

## ABSTRACT

### THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES: EXPERIENCES OF STATESIDE CHURCH LEADERS WHO TRAIN CROSS-CULTURALLY

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Educators are facing increasingly diverse teaching and learning contexts at home and around the world. Globalization is bringing students from around the world to learn in the United States; more than ever before, Stateside educators are trotting the globe to teach. As a result, much more needs to be understood about culturally diverse teaching and learning contexts.

What assumptions are evident in the cross-cultural teaching experiences of stateside educators? That was the overriding research question driving this study. Specifically, the interest was in understanding the influence of a foundationalist frame of reference on how an educator negotiates the challenges of teaching cross-culturally.

The study developed from a review of literature on the preparation and experiences of cross-cultural sojourners, whether tourists, study-abroad students, missionaries, or employees sent on overseas assignments. In addition, the research on cross-cultural teaching and learning was studied. Education and sociology were the primary disciplines in which the research was rooted.

Merton's (1968) theory of anticipatory socialization served as the conceptual framework for the study. Anticipatory socialization refers to the influence of how one prepares for a new context upon how that individual assimilates therein. Merton's theory was used to develop a study that would consider how to refine the preparation strategies of cross-cultural educators. Data were gathered and analyzed using a case study design with 12 trainers who traveled overseas for 10 days to two weeks to teach students within a particular culture. The sample comprised subjects who led youth ministries in a variety of stateside churches. The subjects conducted training overseas on behalf of a stateside-based organization that offers training for evangelical church leaders.

The findings revealed that subjects' primary reflection about the cultural contexts where they sojourned focused on the hardware issues of culture rather than the more subtle software issues. This appears to be connected to the limited praxis exercised by the subjects. In addition, the findings revealed that subjects espoused foundationalism theologically and epistemologically; however, at times, they talked more like constructivists. For example, they operated from the assumption that the content of their training must be deposited from them to the students, a clear foundationalist perspective;

however, they also stated that interaction is the most important part of the training, a much more constructivist perspective. Although involved in what seems to be a less colonialistic paradigm of missions and education, subjects displayed subtle but strong imperialistic tendencies.

The findings led to five key determinants for interculturally competent teaching and learning. The five factors most evident to influence the cross-cultural teaching context are the organizational values, frames of reference, selection of trainers, preparation of trainers, and the duration of the sojourn. Although the findings and resulting conclusions relate most specifically to educators coming from foundationalist perspectives, there are broader implications for any educator teaching cross-culturally.

## **CHAPTER SIX CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

Extrapolating conclusions from the findings generated in a study like this is no simple process. There are any number of ways one could reflect on the implications of this study. In some regards, I find myself with more questions about how one can most effectively prepare to teach cross-culturally than when I began.

The findings did not significantly challenge the conclusions from previous research on cross-cultural understanding. The literature indicated that effective cross-cultural engagement was related to the variables of communication skills, social networks, self-concept, a global mindset, previous cross-cultural travel, and intercultural training. Although these were not all predominant variables in the findings, they surfaced at least indirectly throughout all the data. The key lies in seeing the iterative relationships among all of these variables. For example, one may have great communication skills when teaching and relating stateside; however, without the appropriate social networks with students in a foreign context, the communication skills, even if still strong there, will likely play little role. Extensive intercultural training and much experience traveling cross-culturally typically strengthen one's engagement in teaching cross-culturally. At the same time, an inflated self-concept may actually make previous training and travel a hindrance to successful engagement. Examples of this are discussed later in this chapter.

As well as reifying the above-discussed themes discovered in previous research on cross-cultural understanding, the data collected in this study also reinforced the symbiotic relationship between learning and culture. Subjects described variances in the ways students learned in the cross-cultural contexts in contrast with how the subjects perceived that students from stateside culture learn. Assessing effectiveness in accommodating diverse cultural learning styles, however, was not a primary concern in this study. The implications for that area of research are indirect, at best.

The primary focus instead, was on studying the cross-cultural teaching experiences of educators to understand the assumptions underlying their behavior. Anticipatory socialization was the conceptual framework on which the study was based. The conclusions and implications of the study are organized in this chapter as follows: First, I re-visit the viability of anticipatory socialization as a theory for preparing cross-cultural educators. Second, using the themes that emerged from the findings, I suggest five key determinants for interculturally competent teaching and learning. In discussing those determinants, I suggest some practical implications for organizations like Teamworks.

### **Anticipatory Socialization--Viable or Not?**

Anticipatory socialization is the influence of one's preparation for a new cultural encounter on how the individual engages therein (Merton, 1968). Did this study indicate that anticipatory socialization serves as a viable framework for examining the nature of educators' cross-cultural teaching experiences? The findings clearly indicated that the ways educators anticipated cross-cultural teaching contexts revealed something about how they would engage in those contexts. For example, there was a clear correlation

between how subjects saw their roles with the students they would be teaching and how they reflected on those experiences thereafter. In addition, subjects who voiced apprehension about being ill-prepared before the sojourn continued to talk about the lack of preparation throughout and after the engagement. When concerns were mentioned during pretrip interviews about the potential language barriers, those concerns followed subjects through the training.

On the other hand, Merton's (1968) theory of anticipatory socialization is based upon the premise that an individual is aspiring to belong to a particular group and in so doing, adopts the values of that group. The subjects did not demonstrate a strong desire to belong to the cross-cultural context where they would teach which changed the nature of what anticipatory socialization was supposed to describe. Admittedly, they were only there for two weeks and had no intention of acculturating long-term in the contexts where they were teaching. Subjects' anticipations related more to playing the role of a teacher and authority figure among peers from a different cultural context rather than to socializing as a peer among those in the culture where they were teaching.

Further, the findings did not support that *accurately* anticipating a context necessarily causes more effective engagement. In some cases, subjects anticipated fairly accurately what they would be encountering in the classroom, although they typically did so at a surface level of analysis. Although their anticipations continued throughout engagement, there was no clear evidence that the subjects' accurate assumptions led to more successful encounters. For example, almost all of the subjects who trained in Latin America expected most Latinos to be poor people with strong relational affinity. That is, in fact, what they experienced on engagement; however, that did not appear to significantly alter the ways trainers went about fostering learning among the Latino students.

Another example is the way subjects accurately anticipated the ongoing political unrest in South Africa, the influence of Western culture there, and some similarity in ministry structures to what is found in stateside evangelical churches. Those accurate anticipations, however, did not make the subjects more effective. In many cases, the accurate anticipations seemed to foster more confidence than what was helpful for effective engagement. The anticipations were accurate but were a limited view of the context. A better appreciation by the subjects of their limited perspective and understanding would have made them more effective as learners and as facilitators of learning. Therefore, although the findings indicated that the ways subjects anticipated their sojourns affected the ways they engaged in them, there was no indication that *effective* engagement resulted simply from *accurate* anticipations.

Anticipatory socialization was most helpful as a theoretical framework in terms of revealing assumptions held by the trainers participating in cross-cultural teaching experiences. In so doing, the methodology which was developed provided the chance to compare the assumptions of the subjects before, during, and after their cross-cultural teaching endeavors. Further research exploring the nature of these kinds of experiences, however, would be better served by a theoretical framework rooted in perspective

transformation developed by theorists such as Daloz (1986), Mezirow (1991), and Pratt (1992).

### **Key Determinants of Intercultural Competency in Teaching and Learning**

I expected this study to significantly aid in developing training programs for educators who teach cross-culturally. How can educators who experience multicultural classrooms, even here in the States, be better prepared to deal with the cultural variances among students? More specifically, how can Teamworks trainers and others like them be adequately prepared to effectively negotiate teaching and learning contexts in different cultures? How can an educator from a foundationalist frame of reference effectively negotiate the challenges of contextualization? That was the range of questions I intended to address in this study with a predeparture training program as a result. There are some obvious implications for the kinds of training programs that can be developed for these kinds of situations. However, the study indicated that the issues involved in intercultural education are much more deeply rooted and complex than what can be altered and addressed solely through predeparture training. The issues are even more complicated when dealing with trainers and material from a foundationalist perspective.

Effectively fostering learning among students from a different culture requires a broad range of competency. The literature reviewed in Chapter Two describes five key areas which influence the way one engages cross-culturally: Communication/language, social networks, self-concept, global mindset, and intercultural training. The findings of this study further reinforced the importance of these areas to developing cross-cultural understanding. There are additional determinants influencing the effectiveness of how an educator acculturates. Although these additional variables may also relate to other cross-cultural sojourners, these emerged as the most important variables specifically related to interculturally competent teaching and learning.

The findings revealed that the key factors to consider for cross-cultural education include the values of the educational organization, the frames of reference embedded in the teaching material and the teacher, the selection of those who will train cross-culturally, the preparation of the trainers selected, and the duration of the cross-cultural teaching sojourn. The discussion of each of these determinants begins by connecting it to the findings and then suggests some ways to effectively manipulate the variable for more effective training cross-culturally. Like the variables in the literature on cross-cultural understanding, the determinants for interculturally competent teaching and learning are symbiotically related to one another. They feed each other and are dependent upon one another.

### Organizational Values

Some of the new-world-order agendas evident in the subjects for this study were at least in part, the responsibility of Teamworks. Some of the ways Teamworks and its leadership, including me, were responsible for the findings of this study include both the way the trainers were recruited for the cross-cultural contexts and the very nature of Teamworks' training materials. Trainers were recruited for the cross-cultural training trips

based on what was advertised as the cry of churches around the world for help in reaching their youth. I did plenty to promote this need myself. In the midst of conducting the analysis for this study I wrote the following as part of a promotional piece sent out by Teamworks:

Consider this...

- Rev. Wu of Wuhan, China pastors 14 congregations and his only training comes from his two ministry books, both of which he's read many, many times.
- Pastor Immanuel shepherds over 20 churches throughout the poorest country in the world--Sierra Leone. His only training consists of a six week course he attended several years ago.
- Evangelist Rakesh in Northern India is a 20 year old who is planting churches in 15 different villages. He only came to Christ a year ago but does the best he can to teach people the Word.
- 85 percent of churches around the globe are led by pastors who have never received any training. . . . [Teamworks has] gifted, trained people ready to equip their peers. (D. Livermore, personal communication, April 2001)

The information I wrote is accurate. However, it clearly emphasizes the American's role in helping international church leaders, and it sounds like the very condescension evident in the study's findings. It is not that Americans have nothing to offer or give others. Operating primarily from this kind of mindset, however, quickly leads to dehumanizing our international colleagues rather than empowering them. I am reminded how quickly we can slip into subtle participation in new brands of colonialism, simply dressing the "Emperor in new clothes".

Although Teamworks espouses a commitment to empowering learners through a facilitative approach to learning, the very nature of the training content can easily incline trainers toward a banking concept of education. Teamworks uses the life and ministry of Christ as the exemplar for how to go about leading a church today. At the core of Teamworks is a strong commitment to understanding Christ's historical and cultural context rather than mindlessly presuming that everything he did should be replicated by church leaders today. However, trainers often present it far more prescriptively than what Teamwork's primary leadership intends.

Many of the subjects in this study appeared to view the Bible as the "Word of God, pure and simple, rather than the Word of God as mediated through the life experiences and cultural settings of the biblical authors" (Noll, 1994, p. 133). The revisionistic lens through which an individual reads and interprets the Bible was also unrecognized by most of the subjects. When Scripture is used as a model for leadership and ministry with the absence of praxis, ascertaining exactly what the Scriptures say and in turn prescribing that to others around the world is frightening. This is not unlike what Augustine (1982)

criticized so many years ago: "To defend their utterly foolish and obviously untrue statements, [some Christians] will call on Holy Scripture . . . [to] support their position, although they understand neither what they say nor the things about which they make assertion" (pp. 42-43).

Teamworks must develop new means to empower their more than 1,000 trainers around the world to learn from one another as they study Scripture. The multicultural diversity among Teamworks training team members globally affords the organization a unique resource to study issues and Scripture using widely diverse cultural perspectives. The organization and its trainers will have to proactively fight against reducing the tensions these discussions will raise to the "right" interpretation.

In addition, new training resources are needed. Teamworks has developed some strong discovery-oriented materials wherein learners work with others to construct their understanding of Christ's approach to ministry and the implications thereof. These pieces need to be further refined and made more central to the training initiatives used internationally. New resources like these need to be developed using multicultural teams from around the world. A unique niche exists for Teamworks within the evangelical scene internationally. A true commitment and plan to work interdependently across the globe to develop strategies and training will make Teamworks a unique and more Christlike organization.

Teamworks trains and works only when and where invited by local leadership. That policy positions the organization to operate beyond new-world-order agendas. Of course, the true test is what happens on arrival in the cross-cultural context. The response to many of the invitations from around the world has been to send an expatriate in for a number of years to teach and develop strategy alongside a team of nationals. Other times the decision has been to send in training teams itinerantly, for 10 days to two weeks, once or twice a year. This was the model studied in the research for this dissertation. Although the intention in all the initiatives is to truly engage in partnership and to insist on indigenous leadership to lead the way, new-world-order issues are often subversively and subconsciously at work.

Teamworks is in the midst of developing a partnership with churches in Sierra Leone. We have attempted to respond to our subtle new-world-order agendas in the way we have entered this partnership. In recruiting trainers to participate in this training trip, we have described it as a mutual-training event. The first three days will consist of training done by the Sierra Leonean church leaders to the Teamworks trainers. They will address the unique issues of leading a Christian church in Sierra Leone. I am eager to see how this unfolds. I am aware that we must protect ourselves from simply going through the motions of having them train us first so that we "feel" like we have not colonized them. The inequity of financial resources between our countries, churches, and personal savings further complicates the real application of moving beyond new-world-order approaches. The extreme poverty of Sierra Leone vis-a-vis our wealth immediately develops complex issues of power. Although not a guaranteed revision of the Teamworks approach, this is

the kind of direction in which Teamworks must move, in order to truly empower the international partners with whom the organization works.

Teamworks must continue to be alert to the potential of perpetuating colonialistic approaches. Trainers must enter culturally-diverse contexts first as a learner. They must spend time to understand what local youth workers are already doing there. There is no need to toss aside any desire to help but the trainers should be aware that they may come home learning far more than the students they just taught. Teamworks must lead the way in forging a humanizing and empowering paradigm of cross-cultural education.

### Frames of Reference

The practice of teaching is governed by one's frame of reference. A frame of reference is the way an individual understands what it means to learn, to teach, and to know. The subjects in the sample came from foundationalist frames of reference. Adhering to these perspectives appeared to inhibit subjects from demonstrating intercultural competency in their teaching.

The shared frame of reference among the trainers was rooted in the premise that knowledge was something to be transferred from the teacher to the student. Learning was viewed as cumulative and linear, and the content existed independent of the teacher and student dynamics (Barr & Tagg, 1995). Subjects adhered to this theoretical framework both implicitly and explicitly. At the same time, subjects argued for the importance of interaction, to the extent that many argued that interaction was at least as important as the content itself. In that way, subjects were sounding more like social constructivists than foundationalists.

Subjects espoused the importance of contextualization during pretrip interviews. As they reflected upon their experiences, they continued to talk about the importance of not importing cultural biases. The question is whether contextualization merely became a means to an end. Subjects seemed to be most concerned about contextualization, interaction, or other constructivist themes as a way to transfer the information to the students. The implicit message was that interaction would be used to help students "get it", "it" being the objective content possessed in the mind of the trainer. In the midst of dissonance and uncertainty, subjects resorted to reliance on the "truth" as the compass for what to do. This then led them to colonialistic tendencies wherein the trainers assumed they knew what was best for the youth workers they were teaching.

I am confident any of the subjects in the sample would argue vehemently against perpetuating the ills of colonialism. Their assumptions, however, revealed a discrepancy between their espoused ideals and how they actually described their cross-cultural training efforts. As a result, the subjects, consciously or subconsciously, ended up participating in new-world-order agendas.

The question is whether a foundationalist can teach cross-culturally without being the "Emperor". At the core of evangelicalism is the commitment to see people from every people group embrace Christ and all He represents. Participating in the proselytizing

efforts of evangelicalism would seem to be a clear contradiction with globalization-from-below approaches to education. Yet even constructivist frames of reference hold to some essentials.

It is extreme reductionism, simply to regard any aspect of foundationalism and hence evangelization as imperialism. Constructivists claim to have equal respect for all cultures until they come up against religious castes and sexism, clitorectomies, and deliberate persecution. They argue that those kinds of extreme issues mandate the primacy of certain universal principles. Many constructivists join crusades to liberate oppressed peoples given these universal principles of morality. But whose principles? Who determines that flying planes into skyscrapers is an inappropriate way to respond to capitalistic oppression? Who decides that capitalistic oppression is wrong? The relativism of a pure constructivist frame of reference is wrought with tensions and contradictions as well.

The most important theoretical finding from this study for me personally was the development of a framework called constructive foundationalism. Constructive foundationalism is the kind of perspective that embraces the tensions innate to negotiating cultural ways of knowing rather than fleeing those tensions. Simplistic categories which pit one perspective as entirely antithetical to another are not helpful in fostering learning cross-culturally. Everyone involved in the educational context is helped when educators explore the tensions that emerge from their epistemological perspectives and frames of reference.

Challenging the new-world-order assumptions implicit to foundationalist frames of reference is much more complicated than just addressing these issues in predeparture training. It requires an entire paradigm shift in the way cross-cultural educators think about themselves, their faith systems, and their relationships with other members of their faith in other cultures. All of these determinants need to be used collaboratively to truly cause the perspective transformation needed. Teaching competently in cross-cultural contexts and doing so in a liberatory manner is symbiotically related to all these key determinants--organizational values, frames of reference, selection of trainers, preparation of trainers, and duration of the sojourn. As educators develop abilities to assess their own cultural frames of reference, they will begin to identify the tensions therein. Foundationalists like the subjects in this study need to explore the discrepancies between their espoused desire to follow Christ's example and the abuse of their privileged positions.

Interculturally competent teaching and learning is dynamically related to one's frame of reference. Constructive foundationalism is the kind of frame of reference which moves organizations and its trainers closer to fostering learning cross-culturally in a competent manner.

#### Selection of Trainers

The study clearly revealed that although predeparture training is valuable and important, far more important is the selection process of those who participate in cross-cultural

teaching assignments. Latent throughout the anticipatory and engagement findings was the role of self. Previous cross-cultural experience, the ability to interact and relate with people, communicative competencies, and other variables like these are themes that recur throughout the literature on cross-cultural understanding. This study indicated, however, that although, it is more subtle, the most powerful force shaping the way educators engage cross-culturally is the self. When selecting trainers to teach cross-culturally, although subjective, a trainer's sense of self is the most important dimension to consider.

In the psychological literature, the term "self" is defined in two distinct ways. First is the self-as-object definition, which consists of an individual's attitudes, feelings, and perceptions of self as an object. The self-as-object definition means that if one could transcend self and evaluate what is observed, this is what the individual would say (Hamachek, 1971, p. 8). When a person responds to self as an object, there is a tendency to establish boundaries and make judgments quickly, such that these people are encapsulated by themselves. Individuals encapsulated by themselves are unable to construct a unified identity. They are unprepared to negotiate the shifts between cultures, and they have limited ability to assess cultural frames of reference (Bennett, 1993). Encapsulation was evident among most of the subjects in the study. In their pretrip interviews, the trainers ascribed value to practical, applied approaches to teaching and learning but resorted to primarily theoretical approaches when they engaged in cross-cultural teaching contexts. Further, the inability to reflect upon their cross-cultural experiences in abstract and creative ways indicated the subjects were encapsulated by themselves.

In contrast, a self-as-process definition, or constructive marginality as Bennett (1993) called it, is the process of becoming fully conscious of self-differentiation. It leads one to assume personal responsibility for choosing and constructing value sets. "It is not so much a case of becoming individualistic as it is of becoming self-reflective" (Bennett, 1993, p. 118). A self-as-process orientation is the very trait needed to explore the tensions within one's frame of reference. The self, in coalescing perception, produces a "picture that has an order predetermined, significantly, by emotional emphases" (Kreiger, 1991, p. 47). From this perspective, "self" includes an active group of processes, such as thinking, remembering, and perceiving (Hamachek, 1971, p. 8).

As already indicated, the subjects in this study demonstrated the encapsulated approach to self, wherein limited critical thinking occurred that led to faulty assessments. When a more constructive sense of self emerged in a subject, it superseded other variables cited in the literature as predetermining intercultural competency. For example, both Phil and Doug had extensive experience traveling and training cross-culturally yet Phil demonstrated a sense of self that yielded a more significant level of critical self-reflection. In contrast, Ron and Ken both had limited experience traveling and training cross-culturally yet Ken engaged in a more abstract level of critical self-reflection than Ron did. Phil's extensive experience, coupled with viewing himself as process, made him much more effective as a cross-cultural educator. That effectiveness was evident by things like Phil's ongoing critical reflection, the learning apparent by the students who evaluated him, and by his overall willingness to question his assumptions. However,

there was potential for Ken (no experience but viewed self as process) to engage more effectively than Doug (lots of experience but viewed self as object) because of how they viewed themselves.

Furthermore, the majority of subjects made assessments about student perceptions that were not in line with the input provided by the students themselves. For example, most subjects shared the opinion that principles should be taught but that illustrations should be avoided. Students expressed the opposite view.

It is noteworthy that most informants' identities appeared to be rooted in their careers as youth ministers, not as educators. That was to be expected. However, it does raise the question, how much did identifying more as ministers than as educators influence the way the subjects thought through their experiences? Considering the teaching and learning issues involved in the cross-cultural experience seemed to be much less a part of subjects' thinking than did analyzing what youth ministry was like in the respective contexts. One's identity--ethnic, vocational, and otherwise--is at the core of intercultural training (Bennett, 1993).

The danger of building a framework of intercultural competency for cross-cultural educators based on the self-as-object definition is the potential for fostering self-absorption. Educators could be inclined toward being preoccupied with using another culture and the learners there first and foremost as a way to actualize one's self. On the other hand, a more constructivist perspective that views self as process has the potential of both gaining increased insight into one's self and more carefully considering constructions of reality. As educators view themselves within the larger social body, there is increased potential for creating a more democratic sense of higher learning for everyone involved in the teaching and learning context (Rhoads, 1997).

The primary challenge for educators teaching cross-culturally lies in "learning how to think critically about contradictory perspectives their cultural knowledge and experience have provided. If they are indeed encapsulated by the whirlwind of equally valid (to them) cultural frames of reference, they need to develop standards for assessing those frames" (Bennett, 1993, p. 125).

In subtle but profound ways, the subjects' "self" influenced how they went about preparing for their cross-cultural teaching experiences and that directly correlated to how they anticipated them. This was true for all the subjects. The role of self could be traced through the way each subject engaged in the cross-cultural teaching experience. Helping cross-cultural trainers develop a constructivist perspective of self is the starting point of dealing with the subtle arrogance that permeates so many of the findings. Viewing self as process provides the means by which to understand one's experiences and the experiences of others in new ways. It allows for a deeper level of critical reflection and abstraction.

I was challenged to consider my own sense of self as I worked on this study. Analyzing my findings while continuing to participate personally in training cross-culturally had a profound influence on my own reflections about my teaching, my level of preparation,

and what it was I needed to do differently. While doing my data analysis, I was teaching another course in India. I wrote in my journal:

I love this! I hate this! I feel more cultural distance when I'm in India than anywhere else. Today I was right in the middle of making a point, and while Rakesh was interpreting for me, my mind wandered off to thinking, "Is what I'm saying making any sense whatsoever? I'm so unprepared and ill-equipped to be fostering learning among these people. The entire course is unfolding in a way much differently than I anticipated, and it's fostering all kinds of internal dissonance for me. I'm not sure where to go from here. Where should we even head tomorrow?"

Meanwhile, Rakesh was waiting for me to continue my point. Lest I be too critical of the subjects in my study, I have a lot of work cut out for me in better developing my own competency at fostering learning cross-culturally. (D. Livermore, personal journal, March 5, 2001)

At times I found myself troubled by my sometimes harsh and judgmental attitude in thinking about my subjects and their experiences. The subtle arrogance I found pervasive in many subjects' statements was easy for me to slip into as well. I think I subconsciously justified my judgmental spirit because I thought these fellow Americans and, for that matter, fellow evangelical church leaders should know better. It became increasingly clear to me, however, that narrow, nationalistic thinking that can yield new forms of colonialism and paternalism is a common human weakness. Foucault's (1969) analysis of the power relationships that accompany knowledge is relevant to this tension. Particularly when operating from a foundationalist perspective, one who has knowledge that others seemingly lack tends to use that knowledge as leverage. The subjects' knowledge of their training content inclined them to act superior to their students.

My education and experience in cross-cultural education inclined me to act superior to my subjects who had less education or experience in this field. The commodity of knowledge must be held in check by educators everywhere. Keeping one's self in check in this regard requires a self-as-process orientation. The self-as-process orientation needs to be the primary consideration for Teamworks and other educational organizations when selecting trainers for cross-cultural teaching assignments.

Although an assessment can in no way happen objectively, organizations like Teamworks would be helped by developing an objective checklist from which to begin selecting participants for cross-cultural training. Based on the findings of this study, as well as those that recur in the literature on acculturation, the following represent the kinds of things that need to be assessed. Some questions have been listed under each section below as an indication of the issues needing to be explored. Trainers are needed who are:

**Relationally strong.** Relational affinity will communicate and vice versa. Teamworks trainers and others like them have been part of some excellent international partnerships despite the nationalistic tendencies that have often been present. The

relational affiliation is what has typically made the difference. How do trainers interact with people stateside? Do they easily read people and their needs? Do they ask questions well and remove attention from themselves? Can they laugh at themselves?

**Reflective in praxis.** Does the trainer demonstrate a reflective stance when describing other cross-cultural experiences? Trainers who question their assumptions based on what they see in a foreign context can play a major role in how well they facilitate learning cross-culturally. Is there an unhealthy level of confidence? Is there a willingness to put in question the way they think and act? Is there a theoretical framework guiding their cross-cultural interactions? Are they lifelong learners?

**Cautious in using examples.** The findings indicated trainers' shared conclusion that illustrations should be avoided when teaching cross-culturally. The students, however, struggled to implement purely theoretical teaching. Do trainers exhibit an ability to demonstrate theoretical concepts for application without presenting the illustration as the "right" way to apply the concept? Can trainers move freely between the theoretical and applied realms?

**Secure in their contexts.** Sometimes trainers seem to think deprecating American culture and all it represents is the best way to establish credibility cross-culturally. Realizing that American culture has many weaknesses is an asset; however trying to be something we are not is a liability. How do trainers perceive and describe stateside culture? What is their level of awareness of cultural dynamics? Security with one's own culture comes from a self-as-process orientation.

**Committed to partnership.** Training is merely a means to an end, and the long-term value of blowing into a place one time, sharing some information, and moving on to the next stop is questionable. Long-term equipping partnerships built on relationships have the potential of truly empowering other leaders. What connection do trainers see between formal teaching and on-the-job learning? Are trainers willing to be part of a long-term partnership, either personally or as partners with others?

Developing more reflective questions on the applications for participation in cross-cultural training trips is one way to begin exploring these kinds of issues, but the assessment needed requires far more than just reading a submitted application. Ideally, face to face interaction and on-site observation of the individual training and working in his or her local context will help produce the kind of information needed to answer the preceding questions.

It might still be valuable to consider involving trainers in cross-cultural trips who demonstrate less competency in these qualities. However, those participants' primary role would be to use the trip as a way to better develop their own competency as cross-cultural trainers. Their role in formally facilitating learning for others should be limited, and the focus should be on their own preparation and learning about cross-cultural learning and ministry. Teamworks and similar organizations have the potential of approaching cross-

cultural education with an increased level of competency when carefully selecting the trainers who will represent the organization cross-culturally.

Organizations like Teamworks might need to consider selecting a specific group of its trainers to represent the organization internationally. A trainer should be selected based upon his or her proclivity toward a self-as-process orientation. Upon selection, trainers should be given ongoing opportunities to construct a sense of self that leads to perspective transformation. In so doing, those trainers are more apt to reproduce a liberatory model of education as they teach cross-culturally. This leads to the next key determinant of intercultural competent teaching and learning, the preparation of selected trainers.

### Preparation of Trainers

Training is a variable already cited in the literature review as a key factor in fostering intercultural competence. Predeparture training has long been advocated as an important way to facilitate successful cross-cultural interactions. However, only 30 percent of United States managers who are sent on overseas assignments receive even cursory cross-cultural training before departure, and the percentage of participants in short-term assignments who receive cross-cultural training is far less (Goldstein & Smith, 1999). The learning process is embedded in culture. As a result, cross-cultural educators need not only training related to general cultural dynamics, but also need training that relates to the inherent nature of culture in the learning process.

The findings revealed that subjects were not adequately prepared for the unique challenges of teaching familiar content in new and unfamiliar contexts. The sampled trainers espoused contextualization but ended up acting colonialistically. They valued practical, applied teaching but resorted to theoretical, abstract teaching when they got in unfamiliar environments. Subjects' analyses of the cultures where they taught focused upon concrete, hardware issues of culture rather than the more subtle and possibly more important software issues. Although predeparture training cannot be expected to solve all these issues and the many others that occurred, it is an important tool for moving educators like those sampled toward greater intercultural competency.

The training of cross-cultural trainers needs to be rooted in a transformational learning framework wherein organizations like Teamworks provide venues for trainers to structure meaning from their experiences. Predeparture training needs to be developed within a comprehensive lifelong learning plan for Teamworks trainers. Being certified once and for all to teach materials overseas is not the objective. Instead, ongoing experiences and venues for considering one's frame of reference and empowerment for ongoing perspective transformation is what is needed. Preparation of trainers which is developed within a transformational learning model sets the pace for the kind of teaching and learning that trainers should be part of on the field, in the States and abroad. A transformational approach to learning operates on the premise that educators and students are free and responsible human beings. There is an understanding that knowledge is a personal and social construction, and a belief in a democratic vision of society (Clark, 1993).

At the crux of transformational learning is the art of praxis. The importance of critical self-reflection for cross-cultural trainers like the ones sampled became increasingly apparent as I continued my research. Midway through my data collection, I wrote the following in my journal:

I'm more than disheartened. Trainers did not prepare for these experiences personally, educationally, etc. In trying to get them to reflect on what they anticipated or what they experienced, there is little substance to their responses.

I'm not convinced that predeparture training will do much to alter this. I think the key lies in somehow fostering self-reflection--getting them to really wrestle with personal issues. When asked things like "How has your cross-cultural travel challenged your faith system?" I get responses like--"I was encouraged to pray more . . . I was humbled by my wealth." That's all nice and good but is there nothing deeper? When asked to reflect on the prescriptive nature of the training, it seems to go nowhere . . . How do I foster that kind of reflection?

How do you get trainers to think about the software of the culture and not only the hardware? Everyone seems to cite the obvious differences and observations that come from a surface-level analysis. How can more in-depth analysis be stimulated?

Does evangelicalism breed such superficial thinking? Is there a causal link between my sample being a bunch of youth pastors and their limited critical thinking or would I find similar kinds of responses from a different group of trainers? Is it more related to them being practitioners or to being evangelicals? Or neither? In fairness, these trainers aren't a whole lot unlike the corporate trainers I meet "on the road" who train internationally. They don't seem very reflective either. But I would hope for something more in church leaders.

How do I foster this kind of critical self-reflection?? That's going to be key in preparing people to acculturate as educators, whatever the context! How do we train trainers to train others to engage in it? Those are the things I need to unlock and in so doing, I must continue to engage in some serious, critical self reflection of my own, (D. Livermore, personal journal, November 9, 2000)

In the second sample, I probed further with subjects to try for a deeper level of reflection. I even intentionally asked some leading questions. However, even with biased probes, subjects' analyses were still primarily concrete rather than abstract. The trainers evidenced practice without good theory. There were occasional rays of hope when one or two subjects expressed their many uncertainties or the presuppositions they were questioning.

Even the subjects with a heightened level of critical self-reflection usually relegated discussion about personal transformation from going overseas to conclusions already predominant in the evangelical community. For example, they described increased prayer

lives, reflection about materialism vis-a-vis the poverty of people in developing countries, the need to trust God more, and similar conclusions that permeate evangelical presuppositions. My concern was not with the nature of those reflections but that the reflective thinking did not go further. With such limited praxis occurring, both the trainers and students were robbed of the experience of engaging more fully in higher learning.

Schon's (1987) model of praxis needs to be explored as a crucial element for preparing trainers to teach cross-culturally. Schon looked at how professionals think in the course of their everyday work. In his study of the way architects, psychotherapists, engineers, town planners, and managers operated on the job, he describes the process as reflection in action, a researcher in the practice context. Inherent in the way professionals work is not just problem solving but problem setting, an activity that clearly has a theoretical component. The goal lies in not just finding answers, but in formulating hypotheses. However, Schon argued that alongside reflection-in-action there is a place for ancillary, outside-of-practice learning that enhances a practitioner's capacity to think in doing. Cross-cultural educators need to learn praxis, reflection both behind and within their actions.

Fostering praxis among cross-cultural educators is valuable for everyone. It allows for a holistic approach to education that empowers people to perceive critically the ways they exist in their worlds. Praxis leads to seeing self as process, which potentially equips one to move beyond new-world-order agendas and into conscious choices like constructive foundationalism. Praxis allows individuals to see the world not as a static reality as so many of the subjects seemed to do, but rather as reality in transformational process. Cross-cultural educators must transcend themselves as people "who move forward and look ahead, for whom looking at the past must only be a means of understanding more clearly what and who they are so that they can more wisely build the future" (Freire, 1997, p. 65).

The ability to theorize fosters functional self-awareness, perhaps the most humanizing educational tool of all. I cannot think for others, nor can others think for me. Theory is often held in disdain by religious practitioners. However, "when our lived experience of theorizing is fundamentally linked to processes of self-recovery, of collective liberation, no gap exists between theory and practice" (hooks, 1994, p. 61). I wonder to what extent evangelical ministers have been dehumanized by having rarely been liberated enough to truly think for themselves. The evangelical subculture has lauded practice above theory for several decades (Noll, 1994). Challenging some of the rapacious elements of evangelicalism goes beyond the scope of this study; however, empowering educators for cross-cultural teaching experiences by helping them experience praxis does not.

Helping trainers structure meaning around their experiences through the use of praxis comes from empowering them with tools like journal writing. As human beings, we cannot stop thinking. Every moment is filled with all kinds of impressions. As we sort through the barrage of impressions that come our way daily, we order some into the background whereas others are brought into sharper focus. The practice of reflecting

through writing on the impressions we receive is one of the most important ways to make meaning out of our many impressions. Journal writing can be one of the most effective means of facilitating praxis.

Subjects in the study often demonstrated their deepest, most abstract reflections in their journals. The journal data, although much less in quantity, revealed much more reflective, abstract thinking than the interview data did. Unfortunately, the abstractions did not go far enough. The majority of the journal entries were descriptive, observations of what was occurring during the sojourn and throughout the training. Descriptive journal writing like that is not unimportant. It is the starting point for sorting through impressions and making meaning from them. It is not enough, however, to observe and record experiences alone. "Equally important is the ability to make meaning out of what is expressed" (Clark, 1994, p. 355).

Journal writing allows one to explore both the affective and the cognitive implications of self-discovery. It has the potential to provide insights that can be acquired only through introspective writing (Berman, 1994). As human beings, we have a deep need to represent our experiences through writing. "By articulating experience, we reclaim it for ourselves. . . . We write because we want to understand our lives" (Calkins, 1986, pp. 5-6).

Admittedly, some types of learners are more prone to use journals than others. Fostering praxis through the art of journal writing comes much more naturally for assimilators than for accommodators. Assimilators are more inclined to think before acting and to analyze their practice (Kolb, 1981). Regardless, journal writing is a discipline worth careful consideration by every cross-cultural educator.

One adult learner wrote, "There have been times in my life when only by writing could I find the rhythms that would contain the pain, sustain the necessary movement forward. There were other times that only by rereading my diaries could I believe that my shifting reality would continue to shift and that present pain would yield as mysteriously as past pain had" (Berman, 1994).

At the core of a transformational model of learning and developing the art of praxis is the continual questioning of assumptions. Perspective transformation is dependent upon evaluating previously held claims with new experiences and information. My family and I live in Singapore for four or five months each year. We stay in a beautiful condominium complete with five free-form swimming pools, a gym, playgrounds, and many other amenities. We live unlike the 75 percent of Singaporeans who have much more modest housing, subsidized by the government. During my family's first sojourn in Singapore, my daughter Emily who was then three said, "Daddy! You know what I love about Singapore?" "What?" I replied. She said, "Everyone in Singapore gets to go swimming every day!" After laughing I told her, "Even those who live in housing developments like ours are too busy to go swimming more than once a month. Besides, most Singaporeans do not live in places with swimming pools." She was not convinced. She knew what she

was experiencing and was certain every other child in the country had the same paradise like life she did right then.

I began reflecting on how Emily's assumption was not unlike what many of the participants in my study did. They presumed that their experiences in a given culture could be generalized to what everyone in that culture experienced. Worse yet, some presumed that whatever they experienced cross-culturally was reflective of what happens anywhere cross-culturally outside the United States.

For Emily and for educators like those in my study, a key to developing praxis lies in questioning assumptions. In the multiple readings of the data, I increasingly found myself questioning the assumptions being made by the subjects, which in turn led me to increased suspicion of the many assumptions I make as I teach cross-culturally.

In looking at the assumptions analyzed in the anticipatory and engagement findings, I discovered that many of them are suspect when measured against the literature reviewed and compared with the student evaluations. However, the accuracy of subjects' assumptions was not the primary concern here. Rather, getting trainers to identify some of the predominant assumptions underlying their preparation and practice when teaching cross-culturally was of concern. Whereas subjects may have espoused a few of the assumptions described in the findings, I expect they would *not* have consciously supported the majority of them. Cross-cultural educators must wrestle with the tensions between their espoused assumptions and the ones demonstrated in actual practice.

Helping educators bring formerly "unquestioned assumptions and premises into critical awareness in order to understand how they have come to possess certain conceptual categories, rules, tactics, and criteria and then to judge their validity" (Mezirow, 1991, p. 203) enhances their ability to continue their own learning as well as the learning of others. Further, as educators learn to question their assumptions, they become better at asking questions of others as well. The art of asking questions that stimulate thought and discovery on the part of both learners and teachers, is essential to competently engaging in cross-cultural educational settings.

Trainers going into foreign contexts for only two weeks have an increased challenge to even begin exposing the assumptions at work in their perceptions and practice. However, as they incorporate those short-term experiences within the larger scope of their lives, and specifically as they reflect on them in light of other teaching and learning experiences, the cross-cultural teaching assignment can provide a powerful means of exploring their assumptions.

In point of fact, traveling cross-culturally, as described in the section that follows, is one of the key tools to aid in developing praxis and hence perspective transformation. Further, building trusted relationships with people from diverse cultures provides an ideal context in which to begin questioning one's self. As we participate in cross-cultural sojourns and develop relationships with people in other cultures, we need to pause when we come across something in a different culture that clashes with us. We must begin by

asking ourselves how the situation is viewed through the eyes of the other person. This ability to pause before making a judgment is critical to the whole ability to effectively navigate through cross-cultural encounters.

Praxis has the potential to lead a cross-cultural educator into a stage where he or she can tolerate ambiguity, respect other perspectives, and define his or her own frame of references. Bennett (1993) wrote:

Ultimately, [praxis] requires the person to make a commitment to a value system honed from many contexts and an identity actively affirmed and based solidly on self as choice maker. It requires an ability to empathize with others, balanced by skill at withdrawing from empathy, and flexibility of boundaries, balanced by skill at defining them. (p. 119)

Preparing trainers through a transformational learning model can move organizations like Teamworks toward the kind of paradigm shift that is needed to redeem its educational practices cross-culturally. Further, it is the very tool needed to assist educators in exploring the tensions innate to their frames of reference and in developing a self-as-process orientation. Predeparture training offers little hope for the bringing about the kinds of changes needed without a broader plan for fostering perspective transformation in trainers.

Within a comprehensive plan for empowering educators for intercultural competency, predeparture training should assist trainers in honing the art of praxis. Further, literature about the West and about Christianity that has been written by individuals from the culture where one is headed should be a reading requirement. Most importantly, individuals from other cultures who have received training from stateside educators should play a heightened role in developing and presenting the predeparture training. Predeparture training should not be developed without significant input from internationals.

Most educators and the organizations they represent are interested in bringing about change. Teamworks and its trainers are no exception. Transformational learning is a paradigm of teaching and learning that seeks to produce change in all the involved parties. Mezirow (1991) wrote:

Through content and process reflection we can change our meaning schemes; through premise reflection we can transform our meaning perspectives. Transformative learning pertains to both the transformation of meaning schemes through content and process reflection and the transformation of meaning perspectives through premise reflection. (p. 117)

The findings indicated a needed for change in the way Teamworks trainers and others like them approach cross-cultural teaching and learning. Predeparture training developed within a comprehensive plan for transformational learning among trainers is a key determinant for bringing about the kind of change Teamworks hopes to cause.

### Duration of Sojourn

Being in a foreign culture itself can be a valuable tool in bringing about the perspective transformation that is needed for intercultural competence in teaching and learning. The cross-cultural experience can be the disorienting dilemma that Mezirow (1991) insisted was necessary for perspective transformation. Mezirow stated that perspective transformation does not happen until an individual encounters dissonance from an experience. The experience often includes an emotionally charged situation that fails to fit the person's expectations and consequently lacks meaning, or results in encountering an anomaly that cannot be given coherence either by learning with existing schemes or by learning new schemes (p. 94). Storti (1990) wrote:

Once we encounter another frame of reference . . . we begin to see what we never could before. When we notice the unusual behavior of a foreigner, we are at that moment observing our own behavior as well. We only notice a difference (something unusual) in reference to a norm or standard (the usual) and that norm we refer to is invariably our own behavior. . . . It is only a slight exaggeration to say that the average expatriate, even the average tourist, returns from a stay abroad knowing more about his or her own country than about the one just visited. (p. 94)

Of course, it is entirely possible, as demonstrated by many of the informants in this study, to be in a foreign context and not use it as a way of developing praxis. In Chapter Five, the findings revealed that subjects glossed over cultural differences during their brief encounters. Two week teaching assignments overseas cannot be expected to foster transformation and intercultural competency in and of themselves. These brief assignments can be used as a piece of fostering increased competency interculturally, but are unlikely to disorient an individual enough to stimulate perspective transformation.

Anderson and Anderson's (2000) analysis bears repeating here:

When we travel to a new country, we feel an almost irresistible impulse to smooth over the strangeness, the distinct particularity of the people we meet. We slip seamlessly into supposing that they are just like ourselves, and we almost forget to marvel at the differences. It's not until we have dwelt in the new country long enough to be shocked, repeatedly, at the wrongness of our assumptions that we begin to notice the crucial things we have missed. (p. 41)

Storti (1990) also asserts that sojourners typically ignore differences and focus upon similarities. At six weeks in a cross-cultural setting, a foreigner often begins to face the first cycle of heightened awareness of cultural differences. After working through some of the dissonance caused by seeing differences, the foreigner usually moves into a new level of understanding and socializing into the new context. Three months into a cross-cultural sojourn is another marker when expatriates often experience cultural differences with a new level of intensity, and again at six months, and one year. The way one responds to the awareness of those differences significantly shapes how the individual

acculturates and whether or not metamorphosis occurs (Black et al., 1991; Oberg, 1960; VanMaanen, 1976).

More extended immersion in a diverse context is likely to play a much stronger role in fostering intercultural competency than a two week sojourn. However, abandoning the two week training model altogether is not the only alternative for organizations like Teamworks. The two week teaching assignment can be used as a piece of a comprehensive plan for stimulating perspective transformation.

Subjects in this study demonstrated the potential to use sojourns in this regard. When they were asked about how the sojourn under study or even previous sojourns caused them to think about their home contexts, subjects answered with ease. It seemed natural for them to use the cross-cultural encounter as a way to stimulate thinking about their home environments. The problem came in the ongoing surface-level reflection that occurred, rather than in using the mirror of foreign culture to think more reflectively about personal assumptions, cultural frames of reference, and the like.

Educators preparing to teach in cross-cultural contexts need to be empowered to use those contexts to foster praxis and hence perspective transformation. Immersion in subcultures, even within the States, allows for some aspect of this vantage point. Working within ethnic, religious, gender-based, or other subcultures provides some of the same mirroring opportunities as does traveling overseas. At the same time, a brief encounter in Chinatown or in the inner city is unlikely to bring about the critical self-reflection that can come from extended engagement in a foreign context.

The mirror of a different culture can enhance one's ability to see self as process rather than as object. As stated earlier, the self-as-object orientation focuses on the particular circumstances of our lives that account for how we are different from those around us. The self-as-process orientation understands the role of cultural conditioning and accounts for how we are the same as everyone around us. "Although we can come to know and change our individual selves [self as object] without leaving our own culture . . . we cannot know our own cultural selves [self as process] without the benefit of an equivalent vantage point" (Storti, 1990, p. 95).

With a great deal of intentionality, two week sojourns can be used as a piece of a comprehensive lifelong learning plan for perspective transformation. The transformative potential of a cross-cultural sojourn is further connected to the way it is debriefed. A fundamental change in one's frame of reference and value system is unlikely without a guided plan for debriefing an educator through the reflections seen in the mirror of the foreign culture. Just as much and maybe more energy and resources need to be devoted to debriefing cross-cultural teaching experiences as the energy and resources devoted to predeparture training.

The duration of a cross-cultural sojourn influences the degree to which it fosters perspective transformation. Even brief sojourns have the potential to aid in an ongoing

consideration of one's frame of reference. In so doing, there is a greater chance of operating from a more liberatory model of education cross-culturally.

Cross-cultural education has the potential to more effectively foster transformational learning for teachers and students both when careful consideration is given to the values of the educational organizations involved, to the educator's frame of reference, to the process of selecting cross-cultural trainers, to the preparation of those trainers, and to the duration of the teaching sojourns. I expect the influence of this study on my work at Teamworks to be ongoing. The preceding implications address some of the most germane areas in which the organization and others like it must begin to respond to what was discovered through this study. I take seriously my own responsibility to do the same.

### **Conclusion**

As the international director at Teamworks, all the preceding implications relate to me personally. The implications run even deeper for me as an individual, however. Being a dissident voice in a movement with which I am so closely connected, evangelicalism, can be lonely at times. A study like this only makes me more passionate about my faith journey; however, it also gives me cause to consider abandoning the greater evangelical movement and its institutions. I am quickly reminded, though, that other groups who share my basic presuppositions have baggage of their own. Instead, I am inclined to remain part of evangelicalism and speak into its shortcomings as a peer rather than as an outsider.

Further, I am increasingly aware that I am not a lone voice within evangelicalism. A growing number of thinkers are challenging some of the same kinds of issues as those raised by the findings from this study. For example, Mark Noll (1994), an evangelical scholar, wrote, "To put it most simply, the evangelical ethos is activist, populist, pragmatic, and utilitarian. It allows for little space for broader or deeper intellectual effort because it is dominated by the urgencies of the moment" (p. 12). In similar fashion, Canadian N.K. Clifford (1973) wrote, "The Evangelical Protestant mind has never relished complexity. Indeed its crusading genius, whether in religion or politics, has always tended toward an oversimplification of issues and the substitution of inspiration and zeal for critical analysis and serious reflection" (p. 323).

I resonate in profound ways with Susan Wise Bauer's (2000) description of her experience as a Ph.D. student at Harvard:

There is much about evangelical culture that I loathe . . . its unthinking boasting of truth, rationality, and the American market-way--and whenever I criticized some prominent voice of evangelicalism--Jerry Falwell or Pat Robertson, for example, my classmates became visibly more comfortable with my presence. My willingness to find fault made me respectable. But to reject the evangelical label altogether . . . seemed like a betrayal. (p. 47)

Interestingly, however, most of the influence from scholars like those above seems to be restricted to the academic world of evangelicalism. These kinds of issues do not appear to have the ears of men and women leading evangelical churches. My research has given me an increased desire to challenge and empower church practitioners with regard to the kinds of issues raised by this study. Noll (1994) wrote:

For evangelicalism as a whole, not new graduate schools, but an alteration of attitudes is the key to promoting a Christian life of the mind. . . . The superstructures--appropriate institutions, lively periodicals, adequate funding, academic respect, meaningful influence--are not insignificant. . . . But if evangelicals are ever to have a mind, they must begin with the heart (p. 249).

The alteration-of-heart attitude is what I most long to see come about as a result of the suggested implications. Cross-cultural teaching and learning is complex and is not helped by simplifying it into packaged approaches. More research is needed on the assumptions of cross-cultural educators in general, and specifically the foundationalist assumptions held by trainers like the subjects in this study. Further research needs to be done on how best to foster perspective transformation in educators who participate in cross-cultural education. Constructive foundationalism needs to be tested as a frame of reference which yields a more liberatory model of education while still remaining true to some essentials of truth and morality.

As my South African friend and I continued to wander through Picadilly Circus on that autumn night several months ago, I challenged him not to write off all Americans just yet. A few months later, he e-mailed me the following message:

I am in recovery at the moment. I have just hosted for a week an American who works for Youth Leadership Association [pseudonym] . . . and it has been a disaster. He presented a . . . workshop. The essence of what he presented . . . was really good--but could have been much better presented by someone more culturally-sensitive. I have never met anyone more insensitive to a local culture--nor a more proud, pushy and condescending person in my whole life. We clashed over cultural issues from the moment he arrived to the last minute that he left. I even told him that he is terminally-offensive in our culture. He would normally say that he is transcultural and that he is not American but biblical in terms of his values. . . .

He never once asked to see anything that I had done--that just made me feel like nothing we have is worth anything. (M. Tittley, personal communication, August 5, 2000)

I wonder what success stories this trainer from the States told when he returned home. Did he use Mark's bold confrontation as a stimulus to reflect critically on his experience? Did he use it to construct a more social sense of self? Would he be bothered by his own new-world-order agendas if he saw them? Although not wanting to remove personal responsibility for exercising praxis, was this trainer intending to be so culturally offensive

or was he subconsciously acting out what he had been programmed to do by his national and religious cultures?

As educators learn to be more reflexive in foreign contexts, it can only strengthen their teaching in familiar contexts. "We need to become more self-reflective about understanding the changing landscape of the international scene, because the globalizing process is being duplicated in our own local environment almost on a daily basis" (Kushigian & Parsekian, 1998, p. 13). I am committed to continuing my journey in this area of research. I am further committed to ongoing growth in my own role as a facilitator of learning in contexts around the world.

I love traveling the world and meeting people with entirely different cultural identities. I often find myself in churches, hotels, or conference centers that could just as easily be in Chicago, New York, Kansas City, Sao Paulo, Frankfurt, or Bangkok. Marriott meeting rooms look much the same in any of those cities. So I have to make it a point to break away from those sterile environments and blaze the streets. I often wander aimlessly around town, sometimes with an invincibility and naiveté that could be dangerous. I talk to locals and I scan the streets for "hits"--the eyebrow raisers and the aha moments--and I mentally file them. What am I after? I want to take the pulse of the community, partly to increase my effectiveness while there, but also just to broaden my personal bandwidth, to glean fresh insights, and to recharge my creative batteries. I look around. I ask questions. Answering them is not as important to me as constantly looking at the world in different ways and realizing that very few people live the way I do. If I cannot draw from these new perspectives, how can I create anything that will be meaningful to anyone but myself? This introspection makes me more effective in the classroom, and rather than shaking my faith, it enriches my journey with God. With God's help, I want to multiply that privilege in the lives and experiences of others who train and learn cross-culturally.

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