familiar with the taxonomy developed a number of years ago that expanded educational objectives by adding the third area of “affect” (or attitude) to knowledge (or cognition) and skills (or behaviors) (cf. Bloom 1969). Since that time, however, awareness has also become increasingly recognized as another essential component of ICC development. For this reason, interculturalists commonly address awareness and affect along with knowledge and skills. Yet, awareness appears to be of a different order from the other three.

Awareness emanates from learnings in the other areas while it also enhances their development. Many interculturalists see awareness (of self and others) as the keystone on which effective and appropriate interactions depend. Writers from various disciplines have long been intrigued with awareness and explored its role further. Stevens (1971), Curle (1972), and Gattegno (1976), among others, cite awareness as the most powerful dimension of the A+ASK quartet; for this reason, awareness is shown at the center of the graph below:



The important works of Paulo Freire (1970, 1973, 1998) reinforce this thinking and, as a result, the Portuguese word “conscientização” (signifying “critical consciousness” or “awareness”) is now internationally recognized.

Awareness is in and of the “self” and it is always about the self in relation to someone or something else. Hence, all awareness is “self”-awareness, and to speak of “self”-awareness may be redundant. Awareness involves exploring, experimenting, and experiencing (the subtitle of Stevens’ book) (1971). It is reflective and introspective. In turn, it can be optionally expressed or manifested both to the self and to others. Awareness is difficult to reverse; that is, once one becomes aware, it is difficult to return to a state of unawareness (and even though one may try to deceive oneself, the self knows of the deception). Awareness leads to deeper cognition, skills, and attitudes just as it is also enhanced by their development. It is pivotal to cross-cultural entry and to acceptance by members of other cultures on their terms (and for this reason, it has a role in most cross-cultural orientation models). Freire reinforces this notion with several other important observations (1970, 1973, 1998):

- “conscientização” is awareness of selfhood
- “conscientização” is a critical look at the self in a social situation
- it can produce a transformation of the self and of one’s relation to others
- it can lead to dealing critically and creatively with reality (and fantasy)
- it is the most important task of education.

Clearly, awareness development is important to those striving to foment ICC in their program participants. How, and to what degree, we work on awareness development, directly or indirectly, affects intercultural competence. We need to explore questions like: What role does awareness have in the educational process? How can we work on enhancing awareness? What kinds of activities and experiences help participants increase awareness of themselves and others as cultural beings? And more challenging still — how can we monitor and assess its development? Ignoring these questions can lead to missed opportunities to enrich intercultural aspects of the program and the lasting results they may produce.

Finally, ICC is enhanced by grappling with, and developing proficiency in, a second language. Learning to perceive, conceptualize, and express ourselves in alternative ways is a *sine qua non* of intercultural competence. A monolingual who has never grappled with a foreign communication system may develop many intercultural talents but will be excluded from the insights arising from the struggle to communicate in alternative ways and the differing conceptualizations encoded in other language systems.

A DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESS

While acknowledging that contact and experience with people of other languages and cultures in a positive setting provide excellent opportunities to provoke and foster ICC development, it is also clear that once the process has begun, ICC development is an on-going and lengthy — often a lifelong — process. Occasionally, individuals experience moments of regression or stagnation, but normally there is no end point. One is always in the process of “becoming,” and one is never completely “interculturally competent.” Although we may develop and expand our competencies, new challenges always exist. Like the speaker of two or more languages, one rarely attains complete and native-like fluency in the subsequent systems one enters beyond the native system.

For this reason, it is common to explore intercultural competence in terms of the cross-cultural contact and entry processes, the options available, the choices one makes, and the resultant consequences. Cultural entry models often address some of these aspects. These include: “Stages in Developing an Intercultural Perspective” (Hoopes in Pusch 1979); “Seven Concepts in Cross-Cultural Interaction” (Gochenour and Janeway 1993, p. 1); and “Six Stages from Ethnocentrism to Ethnorelativism” (Bennett 1993, p. 29). Each model usually reflects a particular orientation, e.g., chronological progression, developmental sequences, psychological adjustments, or the stages and phases commonly experienced by intercultural sojourners.

How far one progresses through these stages and how much one adapts to a second culture, ultimately resides in the choices one makes. Individual choices may range from rejection of the target culture (usually countered by similar reactions on the part of hosts) to surface and sometimes profound cultural adjustments. Sojourners who learn to operate in a rather native-like fashion may be perceived (or accepted) as a member of the host society. Those who adjust contextually to two (or more) cultures in such a fashion tend to be fairly bilingual-bicultural (or multilingual-multicultural), i.e., individuals comfortable within, and accepted by, members of each context. Those who adjust to the point of also losing their original identity (or sometimes rejecting their native culture) present cases of assimilation (sometimes voluntarily taken on by the sojourners themselves and sometimes forced upon them by others). And those who question their identity as members of any group often experience a state of anomie in which clear ties to either culture may be diminished or lost.

In any case, it is important to ascertain for each program the desirable levels of ICC to be attained. Once articulated (usually as a series of objectives), program design and implementation are improved, and the results can be better measured. Moreover, stating ICC levels in behavioral terms helps program planners and implementers to design a more effective progression and series of activities to assure their attainment. With experience, better and more realistic objectives and activities leading toward appropriate levels of ICC can be created. Another benefit is an increased ability to cite competency levels for participants as well as for program staff and trainers (usually at a higher level of competence) (see Appendix). Clarity about competencies required of staff also helps in selecting qualified candidates.

Within the World Learning context, four developmental levels have been posited (more or fewer might be more desirable in other situations). These are:

- Level I: Educational Traveler — e.g., participants in short term exchange programs/4-6 weeks
- Level II: Sojourner — longer cultural immersion, e.g., interns and participants in college semester abroad programs and intercultural internships of long duration, 4-8 months
- Level III: Professional — staff who work in a intercultural or multicultural context; e.g., School for International Training and World Learning employees, alumni, project staff, EIL national directors
- Level IV: Intercultural/Multicultural Specialist — individuals involved in training, educating, consulting, and advising international students, overseas directors, and cross-cultural trainers.

ACTIVITIES, INDICATORS, AND ASSESSMENT

Clarity about intercultural competencies helps in many ways. The more its domains, traits, dimensions, and developmental nature (with the attendant cross-cultural choices and consequences) are understood, the better programs and activities to foster ICC development can be designed. Understanding ICC better equips us to seek positive indicators and to assess outcomes both in collective program terms and in individual participant growth. Many materials exist that can help in designing intercultural programs and activities (in addition to the models cited above). See, for example, the Experiential Learning Cycle (Lewin in Kolb 1984, p. 21); fifty cultural and intercultural activities (Fantini (1997); activities for intercultural learning (Seelye 1996); and cross-cultural training methods (Fowler and Mumford 1995 and 1999), among others.

Assessing ICC development, however, presents various challenges. Whereas most educators and trainers know how to assess knowledge and skill, awareness and attitude are seldom part of traditional assessment. Because the latter are less subject to quantification and documentation, indirect, rather than direct, indicators are usually required. Nonetheless, assessing competence levels at the beginning, during, and end of programs provides important and useful information. Happily, evaluators in international and intercultural organizations are normally unconcerned with traditional letters and grades. Their concerns are rather with ways to determine progress toward competencies development. Consequently, their assessment techniques can be more creative than those employed in more traditional academic settings.

Assessment may be ongoing and conducted in various ways and at various points in time. Approaches to assessment should consider direct and indirect indicators, quantitative and qualitative information, and discrete and global information. They may include self-evaluation, peer evaluation, as well as staff evaluation of participants. No matter how accomplished, assessing competencies is important. Assessment provides information that is both about individual achievements towards the stated competencies as well as collective program outcomes.

Various instruments may be used and/or adapted to serve as guides for locally developed assessment techniques. Such instruments include the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) (Kelley and Meyers 1992), the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) Language Proficiency Scale for assessing levels of language attainment (Liskin-Gasparro 1982), portfolio approaches that are comprehensive in nature and are compiled by the individual being assessed, and a YOGA form (“Your Objectives, Guidelines, and Assessment”) for assessing intercultural competence (Fantini 1995, 1999) that addresses areas of A+ASK plus language proficiency at four developmental levels (see Appendix).

AN EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGE

The development of ICC presents a challenge for educators and learners alike, yet its attainment enables exciting possibilities. Intercultural competence offers the chance of transcending the limitations of one’s own world view. “If you want to know about water,” someone once said, “don’t ask a goldfish.” Those who have never experienced another culture nor struggled to communicate through another language, like the goldfish, are generally unaware of the milieu in which they have always existed.

Positive contact with other world views provides opportunities for individuals to experience a shift of perspective and an appreciation for both the diversity and commonalities among human beings. This type of paradigm shift is described in the *Aquarian Conspiracy* (Ferguson 1980) as “the greatest revolution in the world — one that occurs with the head, within the mind.” But for this to happen, we need to be educated to become better global participants — able to empathize with and understand other persons *on their own terms* which also deepens an appreciation of our own heritages. Intercultural competence offers such a promise. For this reason, the development of intercultural competence and second language proficiency continue to be at the core of all of World Learning’s programs and activities.

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ASSESSING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE: A YOGA FORM

The term “YOGA” stands for “Your Objectives, Guidelines, and Assessment” form. This form may be used as a self-evaluation guide. It is designed to help you examine the development of your intercultural communicative competence (ICC, or Intercultural Competence, for short). This pilot document should help you to critically examine your intercultural objectives, serve as guidelines while undergoing an intercultural experience, and provide an assessment tool at various stages of intercultural development.

Rate yourself in each of the areas below (from 0 — no competence — to 5 — very high competence). After doing so, it is useful to have a native of the host culture rate you as well. This will provide you with not only your own perspective, but that of your hosts as well. Normally, the same individual will be perceived differently by the various evaluators (providing, e.g., “emic” and “etic”, or insider/outsider viewpoints that invariably exist across cultures). These different perspectives can spark important discussion, reflection, and learning.

AWARENESS

Level I: Educational Traveler — I demonstrate awareness of

- differences across languages and cultures 0 1 2 3 4 5
- my negative reactions to these differences (fear, ridicule, disgust, superiority, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
- how a specific context affects/alters my interaction with others 0 1 2 3 4 5
- how I am viewed by members of the host culture 0 1 2 3 4 5

Level II: Sojourner — I demonstrate awareness of

- myself as a “culturally conditioned” being and as an individual with personal preferences and habits 0 1 2 3 4 5
- responses to my social identity (race, class, gender, age, ability, etc.) within the context of my own culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
- responses to my social identity (race, class, gender, age, ability, etc.) as perceived by the host culture 0 1 2 3 4 5

- intracultural differences (i.e., diversity aspects such as race, class, gender, age, ability, sexual orientation, etc.) within my own culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
- intracultural differences (i.e., diversity aspects such as race, class, gender, age, ability, sexual orientation, etc.) within the host culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
- my choices and their consequences (which make me either more or less acceptable to my hosts) 0 1 2 3 4 5

Level III: Professional — I demonstrate awareness of

- my own values that affect my approaches to dilemmas and their resolution 0 1 2 3 4 5
- my hosts' responses to me that reflect their own cultural values (e.g., ethical frameworks embodying values, variations based on individual differences, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
- how my values and ethics are expressed in specific contexts 0 1 2 3 4 5
- differing cultural styles and language use and their effect on the workplace or institutional context 0 1 2 3 4 5

Level IV: Intercultural/Multicultural Specialist — I demonstrate awareness of

- my own level and stage of intercultural development (e.g., in terms of sensitivity, empathy, ethical issues, language proficiency, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
- the levels and stages of intercultural development of those I work with (students, program participants, colleagues, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
- factors which help and hinder my own intercultural development and ways to overcome them 0 1 2 3 4 5
- factors which help and hinder the intercultural development of those I work with and ways to help them overcome them 0 1 2 3 4 5
- how I perceive myself as a communicator, facilitator, mediator in intercultural/multicultural situations 0 1 2 3 4 5
- how I am perceived by others as a communicator, facilitator, mediator in intercultural/multicultural situations 0 1 2 3 4 5
- the multiple perspectives, complexities, and implications of choices in intercultural and multicultural contexts 0 1 2 3 4 5

ATTITUDE

Level I: Educational Traveler — I demonstrate a willingness to

- interact with members of the host culture (I don't avoid them, or primarily seek the company of my compatriots, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
- learn from my hosts, their language, and their culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
- try to communicate in the host language and to behave in ways judged "appropriate" by my hosts 0 1 2 3 4 5
- try to deal with the emotions and frustrations caused by my participation in the host culture (in addition to the pleasures which it offers) 0 1 2 3 4 5

Level II: Sojourner — I demonstrate a willingness to

- take on various roles as appropriate to different contexts in the host culture (e.g., in the family, at school, as an intern, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
- demonstrate interest in particular aspects of the host culture (e.g., motivation to learn the host language, to understand the values, to learn the history and traditions, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
- adapt my behavior in accordance to what I am learning about host culture communication (e.g., language, non-verbal behaviors, and sensitivity to behavioral adjustments appropriate for different contexts) 0 1 2 3 4 5
- reflect on the impact and consequences of my decisions, choices, and behavior on my hosts 0 1 2 3 4 5

Level III: Professional — I demonstrate a willingness (plus evidence of moving beyond tolerance to deeper levels of understanding and respect) to

- grapple with multiple ways of perceiving, of expressing myself, and of behaving 0 1 2 3 4 5
- engage with others and to try to understand differences in their behavior, values, and attitude 0 1 2 3 4 5
- interact in a variety of ways, some quite different from those to which I am accustomed 0 1 2 3 4 5
- grapple with the ethical implications of my choices (vis-a-vis my behavior, decisions, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5

Level IV: Intercultural/Multicultural Specialist — I demonstrate a willingness (plus evidence of moving beyond tolerance, understanding, and respect, to appreciation) to

- engage the challenges of linguistic and cultural diversity as they occur in professional and community settings 0 1 2 3 4 5
- exhibit appreciation for and interest in individuals and groups in particular cultural contexts 0 1 2 3 4 5
- be flexible in communicating and interacting with those who are linguistically and culturally different (and with limited knowledge of my own language and culture) 0 1 2 3 4 5
- enter into dialog with others and accept responsibility for the consequences of my decisions and actions within the host culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
- suspend judgment and appreciate the complexities and subtleties of intercultural and multicultural communication and interaction 0 1 2 3 4 5
- extend a sense of empathy to those oppressed because of their sociocultural status 0 1 2 3 4 5

SKILLS

Level I: Educational Traveler

- I demonstrate flexibility when interacting with persons from the host culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I use models appropriate to the culture and I avoid offending my hosts with my behavior, dress, etc. 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I am able to contrast the host culture with my own 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I use strategies which aid my adaptation and reduce cultural stress 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I develop strategies for learning the host language and about the host culture 0 1 2 3 4 5

Level II: Sojourner

- I use a variety of effective strategies when interacting with culturally different people 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I demonstrate the capacity to interact appropriately in a variety of situations within the host culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I am able to cite sociopolitical factors which have shaped both my own culture and the host culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I employ appropriate strategies for coping and/or adjusting to the host culture 0 1 2 3 4 5

- I employ appropriate strategies for coping and/or adjusting to my own culture upon returning home 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I identify and effectively utilize models, strategies, and techniques to enhance my learning about the host culture and language 0 1 2 3 4 5

Level III: Professional

- I utilize several cultural frameworks to improve my professional interactions in the host country 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I communicate effectively with people from various cultures in a range of social domains, considering age, gender, social status, and other factors 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I utilize relevant culture-specific information to improve my working style and professional interaction with my hosts 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I monitor my behavior and its impact on my learning, growth, and on my hosts 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I successfully utilize relevant frameworks to improve my managerial role in intercultural and multicultural settings 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I devise strategies to adapt my professional habits to the appropriate learning and styles of the workplace 0 1 2 3 4 5

Level IV: Intercultural/Multicultural Specialist

- I can explain a range of models for understanding cultures and the dominant and emerging theories which underpin these 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I utilize my language ability and cultural models to anticipate the behavior of persons from various cultures in most domains of social and professional interaction 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I successfully incorporate host culture dominant cultural traits into intercultural education and training designs 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I help resolve cross-cultural conflicts and misunderstandings 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I test out the relevance of new and alternative methods that further understanding of the intercultural and multicultural fields 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I develop new concepts, models, and strategies for presentations at professional meetings and publications in appropriate journals 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I provide professional and educational services in the intercultural and multicultural fields 0 1 2 3 4 5

KNOWLEDGE

Level I: Educational Traveler

- I can cite a basic definition of culture and identify its components 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I can contrast aspects of the host language and culture with my own 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I know the essential norms and taboos (greetings, dress, behavior, etc.) of the host culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I recognize signs of cultural stress and I know strategies for overcoming them 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I know some techniques to maximize my learning of the host language and culture 0 1 2 3 4 5

Level II: Sojourner

- I can articulate at least one academic definition of culture and describe the complexities of cultural systems using relevant concepts and terms 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I can describe and explain my own behavior and that of my hosts in various domains (e.g., social interaction, time orientation, relation to the environment, spiritual, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I can articulate the general history and some sociopolitical factors which have shaped my own culture and the host culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I can describe one cross-cultural model for understanding common adjustment phases (from entry to reentry) and strategies for coping while immersed in the host culture and upon returning home 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I can explain at least one model for understanding learning processes and strategies (e.g., the experiential learning cycle) and implications for learning about and adjusting to another culture 0 1 2 3 4 5

Level III: Professional

- I can cite various publications about understanding cultures, including those related to the domains of work, teaching, etc. 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I can describe and explain the interactional behaviors common to persons from a specific other culture in social and professional domains (e.g., team work, problem solving, teacher-student roles, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I can compare and contrast my professional area of interest in my own culture and a specific other culture (e.g., teaching, sustainable development, community organizations, volunteer practices, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I can describe several models of cross-cultural entry and strategies for successful entry and adaptation 0 1 2 3 4 5
- I can discuss models for understanding learning styles and strategies, and describe prevailing styles in my own culture and another culture and their implications 0 1 2 3 4 5

Level IV: Intercultural/Multicultural Specialist — I am able to

- explain the complex dynamics inherent in multicultural settings involving people of diverse language and culture backgrounds 0 1 2 3 4 5
- describe a range of models for understanding cultures, and the prevailing theories and paradigms in the intercultural literature which underpin them 0 1 2 3 4 5
- describe and explain in depth the behavior of persons from specific other cultures in important domains of social and professional interaction 0 1 2 3 4 5
- discuss aspects of specific other cultures within the professional domain of intercultural training 0 1 2 3 4 5
- explain and utilize several models for mediating and resolving conflict among peoples of different cultures 0 1 2 3 4 5
- provide a range of alternative models for conducting education or training processes that address diverse learning styles, relevant to training and advising in intercultural and multicultural settings 0 1 2 3 4 5
- cite primary and secondary research tools and other resources and systems available to professionals in the field 0 1 2 3 4 5
- identify relevant publications, journals, and professional societies that contribute to our understanding of intercultural communications, as well as the contributions of other related academic disciplines 0 1 2 3 4 5

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Level I: Educational Traveler — I demonstrate ability within the following range

- ACTFL Novice-Mid (or FSI 0): able to operate in only a very limited capacity 0 1 2 3 4 5
- ACTFL High (or FSI 0+): able to satisfy immediate needs with learned utterances 0 1 2 3 4 5
- ACTFL Intermediate Low (or FSI 1-): able to satisfy basic survival needs and minimum courtesy requirements 0 1 2 3 4 5
- ACTFL Intermediate-Mid (or FSI 1): able to satisfy some survival needs and some limited social demands 0 1 2 3 4 5

Level II: Sojourner — I demonstrate ability within the following range

- ACTFL Intermediate-Mid (or FSI 1): able to satisfy some survival needs and some limited social demands 0 1 2 3 4 5
- ACTFL Intermediate-High (or FSI 1+): able to satisfy most survival needs and limited social demands 0 1 2 3 4 5

Level III: Professional — I demonstrate ability within the following range plus some ability in a third language as stated below

- ACTFL Advanced (or FSI 2): able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements 0 1 2 3 4 5
- ACTFL Advanced Plus (or FSI 2+): able to satisfy most work requirements and show some ability to communicate on concrete topics 0 1 2 3 4 5
- ACTFL Superior (FSI 3 to 4+): able to use the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal situations 0 1 2 3 4 5
- and ACTFL Intermediate Low to Intermediate High (FSI 1- to 1+) in a third language 0 1 2 3 4 5

Level IV: Intercultural/Multicultural Specialist — I demonstrate ability within the following range plus some ability in a third language as stated below

- ACTFL Superior (FSI 3 to 4+) in a second language 0 1 2 3 4 5
- and ACTFL Intermediate High to Advanced Plus (FSI 1+ to 2+) in a third language 0 1 2 3 4 5

*Adapted in part from a “Report by the Intercultural Communicative Competence Task Force,” World Learning, Brattleboro, VT, USA, 1994.

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