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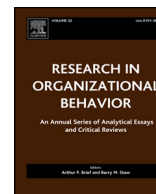
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# When in Rome: Intercultural learning and implications for training<sup>☆</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

Learning requires acquiring and using knowledge. How do individuals acquire knowledge of another culture? How do they use this knowledge in order to operate proficiently in new cultural settings? What kinds of training would foster intercultural learning? These questions have been addressed in many literatures of applied and basic research, featuring disparate concepts, methods and measures. In this paper, we review the insights from these different literatures. We note parallels among findings of survey research on immigrants, expatriate managers, and exchange students. We also draw on experiment-based research on learning to propose the cognitive processes involved in intercultural learning. In the first section, we focus on acquiring cultural knowledge, reviewing longstanding literatures on immigrant acculturation and expatriate adjustment investigating antecedents of intercultural adjustment and performance. In the second section, we focus on gaining proficiency, examining how newcomers to a cultural setting deploy their knowledge of it in order to adjust their behavior and judgments. We draw upon findings about individual differences and situational conditions that predict performance to suggest training proficiency in adaptive use of cultural knowledge to shift behaviors and judgments.

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## 1. Introduction

Whereas scholars once thought that globalization would reduce cultural differences and the challenges they pose to organizations, in many ways globalization has raised the demands on managers for intercultural competence. Firms that once were once grounded in a single national culture and only exported to a few familiar neighboring countries now find themselves intimately connected to many cultures,

unfamiliar cultures, and new cultures all the time. Consider for instance the classic British firm Land Rover: today it belongs to Tata Motors of India, sells more in China and Russia than any European country, and manufactures in Saudi Arabia. Similarly, managers in public sector organizations—whether military, medical, or environmental in their missions—increasingly find themselves working on global problems that bring them to remote, unfamiliar cultures (Yemen, the Congo, Siberia). Globalization has increased the world's connectedness and accelerated the pace of change, requiring managers to gain proficiency in new cultures all the time.

Globalization has also contributed to intercultural challenges at home. Cultural diversity at the workplace has heightened through forces such as increased immigration (Portes, 1995), multiculturalist policies and ideologies

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(Modood, 2013; Shweder, Minow, & Markus, 2004), and the post-Cold-War resurgence of ethnic identification (Barber, 2004; Kaiser & Pratt-Hyatt, 2009). Whereas the US workforce once consisted predominantly of White males, this category is no longer the majority (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011). All this diversity – from immigrants, ethnic renewal, and corporate cultures – demands managers who can learn about cultural norms and use this knowledge to adjust their actions and inferences.

Finally globalization has also increased the cultural diversity within individuals. More and more people live in multiple countries over the course of their lives and careers, becoming bicultural or multicultural (Chen, Benet-Martínez, & Harris Bond, 2008). Resultantly, people's passport, birthplace, and residence are increasingly limited as guides to the person's behaviors, preferences, or expectations. This makes it all the more challenging to rely on knowledge of people's cultural background when interacting with them. Efforts to take into account another person's culture risk mistakes and stereotypes (Leung & Su, 2004).

### 1.1. Augustine's advice

Intercultural interactions and careers are hardly new, but contemporary managers may face more complex intercultural challenges than in previous eras. The classic adage – “When in Rome, do as the Romans do” – originated with an executive's intercultural dilemma. Augustine, a native of Carthage serving as Bishop of Milan, wrote to Januarius, Bishop of Naples, with advice about an upcoming trip to their organization's headquarters in Rome. At the time, Christians in Rome fasted on Saturday whereas Christians in other cities did not. To avoid scandal or offense, Augustine's approach was to fast when in Rome but not when at home in Milan, and he advised Januarius to adapt to local norms in the same way. History does not record whether the advice was followed, but we do know that Augustine had a long successful career after this correspondence, whereas Januarius was killed soon thereafter.

Although Augustine found adaptation to be an easy solution to his intercultural dilemma, contemporary managers in many contexts find it fraught with challenges. Consider first the challenge of learning the foreign cultural patterns. For Augustine it was easy to see what “the Romans do”. The norms of a religious community are followed by all of its members, in conspicuous public behaviors. They are also codified in teachings for children and converts. By contrast, the cultural biases that managers in today's organizations need to learn are not so easily observed. While an expat can see that German bankers wear ties to work, he cannot just see the cultural habits in their decision making about investments – these can only be inferred from comments at a meeting or votes on a proposal. And this inference is challenging because not all German bankers make these decisions in the same way – it depends on personality and on situational factors such as the urgency of the matter and the relative ranks of the interactants (Bicchieri, 2006). Such cultural norms are rarely discussed by insiders or codified in documents; they are tacit, background rules and taken for granted (Gelfand et al., 2011; Triandis, 1996). People may only become

conscious of the norms when someone violates them. For most managers in a new culture, simply learning what it is that “Romans do” is a subtle and complex process.

In this paper, we argue that managers learn foreign norms (what “Romans do”) through at least four qualitatively distinct cognitive processes: studying, attributional reasoning, social learning, and conditioning. Some of these learning processes operate in a controlled, explicit way, but others operate subconsciously, meaning that even as a manager gains familiarity with a new culture, he or she may not be aware of what he or she has learned. We draw on recent findings suggesting that these cognitive processes may depend in different ways on people's motivations, personalities, and metacognitive processing, elucidating why these individual difference dimensions drive criteria such as immigrant acculturation and expatriate adjustment.

Consider next the challenge of deploying foreign knowledge proficiently, once it has been attained. For Augustine, knowledge of the Roman norm served as an unvarying script for his own conduct in Rome – he always fasted on Sabbath when in Rome. Also it served as a lens through which he could judge and interpret Romans. If he saw a Roman breakfasting on the Sabbath, he could determine that the person was non-Christian. Using his knowledge this way was straightforward because of early Christianity's universalistic ethos – the same rules applied to everyone in the community. However, universalism is hardly universal; in most communities, some rules apply to the elite and other rules apply to the masses. Newcomers who adopt practices that are reserved for the elite or for insiders are judged to be presumptuous or offensive. Nor can newcomers always use their cultural knowledge to draw conclusions about locals in the case of norms that are socially restricted or situationally contingent. Drawing inferences from cultural knowledge and people's behavior is a delicate matter; while expatriates cannot succeed without using their knowledge of the local culture, they can only succeed if they use this knowledge very carefully. In this chapter, we argue that using cultural knowledge requires metacognitive activity such checking the applicability of one's assumptions and monitoring for errors. Managers who want to utilize knowledge of a foreign culture must do so judiciously – adapting in some ways so as to bridge communication gaps but not so much that it reduces trust or induces negative attributions (Enos, Kehrhahn, & Bell, 2003).

To make this case, in the sections below we review literatures relevant to the questions of how people internalize another culture and how they use this knowledge. Within each section, we integrate several different management and social science literatures to identify parallels and open questions. We bring in relevant research from experimental psychology to develop a picture of the cognitive processes involved. At the end of each section, we note applied implications for cultural learning and training.

## 2. Acquiring cultural knowledge

Several research literatures have amassed evidence relevant to the question of how people gain understanding

of new cultures. Research on immigrant acculturation identifies antecedents of immigrants' engagement and identification with their new culture. Studies of expatriate employees similarly look for predictors of emotional adjustment and job performance overseas. While these outcomes are thought to chiefly hinge on learning of the "host culture", the actual processes of acquiring cultural knowledge are rarely theorized or measured in these literatures. Intercultural learning is a black box that exists between the antecedent conditions and traits and the outcome criteria such as identification or adjustment. However, several different kinds of learning processes that may play a role in second-culture learning have been theorized and studied in the experiment-based literatures on cultural training, intercultural competency, and cognitive psychology. Below, we integrate these suggestions into a four-fold taxonomy of intercultural learning processes. Then we draw implications for selection and training of intercultural competency.

### 2.1. Acculturation

How are people changed by exposure to a new culture? Two basic premises underlying theory and research about this can be termed the replacement and supplement models. The former is a zero-sum notion that when a new culture enters people's minds and hearts it displaces their first culture. The latter notion is that gaining familiarity and proficiency in a second culture can leave one's understanding and attachment to one's first culture undiminished or perhaps even enhanced.

#### 2.1.1. Replacement view

A longstanding intuition about foreign exposure is that it is corrupting. A soldier's loyalty could be diluted if he becomes too familiar with another land. A society's stock of shared values and traditions could be contaminated by immigrants bringing different ways of life. Prohibitions against immigration and foreign travel have existed throughout human history - from the Hammurabi code of 2370 BC, to Japan's 17<sup>th</sup> c. Sakoku Edict, to laws of North Korea today. Plato recommended that a state should restrict travel abroad to people over the age 40, who were believed to be less susceptible to learning anything new.

The replacement view of cultural learning underlies the "melting pot" ideology that shaped US immigration policy and discourse until the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Identifications with the country of origin must be dissolved in order to gain an American identity. Theodore Roosevelt (1915) decreed those who maintain ethnic identities as lacking sufficient "heart-allegiance" to their country:

Americanism is a matter of the spirit and of the soul. Our allegiance must be purely to the United States. ... The men who do not become Americans and nothing else are hyphenated Americans; and there ought to be no room for them in this country.

Classical theory in sociology and anthropology maintained that groups in contact necessarily take on each other's concepts and habits; immigrants assimilate in a

"straight line" moving closer to the mainstream with each generation (Gans, 1973; Herskovits, 1938). Later theorists (Gordon, 1964) posited multiple dimensions of identification and assimilation (i.e., attitudinal, occupational, marital). Glazer and Moynihan (1963) delineated dimensions of acculturation among Jewish, Irish, Puerto Rican, African American and other communities in New York, and noted that ethnic habits get replaced by host culture habits on some dimensions more than others, as a function of language, religion, and race. Generally, immigrants are quicker to acculturate to political and economic practices (voting, savings accounts) than to religious or parenting practices (Navas et al., 2005). Professional aspirations push some people to embrace mainstream norms in public spheres more than in their private life (Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver, 2004). Challenging the notion of a straight line assimilation, even that limited to some dimensions, Portes and Zhou (1993) distinguished three trajectories of immigrant groups across the generations: upward mobility through assimilation, downward mobility to the underclass, and economic achievement coupled with maintenance of ethnic ties and values. Other work challenges the taken for granted link between occupational success and assimilation. Comparing immigrant groups to and from many different countries, Sowell (1994) found that the occupational and economic attainment is highest for groups who bring previously lacking skills to their adopted societies and work in niche fields; immigrants with skill sets highly similar to established locals have a harder time competing. By challenging the myths of the melting pot, this research has enabled more informed policies.

Acculturation also occurs in colonial and post-colonial societies. The influence of the colonizing culture also differs across domains. In Hong Kong, a society of Chinese ethnicity and Western institutions, role models in educational curriculum are drawn from both Eastern and Western history but not equally across all domains of life. Role models in instrumental domains include Westerners such as Thomas Edison, but role models in moral domains tend to be exclusively Chinese (Fu & Chiu, 2001).

The premise that knowledge of a new culture replaces the first culture persists in contemporary acculturation research. Gudykunst and Kim (2003) proposed that an immigrant becomes acculturated only to the extent that she "deculturizes" or "unlearns" her native culture. Learning a new culture requires that one act, think, and feel like a local - not just by doing but also thinking and feeling as Romans do! Gudykunst and Kim (2003) spell out the implication that cultural learners should refrain from contact with their heritage culture, totally immersing themselves in the culture they are studying. "Unlearning" does not mean erasing knowledge from memory, but merely changing habitual patterns of association. An important distinction in social cognition research is between knowledge availability and accessibility (Higgins, 1996a). While a person possesses many schemas that are available in long term memory, only a small subset of these are highly accessible ("top of mind") and hence frequently activated. Recent use of a schema heightens its accessibility, so accessibility perpetuates itself. Because a chronically

accessible schema wins out in the response competition, it crowds out other schemas from becoming chronically accessible. Habitually acting, thinking and feeling according to first-culture norms may make it harder for second-culture schemas to become chronically accessible.

Speaking a second language illustrates the tension between first- and second-culture accessibility. For bilinguals, schemas associated with the first-language and second-language both become accessible when speaking or reading, creating response competition (Bialystok, Craik, Green, & Gollan, 2009; Kroll, Sumutka, & Schwartz, 2005). Part of the difficulty of operating in one's second language is inhibiting the concepts from one's first language that can interfere (Kroll et al., 2005; Miller & Kroll, 2002). Americans taking a Spanish class in Spain, compared to a group taking the same class in the U.S., showed better performance in a task requiring objects to be named in Spanish, and they also showed decreased accessibility (measured by reaction times) for the English names of the objects (Linck, Kroll, & Sunderman, 2009). It may be easier to learn a second language if leaves an environment that constantly perpetuates the accessibility of one's first-language associations.

Accessibility also depends on the visual environment. In an effect known as cultural priming, exposure to images associated with a culture sets off a chain reaction of excitation through their network of schemas associated with that culture, meaning that they are more likely to be active and thus the person's interpretations and actions would adhere to the norms of that culture (Fu, Chiu, Morris, & Young, 2007; Hong, Morris, Chiu, & Benet-Martinez, 2000). Zhang, Morris, Cheng, and Yap (2013) studied whether immigrants from mainland China (PRC) to the US speak English less fluently when they are primed with Chinese culture. In a simulated teleconference conversation in English, PRC immigrants spoke less fluently to an ethnically Chinese face than to a Caucasian face, despite the fact that they indicated greater social comfort with the Chinese face than the Caucasian face. A similar study found that PRC immigrants' English fluency dropped after exposure to iconic Chinese landmarks (The Great Wall) as opposed to iconic American images (Mount Rushmore). In other studies, PRC immigrants, after exposure to Chinese images, used literal translations from Chinese in an object naming task (e.g., they called pistachios 'happy nuts'). In another study, they recognized these anomalous phrases with faster reaction time after seeing Chinese images than American images (indicating that these Chinese linguistic structures had elevated cognitive accessibility).

Other studies of immigrant acculturation find that the social context affects the extent to which host culture mindsets replace heritage culture mindsets. Birman, Trickett, and Buchanan (2005) compared adolescents' acculturation in two communities of Russian immigrants in the same US state, one where Russians lived in a concentrated ethnic enclave and one where they lived dispersed through the area's multicultural neighborhoods. American acculturation and Russian culture retention was measured in terms of linguistic fluency, consumption behavior (media, music, food, entertainment), and identification ("I consider myself

American" versus "I consider myself Russian"). Time in the U.S. positively predicted measures of American acculturation, in terms of language, behavior, and identity. It negatively predicted Russian language and behavior, but not identity. First-culture identity may be less a matter of habit than language or consumption behavior. Interestingly, time in U.S. also interacted with the community variable: the relationship between time in the U.S. and American linguistic, behavioral, and identity acculturation was stronger in the dispersed community, suggesting a faster process of acculturation. Less frequent social interactions with fellow Russians most likely meant less priming and less reinforcement of Russian habits.

While the immigrants' social context matters for acculturation, the effect depends on individual motivational needs. Need for cognitive closure (NFCC) refers to the desire for firm and final answers rather than ambiguity and further processing (Webster & Kruglanski, 1994). Individuals vary in their chronic levels of NFCC and some situational conditions induce NFCC, such as time pressure, distraction, or noise (Webster & Kruglanski, 1994). The need for closure draws people to conform to group norms. High NFCC is associated with liking homogeneous groups (Pierro, Mannetti, De Grada, Livi, & Kruglanski, 2003) and disliking deviant individuals (Kruglanski & Webster, 1991). Individuals higher in NFCC tend to adhere to culturally typical patterns of causal attribution and conflict management (Chiu, Morris, Hong, & Menon, 2000; Fu et al., 2007). Kusic, Kruglanski, Pierro, & Mannetti (2004) compared immigrants to Italy from Croatia who landed in different kinds of communities. For those in Croat ethnic communities, higher NFCC predicted slower adaptation to Italy and stronger maintenance of heritage-culture habits. For those in Italian communities, higher NFCC predicted faster adaptation to Italy.

Not all immigrant communities acculturate toward the mainstream host culture; some evolve toward greater differentiation. Portes and Rumbaut (2001) found that second generation Mexican immigrants in California, compared to first generation immigrants, expressed more negative attitudes about things American, perhaps because they get more exposed to mainstream American discourse derogating their national origins. In some cases, reactive movements toward cultural conservatism may involve heightened levels of NFCC. Orehek et al. (2010) found that a slideshow about 9/11 raised Americans' NFCC levels, and that Londoners' NFCC levels were elevated in the weeks after the 2005 London transit bombing. Higher NFCC fosters cultural persistence, as it induces conformity from members of the culture and induces newcomers to look to old-timers' behavior for guidance. Communities that feel threatened may go down the path of chronic closure needs and cultural traditionalism—reactionary movements such as fascism or fundamentalism, in which communities embrace more traditional (or imagined traditional) modes of behavior, often follow perceived threats (see Morris, Mok, & Mor, 2011). NFCC may play a role in the ways communities respond to external threats through the collective-level hardening or narrowing of cultural identities.

In sum, the replacement view of cultural learning is exemplified by research on acculturation. This research finds that immigrants assimilate compartmentally rather

than categorically. The extent and speed of assimilation depends on the person's linguistic, visual, and social context, because of the dynamics of schema activation. For example, it is harder to learn a second-culture when one's first-culture schemas are chronically accessible. Acculturation also depends on the interaction of context with the motivational state of NFCC, because this epistemic motive induces conformity to the norms of whichever ingroup is most salient in the person's social environment. High levels of NFCC at the community level may support culturally conservative and reactionary movements that resist the influence of other cultures.

### 2.1.2. Supplement view

While some acculturation phenomena can be understood within the framework of a second culture replacing the first culture, the limitations of this zero sum model of cultural knowledge have long been apparent. People can learn a new culture without losing their heritage culture proficiency and identity. Thomas and Znaniecki's (1918) study of Polish immigrants in Chicago distinguished three trajectories of adjusting to the host culture of the US: "bohemians" who embraced the host culture and abandoned their heritage culture, "philistines" who rejected the host culture and stuck to their culture of origin, and "creatives" who strongly engage with the host culture identity while also keeping significant heritage-culture involvement. Even earlier Du Bois (1903) described African Americans as double-conscious, seeing from the Black perspective and the White perspective, resulting in "two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings, two warring ideals." Park (1928) and Stonequist (1937) described ethnic immigrants as "marginal," as they lived in two cultural worlds but on the periphery of each. In this more ambivalent picture, weak ties to two cultures could result in either creativity or conflict.

Drawing on these ideas, Berry (1974, 1990) developed a self-report scale to categorize immigrants into four acculturation strategies – Assimilation, Separation, Integration, and Marginalization. Assimilation means identification and engagement solely with the host culture; Separation, solely with the heritage culture; Integration, with both cultures; and Marginalization, with neither culture. Berry (1990) found evidence for his prediction that psychological adjustment would be highest with the Integration strategy. Whereas Berry (1990) linked Marginalization to maladjustment, recent evidence supports Park and Stonequist's Janus-faced image that dual weak identifications can indicate alienation or independence (Bougie & Bourhis, 1996). In several recent studies of managers living between two cultures, the greatest career success was associated with the balanced configurations – Integration and Marginalization – as opposed to the unbalanced configurations – Assimilation and Separation (Gillespie, McBride, & Riddle, 2010; Tadmor, Tetlock, & Peng, 2009).

While acculturation paths are called "strategies", they depend on the host society's welcome as well as the immigrant's aspirations. Immigrants from the same source country fare differently in different host countries (e.g., Vietnamese in France versus those in Finland). Berry, Phinney, Sam, and Vedder (2006) distinguished three

relevant types of host countries: settler societies founded on immigration (Australia, Israel), former colonial societies (Germany, the Netherlands), and societies new to immigration lacking explicit policies (Portugal, Sweden). In settler societies, which have higher rates of immigration, there is greater public support for cultural diversity and higher rates of immigrants on the Integration path. In sum, the question of whether immigrants' cultural learning takes the form of assimilation (replacement) versus biculturalism (supplement) hinges on the host society's welcome as much as the immigrants' preferences.

In the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century many Western nations, starting with Canada, began to conceptualize their societies as multicultural mosaics rather than assimilative melting pots (Morris, Chiu, & Liu, 2014). This coincided with the resurgence of ethnic identity and increased rates of immigration since the 1960s. In recent years, support for this multiculturalist ideology has dramatically receded in Western Europe, as unassimilated Islamic communities have become sites of discontent and violence (Brubaker, 2001). An emerging intercultural ideology called interculturalism places less emphasis of preserving authentic traditions and more emphasis on fostering interactions between ethnic communities (Meer & Modood, 2012).

At the same time, globalization has changed the forms emigration takes, with more migrants aspiring to live transnationally. It has always been the case that more immigrants returned home than the assimilationist ideology acknowledged, and letters, money and gifts have always traveled back to families in the old country. What's changed is that new communication and transportation technologies have made close relationships and frequent travel much easier, such that people can work in another country without giving up their home. People can maintain networks and involvements in both countries easily when they are just a short flight apart (e.g., Polish physicians in the U.K. who fly in for the workweek, NYers who vote in Dominican elections and even run for office). Transnationalism can enable compartmentalized acculturation and dual strong cultural identification.

In sum, research premised on the supplement view of second-culture learning finds that second-culture proficiency does not always crowd out first-culture proficiency and second-culture attachments can balance rather than displace first-culture attachments. When do two cultural identities conflict or compete? Proficiency in two cultures may interfere with each other in matters like attaining fluency, which depend on knowledge accessibility rather than knowledge availability. There may be more competition between cultures in the heart than in the mind. That is, learning to bow does not interfere with ones memory of how to give a firm handshake. However, adopting Western gender roles may interfere with one's commitment to Saudi traditions. (We will revisit such issues in our second section when we consider how newcomers make use of their knowledge of a second culture.)

### 2.2. Research on expatriate adjustment

Another applied research literature investigates people who visit or sojourn in another country rather than



immigrating, such as expatriate employees, foreign students, and military personnel. Whereas the immigrant literature typically studies engagement or identification with the host culture, the expatriate literature focuses on adjustment, “psychological comfort with various aspects of a new setting” (Black & Gregersen, 1991a, p. 498).

### 2.2.1. Emotional dynamics

Early case studies of expatriates spawned the influential theory of culture shock, which posits three phases in an expatriate’s emotional adjustment process. In the initial “honeymoon” period expatriates are enchanted with the novelty of their new foreign environment and buoyed by fresh memories of home, including its close, supportive relationships. After a month or two expatriates begin to experience culture shock, a debilitating “anxiety that results from losing all our familiar signs and symbols” and causes many to isolate themselves or return home (Oberg, 1960, p. 177). Expatriates who survive the culture shock phase then transition to an emotionally positive phase of engagement with the local culture. On return home, expatriates experience the same process: a honeymoon followed by reverse culture-shock and then eventual engagement (Adler, 1981; Austin, 1986). Cultural shock theory assumes a new cultural attachment replaces the previous one and that this is a traumatic process. However, more systematic empirical tests do not support the proposal that all expatriates experience this affective W-curve, through many do struggle at various phases of their experience with feelings of insecurity and isolation (Triandis, 1994; Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001).

Recent theory and evidence suggests that the emotional dynamics of expatriates hinge on the feeling of security versus insecurity. Insecure feelings become self-confirming. Insecurity about one’s acceptance by others can lead to withdrawal, inducing further feelings of isolation, inadequacy and distress (Adler, 1975). This also happens through interpersonal dynamics; insecurities induce defensive social behaviors that often elicit the very rejection that the insecure person most fears (Stephan & Stephan, 1993). Some evidence linking expatriate adjustment to relational security comes from priming experiments. Fu et al. (2014) found that exchange students adjustment to their host culture can be helped, somewhat ironically, by reminders of their home culture. In a pilot study, American exchange students in Hong Kong China felt more secure about their relationships with host nationals after a prior task in which they tasted American desserts (apple pie) as opposed to Chinese desserts (mango pudding). In Study 1, exposure to iconic American cultural images (versus Chinese images) induced greater adjustment to Hong Kong, and this effect was mediated by endorsement of relational security, not other values often related to studying abroad such as personal growth or international harmony. Study 2 surveyed Hong Kong students before, during, and after a term abroad. Students who expressed insecurity before the trip about interacting with host locals (but not those who had no insecurity) benefited from a home-culture prime intervention during their stay. Not only was their immediate cultural adjustment increased but the effect persisted, still evident months later in post-stay evaluations of the study abroad

experience. In sum, home-culture primes soothe the relational insecurities that hinder some expatriates, impeding their development of relationships with host locals.

With the recognition that expatriates’ experiences in gaining familiarity and comfort with host cultures vary widely (just as do immigrants’ experiences of acculturation), research has turned to identifying the antecedent factors that determine whether an expatriate adjusts quickly, slowly or not at all. Adjustment is typically measured as the degree of comfort with the general practical environment (i.e., food, climate, weather, and housing and living conditions), interpersonal interactions with host nationals, and with work/school tasks (Black & Stephens, 1989; Black, 1988, 1990; Gregersen & Black, 1990). We review research on predictors of adjustment in terms of two major categories: situational factors, dimensions of the expatriate’s environment, and personal factors, dimensions of individual difference.

### 2.2.2. Situational factors

Not surprisingly, studies have found that expatriate adjustment decreases with greater objective challenges to be overcome and increases with greater social and organizational supports. Adjustment decreases with greater cultural distance between home and host countries (Searle & Ward, 1990; Van Vianen, De Pater, Kristof-Brown, & Johnson, 2004). It increases with spousal adjustment, cross-cultural training, and support from host nationals (Black & Gregersen, 1991b; Black & Stephens, 1989; Shaffer & Harrison, 2001). Adjustment increases with the job characteristic of decision autonomy (Takeuchi, Shay, & Jiatao, 2008) and support from one’s home organization and superior (Kraimer, Wayne, & Jaworski, 2001). Mixed findings have emerged about organizational rank and functional area (Shaffer, Harrison, & Gilley, 1999).

### 2.2.3. Personal factors

2.2.3.1. Personality. Much evidence links expatriate adjustment to personality dimensions (Abbe, Gulick, & Herman, 2008). In terms of the five factor model of personality, extraversion, people’s proclivity to be outgoing and expressive, positively predicts expatriate work adjustment and job performance (Caligiuri, 2000; Mol, Born, Willemsen, & Van der Molen, 2005; Searle & Ward, 1990; Shaffer, Harrison, Gregersen, Black, & Ferzandi, 2006), perhaps because they are more able to interact with locals and find social support. Openness to experience, people’s taste for novelty as opposed to routine, also positively predicts work adjustment and job performance (Ali, Van der Zee, & Sanders, 2003; Lievens, Harris, Van Keer, & Bisqueret, 2003; Shaffer et al., 2006). This may reflect the fact that curiosity drives cultural learning or that comfort with ambiguity as opposed to familiar routine makes confusion a less frightening experience. Expatriates higher on agreeableness, people’s degree of interpersonal flexibility, have better interpersonal adjustment, better job satisfaction, and lower desire to terminate their foreign assignment (Caligiuri, 2000; Dalton & Wilson, 2000; Mol et al., 2005; Shaffer et al., 2006), consistent with the notion that developing close interactions and relationships with

locals is critical to an expatriates overall adjustment. Expatriates higher on *conscientiousness* have better general adjustment to the host culture and better job performance, both self-rated and supervisor-rated (Caligiuri, 2000; Dalton & Wilson, 2000; Mol et al., 2005; Ones & Viswesvaran, 1999; Shaffer et al., 2006). While there is no direct evidence for the mechanism, it may reflect a tendency to focus on their jobs despite distractions and to receive positive feedback for their performance. Finally, people with greater *emotional stability* are higher in interpersonal and work adjustment (Ali et al., 2003; Mol et al., 2005; Shaffer et al., 2006). Most likely, this is because more emotionally stable individuals can endure frustrating interactions and feelings of incompetence without the downward spiral of insecurity, defensiveness and anxiety that characterizes culture shock.

While plausible mechanisms explaining the influence of personality dimensions on adjustment have been posited, these mediating processes have not been well tested, as the survey designs of expatriate research are not very amenable to testing psychological processes. For the applied goal of selecting individuals for expatriate or exchange student roles, it is useful to know that scores on brief scales predict positive adjustment. However, for our present interest in knowing how people learn cultures so that we can better train them, correlations with personality traits provide limited insight. In the case of dimensions such as Openness, it seems likely that the association with adjustment comes from greater learning, but in the case of dimensions such as Agreeableness or Emotional Stability it may come as much from advantages in emotional coping as in learning. Also the finding that adjustment is linked to all five very different personality dimensions suggests that there may be different kinds of learning processes that contribute to adjustment. Extraversion likely brings about more frequent interaction with locals, and hence more feedback. Openness, by contrast, may have its effects through inducing people to read novels or wander through museums. So whereas the extraversion effect may involve experiential learning from reinforcements, the openness effect may involve the explicit process of studying factual information. These are qualitatively different kinds of learning processes that may play roles at different stages of cultural learning, but these processes have not been probed in the expatriate literature.

**2.2.3.2. Intelligence.** Another literature examines general mental ability and expatriate adjustment. General intelligence, or IQ, is one of the most important predictors of human performance outcomes. The traditional view of intelligence, stemming from Binet and Simon (1916) and Spearman (1927), defines intelligence as basic mental abilities that predict academic performance. General mental ability predicts learning performance in many domains (e.g., Hunter & Hunter, 1984), so research and policy has presumed that IQ would provide an advantage in puzzling through the rules, norms, and conventions governing behaviors in the new cultural environment. However, perhaps because it has been taken for granted, this role of IQ has been seldom tested.

Surprisingly, though, the extant evidence does not indicate that IQ drives intercultural adjustment. A study of 35 international students in California (Matsumoto, LeRoux, Robles, & Campos, 2007) administered the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-Third Edition (Wechsler, 1997), a widely used measure of IQ that includes 13 sub-scales, along with two measures of cultural adjustment (*culture shock* and *homesickness* scales) and three measures of general psychological well-being (*anxiety*, *hopelessness*, and *satisfaction with life*). They found that the total Wechsler IQ score did not correlate with any of the cultural adjustment and general well-being outcomes. Of the 65 correlations between the 13 sub-scales of the Wechsler IQ scale and the five dependent measures, eight were significant. However, when these correlations are evaluated in light of the number of tests – with the Bonferroni correction, Holm’s step-down procedure (Holm, 1979) or Hochberg’s step-up procedure (Hochberg, 1988) – none are strong enough to count as significant. Therefore, Matsumoto et al. (2007) does not provide conclusive evidence that IQ predicts intercultural adjustment.

Another study with a sample of 102 international students in New Zealand (Ward, Fischer, Lam, & Hall, 2009, Study 3) administered a commonly used measure of IQ, the Raven’s Progressive Matrices test, along with two measures of intercultural adjustment (the Sociocultural Adaptation Scale and the Academic Adaptation Scale) and two measures of general well-being (satisfaction with life and depression). Ward et al. found no significant correlation between IQ and the adaptation measures, range  $r(102) = -.07$  to  $-.01$ . With a different indicator of IQ and different measures of cultural adaptation, this study again provides no evidence for a relationship. Although one must be careful drawing conclusions from null effects in studies with small samples, the evidence to date suggests that general intelligence is not a strong predictor of intercultural adjustment. Given the traditional presumption that second-culture learning is largely a matter of studying facts and puzzling through unfamiliar experiences, the finding that IQ does not help adjustment is surprising.

**2.2.3.3. Emotional intelligence.** The aptitude of emotional intelligence was proposed as a set of “mental processes involving emotional information,” including (a) appraising and expressing emotions in the self and others, (b) regulating emotions in the self and others, and (c) using emotions in adaptive ways” (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, pp. 190–191). It emerged from a long tradition of efforts to measure social aptitudes or social intelligence (Thurstone, 1938). Unlike IQ, which refers to people’s ability to process information cognitively through reason and logic, emotional intelligence (EQ) refers to people’s ability to process affect and emotion in a socially appropriate manner. Salovey and colleagues (Mayer et al., 2003) developed a reliable and valid competence test (the MSCEIT) that assesses accuracy of recognizing facial expressions of basic emotions and of reasoning about their typical antecedents and consequences. EQ is typically uncorrelated or weakly correlated with IQ (e.g.,  $r$ ’s =  $-.04$  to  $.15$ ; Ang et al., 2007, pp. 349–350).

As the concept of EI was popularized by Goleman (1995) and others, its definition expanded to encompass individual differences that foster well-being and success, even if these strengths do not have their effects through processing information about emotions. These broad trait constructs of EI were operationalized with self-report inventories such as the TEIQu (Perrides and Furnham, 2003). Although the evidence falls short of the hype in the popular press, some evidence shows that trait EI measures work above and beyond IQ for predicting performance outcomes, such as academic performance (e.g., Petrides, Frederickson, & Furnham, 2004), job performance (e.g., Lam & Kirby, 2002), and leadership effectiveness (e.g., Wong & Law, 2002). While these broader scales seemingly have predictive validity, their shortcoming is discriminant validity. Tests revealed that the TEIQu correlates  $-.7$  with neuroticism and  $.7$  with extraversion, indicating complete overlap with other personality characteristics, as this is the same level at which different personality inventories for these dimensions (the NEO and the BFI) correlate with each other (Meyer et al., 2008). Trait EI measures appear to be simply new labels for familiar noncognitive dimensions of individual differences in personality.

Competence tests of emotional intelligence are preferred to self-report assessments as people might often not have insight into how they process emotional information. However, other problems arise with competence tests. The MSCEIT involves answering abstract questions about emotions, so it loads heavily on IQ. An alternative approach to competence testing is based on the situational judgment paradigm (MacCann & Roberts, 2008). In situational judgment tests, participants are presented with concrete situations and asked how to handle each situation effectively (McDaniel, Hartman, Whetzel, & Grubb, 2007). Situational judgment measures of EQ predict medical students' performance above and beyond IQ and admissions aptitude tests in courses on interpersonal communication and sensitivity (targeting bedside manner) but not in the remainder of their classes on medicine per se (Libbrecht, Lievens, Carette, & Côté, 2014). These findings are important scientifically and practically, even if they fall short of exaggerated popular claims that EQ is the key to work and school success.

As with IQ, only a few studies have examined the influence of emotional intelligence on expatriate adjustment. A study of Taiwanese managers working in China found that managers' emotional intelligence predicted their intercultural adjustment and organizational commitment (Lii & Wong, 2008). A survey of international students in New Zealand (Ward et al., 2009, Study 2) found that EQ (measured using Schutte et al.'s, 1998, scale) predicted general cultural adjustment but not academic adjustment. It also predicted subjective life satisfaction. While initial evidence suggests that EQ correlates with expatriate adjustment, satisfaction and performance, it is not clear whether these associations reflect general influences of EQ or something specific about EQ and intercultural adaptation. It is certainly not clear that these effects reflect an effect of EQ on intercultural learning.

2.2.3.4. Cultural intelligence. Another social aptitude proposed in recent management research is cultural intelligence (Earley & Ang, 2003). Cultural intelligence (CQ) is conceptualized as four dimensions of ability relevant to intercultural effectiveness: cognitive (e.g., "I know the legal and economic systems of other cultures"), metacognitive (e.g., "I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I use when interacting with people of different cultural backgrounds"), motivational (e.g., "I am confident that I can socialize with locals in a culture that is unfamiliar to me"), and behavioral (e.g., "I change my verbal behavior (e.g., accent, tone) when a cross-cultural interaction requires it"). Individuals higher on overall CQ are more likely to make culturally appropriate behavioral attributions, perform better in multi-cultural work settings, show better adjustment in a foreign country, and negotiate better in multi-cultural teams, among other outcomes (e.g., Ang & van Dyne, 2008; Ang et al., 2007; Earley & Ang, 2003; Imai & Gelfand, 2010; Janssens & Brett, 2006; Templer, Tay, & Chandrasekar, 2006).

The various dimensions of CQ have found to be correlated with different dimensions of EQ ( $r$ 's =  $.14-.41$ ,  $p$ 's <  $.01$ ; Ang et al., 2007, p. 349) but CQ predicted intercultural adjustment outcomes above and beyond EQ. CQ and IQ were found to be uncorrelated in both an American sample and a Singaporean sample ( $r$ 's =  $-.01-.07$ ,  $ns$ ; Ang et al., 2007, pp. 349–350).

Do these correlations with intercultural effectiveness reflect that these dimensions foster intercultural learning? Let us consider each dimension, in turn. The cognitive dimension, knowledge of other cultures such as languages, would likely foster greater learning from experiences abroad (e.g., Black et al., 1991). Expatriates who have developed complex cognitive structures regarding the home and host cultures prior to interactions should be able to learn more effectively from host nationals and better integrate such new information (Osland & Bird, 2000; Sanchez, Spector, & Cooper, 2000).

The motivational dimension (which taps self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation) associates with overall adjustment (Templer et al., 2006) and expatriate work performance (Chen, Kirkman, Kim, Farh, & Tangirala, 2010). Such associations may reflect third variables, as self-efficacy often is based on the past experience of competence at a task. From a theoretical perspective, a dimension that taps confidence and drive to engage the host culture should be most directly associated with outcomes that involve confidence and motivation, such as culture shock early in an overseas stay and burnout later on. While these emotional challenges may dampen cultural learning, the effects of motivational traits on the outcome variables do not necessarily run through intercultural learning.

The behavioral dimension, which taps the individual's plasticity in performing adaptive behaviors, has been found to help in intercultural negotiations. Behavioral CQ (as well as motivational CQ) has been associated with a greater use of integrative tactics (communicating one's priorities between two issues) and cooperative moves (expressing enthusiasm for working together; Imai & Gelfand, 2010). People who are behaviorally flexible likely

have an advantage in nonverbal signals used to build relationships, setting others at ease, showing appreciation to a host, showing respect to superordinates and demonstrating authority to subordinates. Past research has not probed how people learn these subtleties, but if the process involves trial and error variation, more behaviorally flexible people would have an advantage.

The metacognitive dimension, which taps the individual's awareness, monitoring and control of culture-based assumptions and inferences, predicts intercultural collaboration and trust development. Among MBA students working in culturally diverse teams, metacognitive CQ (and cognitive and behavioral CQ but not motivational CQ) was associated with higher levels of trust toward and from peers (Rockstuhl & Ng, 2008). Evidence from network surveys, peer-rated surveys and lab experiments converge to show that metacognitive CQ predicted higher levels of creative collaboration in intercultural relationships and this relationship is mediated by greater development of affective trust in these relationships (Chua, Morris, & Mor, 2012). Intracultural creative collaboration was not associated with metacognitive CQ, suggesting that the mechanism is distinct to challenges of intercultural interactions rather than reflecting the general benefits of self-awareness. An experimental manipulation found that the effect on creative collaboration depends on personal interaction; when people from different cultures were given no chance to speak personally before collaborating, high metacognition did not help. This suggests that its effects come from more sensitive interactions that yield trust and ultimately better collaboration.

Overall, CQ research has widened the set of strengths that are studied as antecedents to expatriate effectiveness. However, as with EQ and personality research, the evidence consists largely of correlations from cross-sectional surveys, without all the controls and mediating variables that would be needed to fully isolate the causal mechanism involved. A major limitation of this research is its reliance on self-report assessments, which enable false reporting, rather than competence tests. Also, research teams using different sets of items observe different factor structures (e.g., Ang et al., 2007; Thomas et al., 2008; Van Dyne et al., 2012). CQ research has not tested theories of how the dimensions combine and interact to produce cultural competence, so at this point it is more of a list of strengths than a model of intercultural functioning. While dimensions such as metacognition seem to have their effects through helping people learn from interactions, the precise learning processes involved have not been thoroughly probed.

#### 2.2.4. Summary

The literature on expatriate adjustment provides interesting clues about how people learn new cultures that complements insights from the more longstanding literature on immigrants. Since the classic theories of cultural shock, this literature has emphasized the emotional challenge of adjusting to a new culture. Whereas research on immigrants indicates that exposure to heritage-culture cues can undermine one's efforts to gain fluency in a second language, research on expatriates counters that reminders of home can soothe feelings of

insecurity. While there is a point to immersive learning environments, occasional tastes of home can embolden expatriates who are struggling with insecurity to reach out and engage with the host culture.

The survey literature on antecedents of adjustment has discovered situational factors (cultural distance, family adjustment, organizational support) and personal factors (personality traits and emotional and cultural intelligence) that predict dimensions of intercultural adjustment such as social, work/school, and general satisfaction. While it is presumed that intercultural learning is critical to these adjustment outcomes, few studies have measured learning per se. Adjustment depends on gaining knowledge of the host culture, of course, but also upon the expatriate's emotional strengths and on the objective challenges of their job and supports from their organization and their significant others. While these findings help in selecting people for expat positions, they are relatively weak in overall predictiveness, suggesting omission of important factors, moderating conditions, and mediating variables (cf. Harrison, Shaffer, & Bhaskar-Shrinivas, 2004; Takeuchi, Tesluk, Yun, & Lepak, 2005). These findings are less helpful for designing expatriate training programs, because it is hard to know which antecedents have their effects through learning as opposed to other mechanisms. Hence, this survey research provides little insight into the underlying processes of cultural learning that can be harnessed to better promote learning before and during assignments (cf. Meziar & Scandura, 2005). As with findings about immigrant identification, the outcome variables of self-reported adjustment and job/school performance are somewhat removed from learning itself.

In our next section, we review research from research programs using primarily laboratory methods to probe learning processes, and we build a four-fold taxonomy of learning processes that are relevant to acquiring a second culture.

### 2.3. Learning processes

The journey of learning another culture can extend over many years, so it should not be surprising that learning occurs through different processes at different points along the voyage. While every intercultural journey is different, and there is no fixed order in which types of learning must necessarily take place, it is likely that some processes typically figure more prominently early in the journey and others later on. We posit the following four kinds of learning process:

- Studying*, internalizing facts as declarative knowledge from books or classes;
- Attributional Reasoning*, tracing observed behaviors to intentions and causes;
- Social Learning*, imitating the ways role models behave in situations; and
- Conditioning*, trying different behaviors and repeating the ones that get rewarded.

In this section, we draw on recent findings to propose how each of these learning processes functions in the internalization and fine-tuning of cultural knowledge, noting their possible relevance to antecedents of cultural learning such as cultural intelligence.

### 2.3.1. Studying

The first stage of learning another culture for most people is studying, internalizing knowledge from books or schooling. Studying is well suited to acquiring the basic facts of language, history, society and etiquette that are needed as a base for navigating as learners, and is the mainstay of cultural training sessions, touristic guidebooks, and exchange student orientations (Yamazaki & Kayes, 2004). Training for businesspeople and students also often involves the presenting of findings from cross-cultural research, such as country differences in values, communication styles, and ethical judgments (Osland & Bird, 2000). Related to studying is learning by asking locals or seasoned expats to explain the culture. While such conversations over dinner are less tedious than studying guidebooks, it is still a matter of internalizing abstract propositions about the culture. Of course, many situational nuances and subcultural variations are missed by the generalizations of the classroom, guidebook or dinner table. The generalizations with which a culture is represented can be a useful starting point for learning the complexity of lived culture or they can be unfortunate stopping points.

### 2.3.2. Attributional reasoning

In addition to studying, learning a culture involves reading people and situations in order to interpret behaviors and interactions. In everyday life, we constantly make sense of other people's behavior through attributional reasoning, comparing different episodes to diagnose beliefs, motives and intentions and ultimately personality traits and situational constraints and provocations (Jones & Harris, 1967). Much research has revealed the important role of attributional reasoning for managers in the workplace who must diagnose problems and evaluate performance by tracing an employee's behavior to properties of the person, the situation, or the relationship between people (Eberly, Holley, Johnson, & Mitchell, 2011).

Attributional reasoning is an important means of learning about cultural norms. Cultural norms are a type of situational attribution. To impute these cultural norms from observed behaviors, the expatriate first has to get beyond the bias of attributing actions to dispositions of the actor (Ross, 1977; Storti, 1990), the worst offenders being those of us from Western individualistic cultures little accustomed to thinking about social constraints on behavior (Morris & Peng, 1994). An important cue to expatriates in diagnosing norms is the consensus with which locals, or a particular category of locals, act in a given situation. When many locals respond in the same way, then attributing to personality becomes less compelling. The longer the newcomer's experience in the host culture, the greater the likelihood of noticing such patterns of consensus that reflect a cultural norm.

Another important cue to expats may be surprise. First, surprising behavior in an unfamiliar setting elicits negative affective reactions (Brislin, 1981), which trigger deliberate, analytic reasoning. Second, when an expat feels surprised but notices that locals are not surprised this likely indicates that locals have a different cultural norm. Notice that this process of cultural learning involves making comparisons between cultures. For this reason, it is likely an important learning process for newly arrived expatriates who can compare their observations in the new environment with their fresh memories of home.

### 2.3.3. Social learning

Becoming competent in another culture involves not only memorizing facts about its institutions and customs, and inferring the goals and constraints guiding people's behaviors in routine events, but also it involves learning how to perform those actions, mastering the moves of its social dances. Social learning theory (e.g., Bandura, 1977) holds that people learn most things from childhood onwards through imitating the behavior of others, role models. Recent social psychology research highlights that this is largely unconscious process. People unconsciously mirror or mimic the behaviors of the people they interact with (Chartrand & Bargh, 1999; Heyes, 2005). When expatriates unintentionally picked up mannerism of host locals (e.g., an Australian accent, a Gallic shrug), this may reflect a nonconscious process through which mirroring begets new habits. We "catch" behaviors from others around us through implicit social learning.

Recent cultural psychology research provides some indirect evidence for social learning of a second culture. First studies found that exposing people to interpersonal situations from other cultures induces some of the psychological tendencies characteristic of the culture. Self-esteem and self-enhancing behaviors are much more subdued in Japan than in the West (Heine, Lehman, Markus, & Kitayama, 1999). So when Americans imagine being in everyday Japanese situations they begin to feel more self-critical, and when Japanese imagine being in everyday American situations they begin to feel more self-enhancing (Kitayama, Markus, Matsumoto, & Norasakunkit, 1997). Likewise, studies of expatriates suggest that they may pick up the tendencies characteristic of the society they are visiting. Japanese expats after several months in Canada show an increase in self-esteem, whereas Canadians expats in Japan show a decrease in self-esteem (Heine & Lehman, 2004). While this study cannot discern why expats changed, it seems likely that people notice the behaviors of people around them (American boasting, Japanese self-deprecation) and adjust their habits toward these norms.

Cultural psychologists have recently studied intercultural social learning in the laboratory. Savani, Morris, Naidu, Kumar, and Berlia (2011) sampled experiences of everyday events involving an influence attempt from college students in India and the US. Content analyses of these *influence situations* revealed that in India, people typically attempted to influence friends and family with the other person's interest in mind, whereas in the US, people typically attempted to influence others with

self-interested motives. Another study confirmed an obvious implication of this – in the influence situations sampled from India, the best decision is usually to accommodate to influence attempts, whereas in the influence situations sampled from the US, the best decision is usually to resist the influence attempt. Both Indian and American participants exposed to the situations (with their origins obscured) showed this pattern of judgments. In a final study, new participants were exposed to a series of 100 influence situations in a long session (50 India-sourced, 50 US-sourced), and they were asked to take the role of the influence target in each decision and decide whether to accommodate or resist. Not surprisingly, participants (from both countries) accommodated more in India-sourced situations than US-sourced situations. Also, Indian participants were generally more likely to accommodate than Americans, likely reflecting their cultural defaults or norms. However, strikingly, these biases converged across trials: As US participants encountered more and more India-sourced episodes featuring altruistic influencers, their predisposition to resist relaxed; as Indian participants encountered more and more American-sourced situations featuring selfish influencers, their predisposition to accommodate broke down.

Social learning is likely particularly important for learning the complex sequences of behavior called for in social institutions and routine events. “Scripts” are procedural knowledge of the sequences of actions expected in a setting (e.g., dining at a restaurant, withdrawing money from a bank, running a meeting, delegating to administrative staff; Morris & Murphy, 1990; Schank & Abelson, 1977). People learn these sequences by observing the actions of another person who they observe succeed in the situation. For a relatively new expatriate, much cultural learning likely occurs through imitating the behavior of locals or more seasoned expats. Some cultural newcomers bluff their way through social interactions by imitating the actions of those around them, even if they do not fully understand the meanings of those actions (Black & Mendenhall, 1990) – an approach corresponding to low cognitive CQ but high behavioral CQ.

While intercultural social learning calls for more theory and evidence, there has been extensive theorizing and research about the role of culture and social learning in human evolution. Whereas other species learn primarily through first-hand trial-and-error learning, *homo sapiens* learn primarily through imitating others (Tomasello, 1994). Human abilities to impute intentions, beliefs and desires to others help us imitate others’ intended actions rather than their literal behaviors and also to instruct others. This capacity for knowledge sharing meant that human innovations tended to become widely shared within a tribe and to be transmitted across generations. By contrast, in groups of other primates, innovations spread inconsistently and only locally and get lost within a few generations. Given the theorized central role of social learning in human’s ability to learn culture, it would be odd if social learning did not also play a large role in learning a second culture.

Social learning processes are also central to the leading account of cultural evolution, dual inheritance theory

(Boyd, 1985; Boyd & Richerson, 1996). It posits that people adopt practices through two basic forms of social learning: imitating the most frequent behavior in their population and emulating the behavior of the prestigious/successful exemplars. While a parsimonious account of how people inherit practices from their primary culture, these heuristics of their primary society and culture, these heuristics may be too simple to suffice for learning a foreign culture, as imitation only works with the right reference group and emulation depends on the right role model.<sup>1</sup>

#### 2.3.4. Conditioning

While copying another person’s behavior can provide a rough sense of how to conduct oneself in a foreign context, finding the optimal approach requires trial and error learning from feedback. In everyday interactions, people’s actions get rewarded or not depending on whether their goal was achieved. Another layer of reinforcement comes from interpersonal sanctioning for appropriateness or inappropriateness, which might be in the form of explicit words or in the form of subtle differences in how others treat the individual afterward. Did they smile or frown? Did they withdraw or draw closer? Explicit or implicit

<sup>1</sup> The first social learning heuristic posited in dual inheritance theory rule is that individuals tend to “preferentially adopt the cultural traits that are most frequent in the population” which works because “the frequency of a trait among the individuals within the population provides information about the trait’s adaptiveness” (Henrich & Boyd, 1998, p. 219). Of course, much social psychology evidence documents a reflexive mental bias in the direction of acting and thinking in line with the majority (Sherif, 1936) and this aspect of psychology perpetuates group norms, including cultural patterns. That said, the evidence indicates people attend to reference groups, not the entire population; they conform to a salient, immediate group even when its majority behavior contradicts what most people in the broader community would be assumed to do (Asch, 1951).

While the heuristic of imitating the frequent behavior in ones group explains how people relate to their primary society and culture, but does it explain how they learn a second culture? Can expats find adaptive ways to conduct themselves by imitating the most frequent behaviors in the population? Many common behaviors in a society (entering Mosques to pray) might be considered inappropriate for expats, so expats would be ill-served by imitating them. The issue of focusing on a relevant reference group, important in any kind of cultural learning, seems even more crucial for expats learning a second culture, so simply imitating what is frequent in the population or the immediate environment does not work.

The second social learning heuristic in dual inheritance theory is emulation of the prestigious or successful (Henrich & Gil-White, 2001). “Natural selection favored social learners who could evaluate potential models and copy the most successful among them. . . . This generated a preference for models who seem generally ‘popular’ (Henrich & Gil-White, 2001, p. 165). There is experimental evidence that people automatically track prestige. Even 3- and 4-year old children were twice as likely to attend to a target person that others had previously attended to versus previously ignored (Chudek, Heller, Birch, & Henrich, 2012). People gaze more at individuals who have high informal social status in a group than people who have low informal status (Boulsham, Cheng, Tracy, Henrich, & Kingstone, 2010). By tracking who gets attention we know who has status and who to emulate.

Copying the individuals who get the most attention is a heuristic that could be applied when trying to learn a second culture. However, if the person who gets the most attention is the village elder or the managing director of national division, the behaviors exhibited by the prestigious person may not be ones considered appropriate for the newcomer to enact. Like the conformity heuristic, the prestige heuristic is simple to define but not so simple to implement in second culture learning.

1193 feedback in interactions enables learning through condi-  
1194 tioning – the association between an action and a situation  
1195 increases with positive reinforcement and decreases with  
1196 negative reinforcement.

1197 Some preliminary evidence from conditioning experi-  
1198 ments suggests that people learn cultural norms through  
1199 conditioning. Some indirect evidence comes from studies  
1200 of cognitive changes in expatriates that seem to go beyond  
1201 what could happen through social learning. Striking  
1202 studies have found cultural differences in judgments of  
1203 line length. Americans are better at absolute judgments  
1204 and Japanese are better at contextualized judgments; for  
1205 example Americans are better at estimating the absolute  
1206 length and Japanese are better at estimating its length  
1207 relative to a frame. However, the accuracy patterns were  
1208 different for expatriates: Japanese studying in America for  
1209 a year to show the characteristic American pattern of  
1210 accuracy on absolute judgment task; Americans studying  
1211 in Japan show the characteristic Japanese pattern of  
1212 accuracy on the contextualized judgment tasks (Kitayama,  
1213 Duffy, Kawamura, & Larsen, 2003). While the study cannot  
1214 tell how these differences come about, it is plausible that  
1215 extended exposure to interpersonal situations demanding  
1216 attention to context conditioned the American expats in  
1217 Japan to think more like Japanese people, and vice versa for  
1218 Japanese expats in the US.

1219 In recent preliminary work (Savani et al., 2014), we  
1220 simulated the expat experience by presenting participants  
1221 with series of influence episodes from another culture,  
1222 asking them to make decisions about whether to  
1223 accommodate or resist, and then providing feedback about  
1224 whether they made the right decision (“Correct” or  
1225 “Wrong” based on the opinions of local raters). The modal  
1226 correct response in the other-culture set differed from that  
1227 in participants’ own culture (accommodation was advis-  
1228 able in 92% of Indian situations but only 48% of American  
1229 situations, as judged by respective locals). Therefore, when  
1230 exposed to situations from the other culture, Indians  
1231 would have to learn about situations in which one does  
1232 better by resisting, whereas Americans would have to learn  
1233 about situations in which one does better by accommo-  
1234 dating. We found that people can learn from noisy  
1235 feedback to make decisions more like those of locals. This  
1236 could be through nonconscious conditioning or through  
1237 conscious testing of hypotheses about the other culture.

1238 One strategy for revealing the mechanism involved  
1239 changing the task by delaying feedback. As anyone who  
1240 has trained an animal knows, conditioning requires that  
1241 the feedback immediately follow the behavior. But delay  
1242 does not disrupt explicit learning processes, such as  
1243 hypothesis testing. Preliminary evidence suggests that  
1244 participants failed to learn from the expat situation  
1245 simulation when the feedback was briefly delayed (Savani  
1246 et al., 2014), pointing to a role of implicit learning  
1247 processes.

1248 Another strategy for revealing the mechanism involved  
1249 individual difference measures. If the mechanism is  
1250 implicit conditioning, then learning should be predicted  
1251 by implicit processing aptitudes rather than by explicit  
1252 processing aptitudes. Across several studies (Savani et al.,  
1253 2014), we measured implicit aptitudes using the artificial

1254 grammar learning task (Reber, 1967, measures the ability  
1255 to notice ordering of sub-strings within larger strings) and  
1256 the probabilistic classification task (Knowlton, Squire, &  
1257 Gluck, 1994, measures picking up probabilistic associa-  
1258 tions between stimuli and outcomes). We measured  
1259 explicit aptitude or IQ using the Raven’s progressive  
1260 matrices test and their explicit learning ability, i.e., the  
1261 ability to learn through conscious reasoning. We consis-  
1262 tently found that implicit aptitude predicted Americans’  
1263 learning to accommodate when exposed to Indian situa-  
1264 tions, and Indians’ learning *not* to accommodate when  
1265 exposed to American situations. Notably, IQ did *not* predict  
1266 learning in this task. This last finding is consistent with the  
1267 previously reviewed findings of no association between IQ  
1268 and expatriate adaptation.

1269 This evidence for implicit conditioning as a mechanism  
1270 of intercultural learning raises the question of whether  
1271 effects of other individual differences related to intercultural  
1272 success run through conditioning. Recall that  
1273 research on CQ has found that people’s tendency toward  
1274 cultural metacognition predicts success in intercultural  
1275 trust and collaboration (Chua et al., 2012). Could this be  
1276 because cultural metacognition enables implicit learning  
1277 from social interactions? Morris and Savani (2014) found  
1278 preliminary evidence that individuals higher in metacog-  
1279 nitive CQ have steeper learning curves in the expat  
1280 simulator task.

### 2.3.5. Conclusion

1281 We have delineated four types of learning process  
1282 involved in the acquisition of a second-culture, which may  
1283 figure differentially across phases of the learning journey  
1284 and across domains of knowledge. We have related these  
1285 to antecedent individual differences noted in past correla-  
1286 tional research with immigrants and expatriates in order to  
1287 speculate about learning processes that may intervene  
1288 between these antecedents and the criterion measures.

1289 A key thesis in our argument is that second-culture  
1290 learning involves not only conscious, effortful, explicit  
1291 learning processes such as studying and attributional  
1292 reasoning but also nonconscious, automatic, implicit  
1293 learning processes, such as social learning and condition-  
1294 ing. Intercultural research and applied practices of selec-  
1295 tion and training can benefit a lot from the insights in the  
1296 past few decades of social psychology about the ubiquitous  
1297 role of implicit processes. Intriguing evidence suggests that  
1298 implicit training may be able to bring people closer to  
1299 native-like fluency. Recent evidence from studies of  
1300 language training have contrasted explicit training (gram-  
1301 mar-focused classroom lessons) and implicit training  
1302 (immersive exposure) and found they differentially affect  
1303

<sup>2</sup> High metacognitive CQ may be akin to a learning goal rather than performance goals with regard to cultural patterns (Porter, Webb, & Gogus, 2010). In achievement contexts, people with a learning goal are more likely to vary their approach and adapt (Gully & Phillips, 2005) and persist in the face of negative feedback and uncertainty (Dweck, 1986; Porter et al., 2010). Thus, people high in cultural metacognition may vary their behavior to get more feedback and may notice more of the feedback they receive in social interactions to learn the appropriate situation-action-outcome contingencies.

neural (ERP) measures. Implicit training results in responses to syntactic violations that are more like those of native speakers (Morgan-Short, Steinhauer, Sanz, & Ullman, 2012). By recognizing the differences between these learning processes rather than lumping them together, it may be possible to develop more realistic and effective training tools. We pursue this in our final subsection below, which suggests implications of research on the processes of cultural knowledge acquisition for training.

#### 2.4. Implications for training

##### 2.4.1. Studying

How can organization best foster the studying of declarative knowledge, which provides a base for further learning? Although books and classes are the most widely used tools for learning through studying, increasingly used web-based tools provide similar information and pedagogy such as structured tutorials and quizzes that enrich declarative knowledge (e.g., [www.culturenavigator.com](http://www.culturenavigator.com)). These tutorials have many efficiency advantages over classes, and allow for a more sustained learning process.

Also internet searches of foreign documents, when combined with machine translators, enables bypassing books written for tourists in order to learn from primary sources such as newspapers and blogs. This approach enables more contextualized learning. The cultural difference between a rural village and a capital city can be as large as the difference between countries. Prospective expatriates and sojourners can use the internet to gain local knowledge about their particular foreign destination instead of relying on generalized portraits. Internet research also is more likely to provide up to date information. To stay up to date with societal, business, and organizational changes, expats can read news reports and blogs relevant to context to identify the issues and topics of current importance in the local community. In sum, new tools enable better learning from studying, reducing the chances that outdated books and classes leave learners with distorted impressions that are counterproductive to intercultural effectiveness.

##### 2.4.2. Attributional learning

Tools for training people to make culturally appropriate attributions have a long history in applied psychology (Flanagan, 1954). Much of the effort has focused on reducing problematic attributions rather than encouraging attributions that produce cultural insights. The most studied tools are called *cultural assimilators* and the goal is to nudge the novice's attributions toward those that would be made by a cultural expert (Bhawuk, 1998; Fielder et al., 1971; for a recent review, see Butterfield, Borgen, Amundson, & Maglio, 2005). The goal of this training method is to expose soon-to-be expatriates to puzzling situations that they are likely to encounter in new cultures, and to help them interpret the host nationals behavior through the hosts' cultural lens rather than through their own cultural lens.

In the first step, so called "critical incidents" are sampled by asking expatriates to describe incidents with

host nationals "that made a major difference in their attitudes or behavior toward the members of the other culture" (Fiedler, Mitchell, & Triandis, 1971, p. 97). Critical incidents thus generated are grouped into categories, often by an inductive, qualitative procedures rather than quantitative methods such as cluster analyses. Thereafter, researchers develop scenarios about intercultural interactions, each followed by a multiple-choice question asking the trainee to select his or her best explanation for the host nationals' behaviors. Of the explanations provided, most rely on cultural stereotypes or misplaced assumptions, whereas one option is the culturally appropriate explanation. Expats take the quiz and then re told which questions they answered incorrectly. The reason for the correct answer in each situation is then explained. This classroom quiz format is better than a simple guidebook, because people are motivated to learn after they have made mistakes. Like classroom quizzes, cultural assimilators are teaching methods that enable more active, motivated learning than do guidebook proscriptions about avoiding misunderstandings.

An interesting finding from cultural assimilator research in different cultures is that identifying the correct answer often requires no culture-specific knowledge but merely a non-judgmental outlook, a suspension of one's own cultural norms as a standard of judgment. As Brislin (1986, p. 216) stated, "there are extensive commonalities in the experiences of people who interact with culturally different others. These commonalities occur despite differences in the exact jobs people have, or despite differences in the exact place where the extensive intercultural interaction takes place." Brislin (1986) compiled incidents from several countries to form a culture-general attributional training tool. This finding suggests that the critical incidents method does not train individuals to learn how people in a particular culture act, but how to avoid using American culture as a lens for interpreting the actions of people from other cultures. These findings and our analysis suggest ways to improve the attributional assimilator procedure (Fiedler et al., 1971).

*Sample a broader pool of incidents.* The current method presents trainees with a narrow range of selected incidents that teach them one basic lesson: to not interpret people from other cultures as though they are American. First, while "critical incidents" are important, they are not representative of the cross-cultural interactions that an expat will have with locals. As each "critical incident" is selected because it reveals some confusing cultural difference, the overall experience may create the impression of the other culture as antipodean in its norms. This would probably contribute to stereotypes. Work on human universals suggests that any two cultures are likely similar as many ways as they differ. Also learning a culture requires understanding local-local interactions as well as well as expat-local interactions. The incidents can be selected by topic (e.g., instances of conflict at work; negotiation incidents; interactions across hierarchical levels) but need not be selected to match pre-identified prototypes. For each incident, the culturally appropriate action can then be determined by ratings of natives of that culture.

*Use immediate feedback to train through implicit learning.* While a classroom training session keyed to explicit



learning would fail if it tried to encompass too much diversity of incidents, it may also be possible to train attributions through implicit learning, which can pick up signals from more complex and noisier data. Trainees would indicate their attribution and receive feedback based on whether their selected action matches the natives' decision or not. This training procedure would simulate the process of learning by trial and error in the real world. By allowing trainees to learn some of the trial and error lessons in advance, the above procedure would help them be more prepared for the difficult everyday interactions that they are likely to encounter in the new setting. Notably, this type of trial-and-error learning is close to impossible to impart in a lecture- or book-type format that relies on verbalized rules while glossing over the heterogeneity and complexity of everyday social interactions.

*Training in use of cues.* In addition to training tools that provide feedback, cultural trainers should try to promote the cues of consensus and surprise that our analysis identified. Films that show a series of locals responding to similar situations might be a good tool for training people to use consensus information. When most locals respond the same way, a cultural norm imputation is justified. Written vignettes about surprising experiences in an early expat's experience might be an effective way to teach people to attend to their own surprise and others' surprise. Occasions when the expat is the only one surprised warrant imputing a difference in norms. Teaching students how to engage in attributional reasoning as an investigative process would be far more valuable than warning them about a finite set of critical incidents.

*Culturally mixed rather than immersive settings.* Also recall that our analysis suggests that expats can learn about cultural norms through making comparisons across cultures. Research on intercultural learning in several different paradigms has found similarly that learning from cultural exposure depends on recognizing differences, drawing contrasts between cultural traditions (Cheng, Mor, Morris, & Wallen, 2011; Leung & Chiu, 2008). This aspect of cultural learning through attributions may point to a difference between the optimal conditions for learning norms through attributional reasoning and those for other forms of cultural learning such as gaining linguistic fluency. A central premise in language training programs is total immersion, hearing only the foreign language throughout the day. This helps in making the second-language associations more accessible and habitual. However, an immersive experience of this sort does not lend itself to observing cultural differences through contrasts, so an expatriate aiming to understand the tacit rules of local's behavior may find it easier to learn in a social environment that is mixed between locals and expats.

#### 2.4.3. Social learning

Given that social learning seems to play a fundamental role in how people learn how to handle situations and solve problems, training tools that exploit this form of learning should also be emphasized. The first step of social learning is observing patterns in another culture.

Pre-departure training could assign trainees to conduct routine interactions in ethnic minority neighborhoods and make note of characteristic behavioral patterns. Films of expats and locals in the target culture could be shown, asking students to identify behavioral moves that they would need in their repertoire.

Whereas our suggested procedures for training attributional reasoning push trainees to analyze their observations in order to diagnose a behavior, the goal of social learning should be procedural knowledge, not declarative knowledge. Classes should involve observing a behavior and then performing that behavior. These sessions should be more like language classes or dance classes than seminars involving analysis and explanation. An instructor from the target culture could interact with students to guide them through the steps of a cultural script for routine events such as a business meeting or celebratory meal. Students could rehearse further by role playing with each other.

What expats need to learn through social learning is a basic repertoire of moves for getting through routine interactions. Students should be encouraged to imitate even if they do not understand all the nuances – to “fake it till you make it”. As many prospective expats are highly controlled and cerebral people, imitating little understood actions will feel uncomfortable. Training could draw on the exercises typically used at the start of acting classes to expand students' comfort zones. Training programs targeting the behavioral dimensions of CQ have adopted some acting class exercises (Earley & Mosakowski, 2004). However, the pedagogy could be improved by emphasizing the process of social learning rather than the notion of behavioral plasticity as a general strength. Not all kinds of variation in behavior are adaptive. The goal should be selection of appropriate reference groups and role models, identification of critical behavioral moves and sequences, and then practice and rehearsal so as to memorize these behaviors as automatic habits.

#### 2.4.4. Conditioning

Given that people can learn cultural norms from verbal descriptions of everyday situations that have occurred in another culture (Savani et al., 2014), there may be potential in game-like simulators of everyday interactions to train people through conditioning. These simulators would enable people to experience the reinforcements that their habitual behaviors or default decisions would evoke in a particular cultural setting. It also enables them to learn by trial and error variation of their behavior and conditioning. Research on implicit learning provides some nonobvious insights and provides suggestions about how to design intercultural conditioning training tools.

*Providing immediate feedback.* Research has found that for people to be able to nonconsciously learn from feedback, they need to receive feedback very soon after they have selected a response; introducing even a brief delay of five seconds between participants' response and their feedback disrupts implicit learning (Maddox, Ashby, & Bohil, 2003; Maddox, Ashby, Ing, & Pickering, 2004). Feedback delay similarly disrupted learning from our simulation of experiential intercultural learning (Savani

1543 et al., 2014). Given that learning in novel critical incident  
 1544 tasks occurs through the nonconscious, implicit processing  
 1545 system, it would be important that any training module  
 1546 provide trainees with immediate feedback once they have  
 1547 selected a response.

1548 *Give brief, unambiguous feedback.* Some cross-cultural  
 1549 training tools, such as the critical incidents method (Fiedler  
 1550 et al., 1971) provide participants with detailed feedback.  
 1551 This is useful in the context of training attributional  
 1552 reasoning, which is an explicit process. However, when  
 1553 training implicit processes, detailed feedback is not  
 1554 optimal. In a learning study, Maddox, Love, Glass, and  
 1555 Filoteo (2008) manipulated whether participants were  
 1556 provided with detailed feedback after each trial (e.g.,  
 1557 “Correct, that was an X” or “No, that was a Y”) or brief  
 1558 feedback (e.g., “Correct” or “No”). They found that when  
 1559 the task required implicit processing, participants per-  
 1560 formed better when they received brief feedback than  
 1561 when they received lengthier feedback. Their argument is  
 1562 that detailed feedback triggers attempts to identify  
 1563 verbalizable rules that determine the optimal response.  
 1564 However, if the learning task does not lend itself to be  
 1565 solved by such rules, then detailed feedback can hinder  
 1566 learning. Designers of such training tools are advised to  
 1567 give unambiguous but brief feedback rather than detailed  
 1568 or nuanced feedback.

1569 *Label incidents after they are presented.* In many  
 1570 expatriate training modules, participants are presented  
 1571 with lists of *do*'s and *don*'ts, actions that are appropriate  
 1572 in the other cultures and actions that are not. Typically in  
 1573 these cases, the descriptions precede the actions; partici-  
 1574 pants first see the label (e.g., “DOs”) followed by a list of  
 1575 actions (e.g., “Bow to an older person”). However, research  
 1576 has found that when learning occurs through the implicit  
 1577 learning system, presenting the label after participants  
 1578 have processed the stimuli leads to faster learning (Ashby,  
 1579 Maddox, & Bohil, 2002). Therefore, even very basic training  
 1580 tools like these would benefit by the introduction of minor  
 1581 changes that are informed by research.

1582 *Selecting for and developing relevant aptitudes.* Evidence  
 1583 from the studies of expatriates on the job and students in our  
 1584 lab simulations of intercultural learning converge in finding  
 1585 that IQ does not drive success. Instead the literature  
 1586 indicates expatriate adjustment follows from personality  
 1587 traits such as extraversion, agreeableness and openness to  
 1588 experience and to dimensions of CQ such as cultural  
 1589 metacognition. It is hard to tell from these associations  
 1590 precisely why such attributes matter, but our lab studies  
 1591 begin to elucidate this: intercultural learning from feedback  
 1592 is fostered by higher cultural metacognition (Morris &  
 1593 Savani, 2014) and by higher implicit processing ability,  
 1594 assessed by the artificial grammar learning task and the  
 1595 probabilistic classification (Savani et al., 2014). These same  
 1596 measures of implicit processing ability have been found to  
 1597 predict performance in foreign language classes, over above  
 1598 measures general cognitive aptitude (Kaufman et al., 2010).  
 1599 These dimensions of implicit aptitude and metacognition,  
 1600 rather than IQ, might be useful as selection criteria for  
 1601 deciding which of many similarly qualified candidates  
 1602 might be more suitable for expatriate assignments or for  
 1603 cultural training programs.

It also may be possible to develop implicit processing  
 aptitudes. Although advertisements about brain training  
 games are greatly overstated, recent evidence suggests  
 that fluid intelligence increases through practice on  
 difficult working memory tasks (Jaeggi, Buschkuhl,  
 Jonides, & Perrig, 2008) and cognitive flexibility may be  
 increased as function of playing intensive point-of-view  
 video games (Colzato, Van Leeuwen, Van Den Wildenberg,  
 & Hommel, 2010). Ritter et al. (2012) found that  
 experiencing unusual events in a virtual reality simulation  
 led to greater cognitive flexibility afterwards. Other  
 research finds that music training improves executive  
 functioning (Moreno et al., 2011) and that musicians have  
 greater implicit learning performance even outside of the  
 musical domain (Francois & Schön, 2011). Hence, it may be  
 that many of the personal attributes that foster cultural  
 learning can be developed, and so the development of  
 employees should begin by fostering these upstream  
 aptitudes.

Another tack in developing implicit learning may be  
 helping people feel comfortable muddling through with-  
 out having an explicit understanding. One possibility for  
 increasing people's openness to learning implicitly would  
 be to expose them to simulated environments (e.g.,  
 complex video games) in which explicit learning is very  
 difficult. The only way to learn and progress in such  
 simulated environments would be through suppressing  
 one's tendency to identify rules by conscious reasoning,  
 but instead taking in the stimuli and making decisions  
 based on one's gut feelings. The games can be designed  
 such that attempts to identify conscious rules are designed  
 to falter. To the extent that there is a similarity between  
 such simulated environments and the actual new cultural  
 environments that trainees are subsequently exposed to,  
 people might generalize the notion that “trying to  
 explicitly identify rules does not help, but keeping one's  
 eyes and ears open and going with one's gut does”.

### 3. Using cultural knowledge

Having considered how people acquire cultural knowl-  
 edge, we now turn to the question of how people utilize  
 this knowledge. As before, we review disparate literatures  
 relevant to this question, both basic social science and  
 applied management research. We draw parallels, note  
 unanswered questions, and then draw on recent work to  
 propose some of the underlying cognitive processes. Two  
 sections consider different uses of cultural knowledge:  
 using knowledge as a script for acting like locals, and using  
 it as a lens for making sense of their behavior.

#### 3.1. Scripts for acting like locals

A person who has learned the scripts of a second culture  
 is like a musician who expands her repertoire by learning a  
 new style of music. Having acquired this knowledge there  
 are different ways to use it. For example, imagine that  
 Susan grew up playing bluegrass music in Tennessee. Ever  
 since childhood, she played with her family and never  
 thought much about the choice of songs. At a wedding or a  
 funeral, they just played the tunes that welled up, its

1661 chords and lyrics ready to pour out of her, and these  
1662 automatic associations enabled her to coordinate with  
1663 other bluegrass musicians even if she had never met them  
1664 before. In recent years, she studied flamenco music in  
1665 Spain, and learned the songs for seasonal holidays,  
1666 weddings, and the like. Now Susan lives in London and  
1667 plays in pubs that cater to Spanish and American crowds,  
1668 among others. What determines which musical tradition  
1669 Susan plays on a given night? Does she play what the  
1670 audience knows best – flamenco for a Spanish crowd and  
1671 bluegrass for Americans? Or does she do the opposite,  
1672 confronting audiences with her other side? Does she mix  
1673 the two traditions for a hybrid sound?

1674 This process of drawing on two cultural repertoires to  
1675 negotiate social situations and pursue goals is studied in  
1676 several literatures that are rarely integrated. Sociolinguists  
1677 study bicultural communities in which speakers switch  
1678 codes – changing languages within the same conversation.  
1679 Management researchers study expats who accommodate  
1680 their workplace behaviors to local norms, examining how  
1681 this affects the managers as well as locals who observe it.  
1682 Both literatures suggest that switching between cultural  
1683 repertoires has complex motivational antecedents and  
1684 consequences. In the last decade, priming experiments on  
1685 bicultural individuals has also documented switching in  
1686 thought processes – switching between differing cultural  
1687 modes of perception, decision making, and behavior.  
1688 Documenting that different patterns of switching tenden-  
1689 cies are predicted by different patterns of bicultural identity  
1690 structure, this work elucidates the psychological processes  
1691 that may underlie phenomena in all three literatures.

### 1692 3.1.1. Bilingual code switching

1693 Sociolinguists use term “code switching” to refer to  
1694 alternating between different languages or dialects within  
1695 a given conversation (Heller, 1988). Linguistics tradition-  
1696 ally viewed the mixing of languages as substandard  
1697 speech, but as sociolinguists studied bilingual communi-  
1698 ties, they came to see code switches as purposeful  
1699 responses to places and people. Places or settings  
1700 sometimes require a given language, or they have features,  
1701 such as the people present, that imply the appropriateness  
1702 of a given language. For example, in many U.S. Latino  
1703 communities, children speak Spanish at home and English  
1704 at school, except at recess, when they speak Spanish or  
1705 Spanglish (Reyes, 2004). This break from English language  
1706 use occurs because recess is an informal time without the  
1707 English-enforcing teacher.

1708 Latino children speaking Spanish with their parents and  
1709 English with their teacher can be described as convergent  
1710 switching – shifting toward the language of the other  
1711 people present in a situation. Convergent shifts may reflect  
1712 the goal of clearer communication or may reflect social  
1713 goals such as putting others at ease or ingratiating oneself.  
1714 A police officer in Miami may question witnesses in  
1715 Spanish so that they understand the question better, or so  
1716 that they feel less nervous, or to convey that he is from the  
1717 Latino community, not an outsider. Giles and Byrne (1982)  
1718 posited that when speakers seek greater closeness to their  
1719 listener they converge toward the other in language,  
1720 accent, dialect, and gesture.

The opposite case is divergent switching, which involves  
shifting away from other people. Just as spies switch codes  
when discussing highly secret information (to prevent  
eavesdropping), parents switch languages when discussing  
topics they want to keep secret from their children, such as  
surprise parties or Christmas presents. Aside from the  
pragmatic goal of keeping secrets, divergent switching can  
serve social goals such as distancing oneself from a person  
or place. If the bilingual crime witness addressed in Spanish  
answered back in highly formal English – “I beg your  
pardon, officer, is there a question you’d like me to  
consider?” – this could be a way of rebuffing the officer’s  
attempt at closeness. More generally, when a speaker  
changes language, accent, dialect or gesture away from that  
associated with the people or place, they can come across as  
showing contempt or rejection (Gasiorek & Giles, 2012;  
Giles & Gasiorek, 2012).

Another reason speakers may switch between lan-  
guages is to convey closeness or distance to the topic of  
conversation. Nelson Mandela advised that negotiators  
should switch to the other side’s native tongue for a more  
emotional influence: “If you talk to a man in a language he  
understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his  
language, that goes to his heart”. Indeed, evidence shows  
that people respond more to emotional content, both  
behaviorally and physiologically, when they hear or read it  
in their mother tongue as opposed to a second language  
(Harris, Gleason, & Aycicegi, 2006). Speakers switch to the  
audience’s native language to convey a heartfelt senti-  
ment. Conversely, when speakers want to distance  
themselves from a topic, they may switch to the audience’s  
second language in order to strike a more detached,  
intellectual tone. Even moral decisions are made differ-  
ently as a function of native versus second language. Costa  
et al. (2014) found that people solving moral dilemmas in  
their second language exhibit less emotional processing  
and more utilitarian reasoning.

Emotions also influence language switching through  
processes that are less purposive and more reflexive.  
People who feel threat or stress revert to early, well-  
learned behaviors (Staw, Sandelands, & Dutton, 1981). The  
emotion overrides social motives related to people, places,  
and conversational subjects. In the aftermath of an  
accident or costly mistake, employees are likely to swear  
in their native language regardless of other factors.

Finally, switches occur when a given subject is easier to  
describe in one language than the other. In Chinese  
research labs, scientific discussions often switch into  
English because they involve concepts that everyone has  
a better lexicon for in the second language. Technical  
topics may be easier to discuss in the language of schooling  
(Blom & Gumperz, 1972). More briefly, bilinguals switch to  
a language for a particular concept if it has words or fixed  
expressions dedicated to the concept that the other  
language lacks. Sometimes, people also switch for the  
sake of upholding traditions, such as to recite a toast or  
company slogan in the original language, so that the  
gesture resonates with tradition.

In sum, code switching can reflect situational norms,  
social motives such as creating distance or closeness to an  
audience, emotional reflexes, convenience or tradition.

### 3.1.2. Behavioral accommodation

Whereas linguistic code switching occurs in interactions between members of the same bicultural community, another kind of switching occurs when newcomers or visitors to a country interact with locals – namely, accommodation of one's behaviors to local norms. The everyday social etiquette of any given culture involves some behaviors that may be impolite or unacceptable in another culture (Gudykunst, 1983; O'Connell, Lord, & O'Connell, 1990). So adapting one's habitual behaviors can be a way to avoid creating offense or discomfort. Expatriates do not have to know the host culture well in order to adapt some of their behaviors; even a first time traveler to Japan can learn to bow instead of hugging, kissing, or shaking hands.

The literature on accommodation has a different emphasis than that on code switching. While researchers presume it ensues when people want to get closer to their audience, little research has investigated this antecedent. Another antecedent of expat accommodation (or its opposite) that parallels the literature on code switching is stress (Oberg, 1960). Stress or anxiety is thought to interfere with the performance of accommodating one's behavior to local norms (Weldon, Carlston, Rissman, Slobodin, & Triandis, 1975). The literature has not studied reverse accommodation, although some qualitative accounts of culture-shock describe withdrawal and polarization of behavior away from the host culture. The antecedent conditions and forms of behavioral accommodation remain under-researched.

The question that has received research is the consequences of accommodation. Consistent with the idea that convergent switching serves the goal of closeness, accommodation researchers build on similarity-attraction theory (Byrne, 1971; Heider, 1958) to argue that expatriates get closer to locals through accommodating (Black et al., 1991). By avoiding faux pas that violate local norms, accommodators escape the negative repercussions (Earley & Ang, 2003; Osland, Bird, Delano, & Jacob, 2000; Pornpitakpan, 1999). More generally, accommodation by bringing one's behavior closer to that of one's interactant fosters positive relationship characteristics, such as rapport, respect and trust (Leary, 1995; Montagliani & Giacalone, 1998; Schlenker & Weigold, 1992). Studies show that trust is critical to the success of intercultural negotiations (Kramer, 2010) and collaborations (Chua et al., 2012).

Nonetheless, accommodation can also evoke some negative reactions, especially when it comes across as extreme or blatant. Expats in Singapore who accommodate to the colloquialism of Singaporean English (e.g., ending sentences with "...la") are judged negatively by locals (Platt & Weber, 1984). Accommodation inspires distrust when it comes across as ingratiation (Jones & Wortman, 1973). Recall that the code-switching literature finds that speaking in one's native tongue connotes more sincerity. Conversely then, adhering to another culture's norms can appear insincere. Given that integrity is a standard for judging trustworthiness, acts of accommodation may reduce intercultural trust (see Morris, 2011).

Another concern is that accommodation may threaten locals' social identity. Social identity theory suggests that

people expect different behaviors from outgroup members than ingroup members (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Positive identifications with the ingroup are sustained through looking for valued ways in which the ingroup differs, dimensions of positive distinctiveness that support one's positive evaluation of the ingroup. Intergroup similarity can threaten group distinctiveness (Brown, 1984). Based on the social identity argument, Francis (1991) investigated Americans' responses to accommodation by a Japanese sales team. Japanese business norms (e.g., conservative business suits, indirect gestures, bowing) differ from American (e.g., less formal attire, direct gestures, hand shaking) in many ways. In the role of a U.S. purchasing agent, participants read about a sales presentation by Japanese visitors with different degrees of accommodation. In one of three conditions: no accommodation to American norms, moderate accommodation (e.g., less formal suits, shaking hands lightly while bowing), and extreme accommodation (e.g., informal attire, firm handshakes). American observers evaluated the Japanese team most positively in the moderate-switching condition not the extreme-accommodation condition. Pornpitakpan (1999) explored the robustness of this curvilinear effect by exposing Thais and Japanese to four levels of adaptation by visiting American managers. For Thais, attraction monotonically increased with each degree of adaptation. For Japanese, it plateaued at moderate rather than extreme adaptation. Perceived threat to social identity was measured by asking whether the Americans' behavior violated their social identity. Perceived threat was low and hardly varied across conditions.

Given that extreme accommodation does not always reduce attraction and the audience's social identity does not seem to be threatened, what is it that underlies negative reactions to accommodation? Thomas and Toyne (1995) replicated Francis's (1991) curvilinear effect and found that substantial accommodation was judged as uncomplimentary to the locals, perhaps because seeing foreigners mimicking one's customs makes one feel stereotyped. Thomas and Ravlin (1995) presented video clips of the interactions between a Japanese manager and American subordinates, varying whether the manager exhibited stereotypical behaviors of the manager's culture (Japan) or the subordinates' culture (US). When the manager accommodated, he was perceived as more effective managerially. Nonetheless, the manager's behavior was attributed to an attempt to fit in rather than as expressing the manager's internal preferences, and this attribution reduced trust in the manager. The threshold for judging accommodative behaviors to be sincere efforts at connection rather than manipulative ploys likely depends on the level of prior suspicion, which in turn undoubtedly depends on the past relationship between the two cultural groups. Recent work finds that it also depends on the ideology or mindset of the perceiver. Cho, Morris, and Dow (2014) found that multiculturalists (who believe cultures are categorical and independent) dislike accommodators because they judge them to be betraying their own cultures, whereas polyculturalists (who believe cultures are overlapping and interacting) like accommodators because they judge them as highly able.

Other research on expatriate accommodation examines negative consequences for the accommodator (Molinsky, 2007). Managers may feel a threat to their identity when their personal values conflict with the behaviors demanded by the local culture (Baumeister, Shapiro, & Tice, 1985). Further, they may experience negative emotions such as embarrassment, anxiety, and guilt when acting in ways that differ from their usual habits. Extensions of this line of theorizing (Maertz, Hassan, & Magnusson, 2009) applied cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957) to elucidate the psychological toll of accommodation, also positing tactics through which accommodators may reduce the dissonance. Molinsky (2013a,b) recommends that accommodators perform hybrid behaviors that incorporate some local mannerisms while also maintaining some consistency with their typical behaviors. Overall, a moderate level of accommodation seems the best tack for gaining its benefits while minimizing its downsides.

Another line of research looks at the longer term effects of accommodating when abroad on creativity. One way of resolving dissonance between conflicting values is developing more complex beliefs and thought patterns; that is, greater integrative complexity (Tadmor & Tetlock, 2006). Tadmor et al. (2009) found that expatriates identified with both their home culture and their host culture (who thus face conflicts between the two value sets) are most likely to develop elevated integrative complexity. Similarly studies find that people who report having accommodated to local norms in past stays abroad do better in creative problem solving upon return (Maddux & Galinsky, 2009; Maddux, Adam, & Galinsky, 2010). Other studies suggest that creativity gains are more likely for individuals high in Openness and for foreign stays that were chosen rather than imposed (Cho & Morris, 2014) and under conditions that do not induce need for cognitive closure (NFCC) or existential threat (Leung & Chiu, 2010). All told, these findings suggest that creativity gains from foreign stays depends on dispositions and states that affect the expatriate's willingness to accommodate and how much of the local culture that they learn. Other research finds that drawing on this foreign knowledge for creative solutions once home depends on home country factors (Wang, 2013). Drawing on foreign knowledge is less likely if there is xenophobic sentiment, not surprisingly. It also depends on more proximal factors such the strength of the individuals' ties to the local professional community, their degree of workplace autonomy, and whether their colleagues have greater international experience than they do. Creative suggestions that draw from foreign ideas always involve some social risks, and returnees' propensity to propose them depends on factors relevant to these perceived costs.

### 3.1.3. Bicultural frame switching

A third literature about how individuals draw on dual cultural legacies to adjust their behavior to the cultural context focuses on judgment and decision making. Bicultural individuals, who are fluent and practiced in two cultures, automatically switch between two sets of culturally associated biases in response to situational cues.

Bicultural Hong Kong students exposed to images of Chinese culture, compared to those exposed to neutral images, subsequently attributed behavior to more situational social pressures, whereas those exposed to images of Western culture attributed more to internal personality dispositions (Hong et al., 2000; for replications see Hong, Benet-Martinez, Chiu, & Morris, 2003; Morris & Mok, 2011). This cultural priming effect has also been documented with other kinds of biculturals, such as the children of Greek immigrants to Holland (Verkuypen & Pouliasi, 2002).

The cultural priming process affects not only social judgments but also economic decisions involving preferences associated with cultural norms. Singaporean participants exposed to Western images (Singaporean images) become more likely to choose to pay for one-day delivery instead of slower delivery, consistent with adherence to Western versus Chinese preference norms (Chen, Ng, & Rao, 2005). Benjamin, Choi, and Strickland (2010) varied whether Asian-American participants were asked demographic questions about languages spoken in their family; this prime of Asian identity affected their subsequent intertemporal choices, inducing more patient preferences for larger, later payoffs rather than smaller, sooner payoffs.

Finally, just as expatriate accommodation has been linked to creativity, so too has bicultural frame switching. Cheng, Sanchez-Burks, and Lee (2008) found that biculturals higher in identity integration, who do more assimilative switching, are better at tasks that require both sets of cultural knowledge, such as designing fusion cuisine menus. Although the measures from their study cannot definitively prove the underlying process, they argued that identity integration carries an advantage in gaining simultaneous access to both pools of cultural knowledge so that they can be employed in a fusion design task.

In sum, comparing the three "switching" literatures reveals parallels and open questions. Evidence about self-defense motives in the bicultural frame switching literature suggests that it is worth testing the presumption in the two literatures that the direction of switching depends on impression management motives. Convergent and divergent switching may reflect the actors' identity-related motives and not just their efforts to manipulate impressions. Conversely, new research questions about bicultural frame switching are suggested by research on consequences of expat accommodation. When biculturals switch frames and resulting biases upon entering a situation with cultural cues, how does this come across to the people around them? While it may increase perceived competence, would it decrease perceived integrity and thereby lower trust? Does it depend on whether they encode biculturals as ingroup members? Is complete switching received better than moderate switching? Is there an emotional toll for biculturals who hold two sets of cultural values, and must often act in a way that contradicts one set of values? Is this primarily a problem for conflicted as opposed to integrated biculturals?

### 3.1.4. Implications for training

What insights do literatures on cultural switching provide about how to train or coach managers working in

2024 intercultural settings? In other words, when and how  
2025 should managers enact the scripts or norms of a second  
2026 culture? This question relates most closely to the  
2027 accommodation literature, yet the findings about bilingual  
2028 code switching and bicultural frame switching provide  
2029 useful context.

2030 *Aim for partial not total accommodation.* The expatriate  
2031 literature clearly suggests that newcomers or visitors to a  
2032 culture should strive for partial rather than total accom-  
2033 modation, as partial accommodation accrues the benefits  
2034 of avoiding *faux pas* and seeming more similar without the  
2035 risks that come with total accommodation, such as  
2036 appearing manipulative, inconsistent, or unfaithful to  
2037 one's cultural roots. Partial accommodation is also easier  
2038 to enact and takes less of a psychic toll. When Obama  
2039 recently greeted the Emperor of Japan he simultaneously  
2040 shook hands and bowed, a partial but not total accommo-  
2041 dation to Japanese etiquette.

2042 *Practice in low-stress interactions.* We have seen that  
2043 even after cultural norms are learned at a cognitive level,  
2044 there are still emotional challenges of performing them in  
2045 real social interactions, ranging from embarrassment at  
2046 one's imperfect performance to concerns about one's  
2047 audience's judgments. This stress can evoke the cultural  
2048 divergence response, reverting to one's first-culture habits.  
2049 As an early review of training research noted, "if the  
2050 interaction is anxiety producing, then the trained subject  
2051 may fall back upon old responses with a new tenacity"  
2052 (Weldon et al., 1975, p. 309). Many training programs that  
2053 aim to increase behavioral cultural intelligence follow a  
2054 "small wins" method to maintain the trainee's confidence.  
2055 Assignments requiring linguistic, behavioral, and cognitive  
2056 accommodation are structured in a series of escalating  
2057 challenges, starting with the trivially easy encounters  
2058 (speak, act, and think like a local in your interaction with a  
2059 taxi driver), and moving on to more complex events  
2060 (interacting with local waiters or shopkeepers) to real  
2061 challenges at the workplace (making a presentation or  
2062 running a meeting).

2063 *Retooling.* If the repertoire of behaviors learned from a  
2064 culture is a toolkit that can be drawn upon, forging  
2065 identity-consistent versions of these behaviors can be  
2066 thought of as a process of "retooling" (Molinsky, 2013b;  
2067 Swidler, 1986). When retooling, newcomers should firstly  
2068 identify which aspects of local practices challenge their  
2069 personal values, grounded in their heritage culture. After  
2070 appreciating this fact, the remaining question is how to  
2071 deal with this conflict when performing a new cultural  
2072 behavior. Through longitudinal data on foreign students in  
2073 the U.S., Molinsky (2013b) theorized two ways people cope  
2074 with internal conflicts, the instrumental approach and the  
2075 integrative approach (adapted from Gardner & Lambert,  
2076 1972). In the instrumental approach, people tell them-  
2077 selves it is necessary for them to achieve their goals  
2078 (Grandey, 2003). This often results in negative emotions,  
2079 such as guilt (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999) or discomfort (Elliot &  
2080 Devine, 1994). It can also harm their relationships with  
2081 local people who can sense their inauthenticity (Molinsky,  
2082 2007; Molinsky, 2013a,b). On the other hand, the integra-  
2083 tive approach seeks to understand the positive meanings  
2084 behind the other culture's practices and results in greater

2085 feelings and appearance of authenticity (Molinsky, 2013a).  
2086 For example, by asking local people, managers can come to  
2087 an understanding of the local cultural perspective embed-  
2088 ded in the local behaviors. Through this learning process,  
2089 people become able to enact the practice in a more  
2090 considered, authentic way. After this process, managers  
2091 can customize their new behaviors to their personal styles  
2092 (Molinsky, 2013a,b). In the end, expatriates who feel that  
2093 they selectively enact the local practices that are identity-  
2094 consistent do better than their peers who feel that they are  
2095 pretending to be someone else.

### 2096 3.2. Lenses for understanding locals

2097 Second-culture learners use their knowledge not only  
2098 as a guide to their own behavior, but also as a guide to  
2099 understanding locals. To navigate social situations, one has  
2100 to use one's cultural knowledge to anticipate how other  
2101 people will behave in particular situations, interpret their  
2102 behavior while it is happening, and learn from it after the  
2103 fact. However, the application of cultural generalizations  
2104 to individuals is not without risks. Social psychology  
2105 research has long studied how stereotypes can cloud  
2106 perceivers' judgments and offend the target person.  
2107 Findings from stereotype research and cultural intelligence  
2108 research provide different insights about the use of  
2109 generalizations in social judgment. As in the previous  
2110 sections, we draw on these literatures and recent research  
2111 to propose some key cognitive processes involved in  
2112 effective use of cultural generalizations. We conclude by  
2113 spelling out some implications for training people to use  
2114 cultural generalizations that follow from our proposed  
2115 processes.

#### 2116 3.2.1. Social psychological studies of stereotypes

2117 Social psychologists have long focused on the negative  
2118 effects of ethnic stereotypes on intergroup relations and  
2119 deemed them harmful (Katz & Braly, 1933). Others  
2120 contend that some stereotypes based on social categories  
2121 can be accurate and lead to more accurate predictions,  
2122 such as gender-based generalizations about students'  
2123 aptitude in different subjects at different ages (Jussim,  
2124 Cain, Crawford, Harber, & Cohen, 2009). While social  
2125 psychology research often examined stereotypes in the  
2126 context of racial generalizations (Devine, 1989), interna-  
2127 tional management scholars have claimed that applying  
2128 cultural generalizations can assist managers in coordinat-  
2129 ing with others and avoiding offense, given differences in  
2130 business etiquette and style associated with national  
2131 cultures (Osland & Bird, 2000). Adler (2008) encourages  
2132 the use of "helpful stereotypes" – accurate descriptions of a  
2133 behavioral norm of a specific culture that can be modified  
2134 based on further observations and experience. In fact,  
2135 accurate generalizations about the other group have been  
2136 associated with higher quality and more effective inter-  
2137 cultural interactions (Li & Hong, 2001). However, people  
2138 vary greatly in the extent to which they have formed  
2139 helpful stereotypes. For example, individuals vary greatly  
2140 in their ability to accurately predict norms across cultures,  
2141 such as the typical helping behaviors in China, the U.S., and  
2142 the Netherlands (Bohns et al., 2011).

2143 An important question is what cues do individuals  
2144 follow in applying a cultural generalization/stereotype to a  
2145 target person? Or in using the evidence from an encounter  
2146 with a target person to update the stereotype? One factor  
2147 that can influence the application of stereotypes is their  
2148 applicability; the extent to which the target's appearance  
2149 or initial behavior is congruent with the stereotype  
2150 (Higgins & Brendl, 1995). Scholars examining expectancies  
2151 further contend that individuals who behave atypically are  
2152 more surprising and more memorable (Roese & Sherman,  
2153 2007), suggesting that perceivers should be less likely to  
2154 make stereotype-consistent inferences when encountering  
2155 incongruent targets.

2156 Past research indicates that there are dramatic indi-  
2157 vidual differences in the extent to which perceivers apply  
2158 stereotypes to a target person who has incongruent  
2159 attributes. Whereas prejudiced individuals discount in-  
2160 congruent behavioral evidence as a byproduct of situa-  
2161 tional factors and stick to stereotypes to guide their  
2162 judgments (Dijksterhuis, Van Knippenberg, Kruglanski, &  
2163 Schaper, 1996; Wigboldus, Dijksterhuis, & Van Knippen-  
2164 berg, 2003), low prejudice individuals actively search for  
2165 counter-stereotypic information that can instead inform  
2166 their judgments (Sherman, Stroessner, Conrey, & Azam,  
2167 2005). However, little research has identified individual  
2168 differences relevant to the flexible use of stereotypes that  
2169 the international business literature recommends.

### 2170 3.2.2. Cultural metacognition and stereotype application

2171 An individual difference found to be relevant to  
2172 sensitive use of cultural knowledge is cultural metacogni-  
2173 tion. Individuals higher in cultural metacognition develop  
2174 affective trust in their cross-cultural interactions and  
2175 relationships, which pays off in the form of better creative  
2176 collaboration (Chua et al., 2012). Theorists of metacogni-  
2177 tion (Klafehn, Banerjee, & Chiu, 2008) propose that it  
2178 promotes (a) contextualized thinking (i.e., heightened  
2179 sensitivity to how a target person is affected by his or her  
2180 situation) and (b) cognitive flexibility (i.e., discriminative  
2181 application of schemas and scripts). Metacognition is  
2182 epistemic self-evaluation, which in this context means  
2183 monitoring of the applicability of one's preconceptions  
2184 rather than blindly imposing them (Van Dyne et al., 2012).  
2185 Studies find that individuals high in cultural metacognition  
2186 are more likely to apply valid generalizations about  
2187 cultural norms to make judgments and decisions in  
2188 intercultural negotiations with counterparts described as  
2189 culturally traditional (Mor, Morris, & Joh, 2013).

2190 In recent research, we proposed that higher cultural  
2191 metacognition would be associated with contingent  
2192 application of generalizations/stereotypes (i.e., application  
2193 when a target's initial behavior is stereotype-congruent  
2194 but not otherwise). That is, a target person from a group  
2195 assumed to communicate very directly would be catego-  
2196 rized and treated that way if the target's initial behavior  
2197 was direct but not if it were indirect. And, higher cultural  
2198 metacognition would be associated with more imposition  
2199 of cultural generalizations onto congruent targets and less  
2200 onto noncongruent targets. Consistent with this congru-  
2201 ence contingency hypothesis, Mor and Morris (2013)  
2202 found that participants who had been exposed to a cultural

2203 generalization about an unfamiliar cultural group were  
2204 more likely to judge a target in line with the generalization  
2205 if the target's initial behavior was consistent, and less likely  
2206 if the behavior was inconsistent. The same congruence  
2207 contingency was seen in the pattern of how those higher in  
2208 cultural metacognition updated their belief about the  
2209 generalization after the interaction and in how they  
2210 formed expectations about a novel target person from  
2211 the group.

### 2212 3.2.3. Implications for training

2213 Training managers to flexibly use their knowledge to  
2214 interpret people from other cultures is important, because  
2215 many of the locals involved in international business are  
2216 not typical locals with stereotype-congruent habits (Earley  
2217 & Peterson, 2004). Given that cultural metacognition is  
2218 associated with adaptive, flexible use of generalizations in  
2219 social perception (and with effective trust development  
2220 and collaboration), organizations would do well to try to  
2221 develop this proclivity in their managers who take on  
2222 international assignments, by giving them relevant train-  
2223 ings and experiences. Just because there are reliable  
2224 individual differences on this dimension does not mean  
2225 that it is not malleable. Even personality traits are  
2226 somewhat malleable as a function of experience, for  
2227 example studying abroad is associated with increases in  
2228 Openness and Agreeableness and decreased Neuroticism  
2229 (Zimmermann & Neyer, 2013). Challenging study abroad  
2230 experiences may have curvilinear effects on self-ratings of  
2231 cognitive and metacognitive cultural strength – at first  
2232 reducing their self-estimates and eventually increasing  
2233 them.

2234 Cultural intelligence theorists have speculated that  
2235 cultural metacognition may be fostered by some training  
2236 strategies that are already used, for example attributional  
2237 assimilators may have their benefits in part by making  
2238 trainees aware that some of their confident judgments are  
2239 wrong (Earley & Mosakowski, 2004; Thomas, 2009). Erez  
2240 et al. (2013) found that a program requiring long-term  
2241 collaborative work on culturally diverse virtual teams  
2242 increased cultural intelligence as well as global identity, so  
2243 long as the team had a positive dynamic. Past research  
2244 found that a dyad's success was driven by the member  
2245 with the higher level of cultural metacognition (Chua et al.,  
2246 2012), which suggests that it may be helpful to compose  
2247 teams with at least one person high on cultural metacog-  
2248 nition who can bring about a positive interaction and teach  
2249 others by example.

2250 Increasingly, cultural researchers of metacognition  
2251 distinguish its subcomponents, just as do researchers of  
2252 metacognition in social and educational psychology. One  
2253 framework distinguishes awareness, planning, and check-  
2254 ing (Van Dyne et al., 2012). A standard method of training  
2255 for increased awareness is to give trainee's assessment  
2256 feedback. The current self-report instruments for cultural  
2257 metacognition are unlikely to be of much use for this  
2258 purpose, as people don't know what they don't know – a  
2259 high self-estimate can be a sign of low metacognitive  
2260 awareness. Peer ratings are useful for personality feedback  
2261 but it is hard for peers to gauge one's metacognitive habits.  
2262 Assessment tests would seem to most useful. Training

2263 people to be less overconfident is a standard part of  
2264 decision making classes, and it can be done by showing  
2265 people that their confidence ratings are not calibrated to  
2266 their objective accuracy levels.

2267 As for planning, teaching a person how to learn what  
2268 they need to know about new cultural settings may be the  
2269 most valuable lesson that cultural training can provide.  
2270 While a firm cannot teach managers about all the world's  
2271 cultures, they can inform managers about better and worse  
2272 ways to learn about a new culture. Managers should be  
2273 directed away from hackneyed tourist guides and dusty  
2274 ethnographies to continually updated websites. They can  
2275 learn not to always ask locals about the local culture, but  
2276 instead to ask seasoned expatriates who are more likely to  
2277 have noticed and analyzed its patterns. Asking a more  
2278 seasoned colleague to provide feedback about one's  
2279 intercultural effectiveness is another good tip for effective  
2280 learning.

2281 As for checking, managers may do well to have checklist  
2282 of background information that they collect about a  
2283 counterpart before an upcoming meeting. While the  
2284 person may carry a Japanese passport and even work for  
2285 a Japanese company, if he went to high school in  
2286 Amsterdam and university in the UK, and if he's worked  
2287 mostly in LA ever since, he most likely does not operate  
2288 according to traditional Japanese social norms, at least not  
2289 when interacting with a Westerner. The checking process  
2290 should continue upon meeting the person: What setting  
2291 does he choose for the meeting? How is he dressed? What  
2292 topics does he bring up to break the ice? All of these are  
2293 cues to what kind of person you are facing and to how he  
2294 should be interpreted and how he should be treated. If he is  
2295 a traditional Japanese businessperson, then it will be  
2296 helpful to interpret his actions through the lens of what  
2297 you know about Japanese business etiquette. If he is not  
2298 congruent with the generalization about traditional  
2299 Japanese businessmen, then it would be a mistake - it  
2300 would lead to erroneous conclusions and possibly would  
2301 give offense. These are the kinds of clues that a good  
2302 salesperson, spy or journalist would attend to, and  
2303 managers can be trained to do the same.

2304 All this said, we must remember that much of  
2305 metacognitive error monitoring and control happens  
2306 nonconsciously. While a checklist wont help with implicit  
2307 metacognition, it may be that the habits of checking one's  
2308 assumptions could be trained through games. Variations of  
2309 Savani et al. (2014) expatriate simulator could be  
2310 constructed with characters from different cultural back-  
2311 grounds and interactions that are complex enough to defy  
2312 simple rule-like solutions and that change over time, in the  
2313 way that real cultural norms change at the start of a  
2314 holiday such as Ramadan or with a life transition such as  
2315 marriage. This sort of game would train people to develop  
2316 hypotheses or generalizations, but at the same time to  
2317 check and update these assumptions.

2318 **4. Conclusion**

2319 This paper reviews recent research relevant to the  
2320 question of how to become adept in a new culture, a  
2321 challenge that more and more managers face everyday.

2322 This involves acquiring knowledge of the norms of the  
2323 other culture and then knowing how best to use this  
2324 knowledge as a guide to one's own behavior and as a lens  
2325 for interpreting locals' behavior.

2326 With regard to acquiring knowledge of cultural norms,  
2327 a tension running through the literatures is the difference  
2328 between replacement views of cultural learning (Gans'  
2329 model of "straight line" assimilation or Gudykunst and  
2330 Kim's deculturation argument for immersive learning)  
2331 versus supplement views (Berry's notion of integration or  
2332 Hong et al.'s model of bicultural frame switching). By  
2333 analyzing underlying cognitive processes, we have delin-  
2334 eated some kinds of cultural learning that may operate in a  
2335 replacement manner (which implicit associations are most  
2336 accessible) and some kinds that operate in a supplemental  
2337 manner (practicing new gestures).

2338 In the next section on learning processes, we proposed a  
2339 four-fold taxonomy of major learning processes involved  
2340 in learning another culture: studying, attributional rea-  
2341 soning, social learning, and conditioning. Whereas the first  
2342 two are explicit, conscious learning processes, the latter  
2343 two are largely implicit and non-conscious. In the recent  
2344 research on learning from conditioning, striking parallels  
2345 have emerged to the findings from the longstanding  
2346 literature on expatriate adjustment, namely that IQ is not a  
2347 driver whereas other aptitudes more relevant to social  
2348 information processing do predict who learns in the  
2349 laboratory or adjusts in the field. As a result, the  
2350 widespread presumption that IQ should be a key basis  
2351 for selecting personnel for the state department, intelli-  
2352 gence agencies and international business assignments  
2353 (Harvey & Novicevic, 2001) may be based on a misconcep-  
2354 tion of the primary learning processes involved in  
2355 acquiring knowledge of another culture's norms.

2356 The final sections reviewed evidence relevant to the  
2357 question of how can expatriates best use their knowledge  
2358 of another culture, once they have acquired it. A key issue is  
2359 whether they should use their knowledge as scripts to  
2360 guide their own behavior, so that they are acting like locals.  
2361 Unlike Augustine, who found that it worked to do as  
2362 Romans do when in Rome, the evidence from studies of  
2363 reactions to managers who accommodate their behavior to  
2364 local norms is decidedly more mixed. The total accommo-  
2365 dation that worked for Augustine produces a host of  
2366 unwanted outcomes when managers use it in a national  
2367 culture appreciably different from their own, including  
2368 being judged as untrustworthy, manipulative, and disloyal  
2369 to one's roots, as well as personally feeling dissonance and  
2370 inauthenticity. We therefore developed recommendations  
2371 for training managers in moderate forms of accommoda-  
2372 tion that feel identity-consistent and at the same time  
2373 contribute to a more successful adaptation to life abroad.

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