



TOOLKIT



Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) Training Materials

Building blocks to construe your personal ICC-Frame of Reference using English for global business performance

Baten, L., Duser, L. & Van Maele, J. (2011), ILT, K.U.Leuven & Group T



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Lut.Baten@ilt.kuleuven.be
lutgart.duser@lscoop.com
jan.van.maele@groept.be

CEFcult - Online CEF-based assessment of oral proficiency for intercultural professional communication <http://www.cefcult.eu/> tool

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"I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand"
(Confucian proverb)

WELCOME TO CEFcult

The CEFcult tool is intended to help language learners refine and improve their speech performance and communicative skills in intercultural professional environments. To this end, learners are invited to observe, to produce and to assess (stretches of) a simulated online job screening interview using English as *lingua franca*. This guided simulation is conceived as a tool for 'learning by doing and sharing' in the network age. It combines theory and application in a highly tangible and practical manner.

CEFcult was started in 2009 when a partnership of foreign language scholars and e-learning development specialists from 8¹ European countries gathered to '*develop an online environment that brings together the worlds of higher education and enterprise for the assessment of oral proficiency for intercultural professional purposes, making optimal use of web 2.0 possibilities*' (CEFcult Kick-off 25 November 2009).

In this increasingly diverse and multicultural world, it was a novel but also logical step to combine the CEF and INCA frameworks for the collaborative evaluation of oral proficiency, adding an intercultural dimension to linguistic and communicative competence constituents. This toolkit builds on tests and pilots with CEFcult at the University of Leuven and at Group T in 2010-2011. We are grateful to the representatives of Cisco and Siemens for their contributing to this fascinating experience. We also thank our students for their task commitment. Cefcult proved to be a fruitful and enjoyable learning experience to all.

We are looking forward to this year's CEFcult path we jointly create and walk ... on the road to success.

Lut Baten, prof.dr ILT K.U.Leuven

Lutgart Duser, project manager, Living Stone Centre for Intercultural Entrepreneurship

Jan Van Maele, prof.dr Group T



As Socrates said, "*If the unexamined life is not worth living,*" then we should also consider a corollary to this axiom: "*The unexamined language lesson is not worth learning!*"

¹ K.U.Leuven AVNet & ILT, Groep T(BE), Technische Universität Dresden (D), Université de Savoie (FR), Università di Bologna (IT), Fontys, Open Universiteit Nederland (NL), University of Lodz (PL), University of Helsinki, Euneos, University of Jyväskylä (FI), The Open University (GB).



'On-line is even better than the real thing'
 (pilot participant, feb.2011)

INTRODUCTION TO THE CEFcult Toolkit

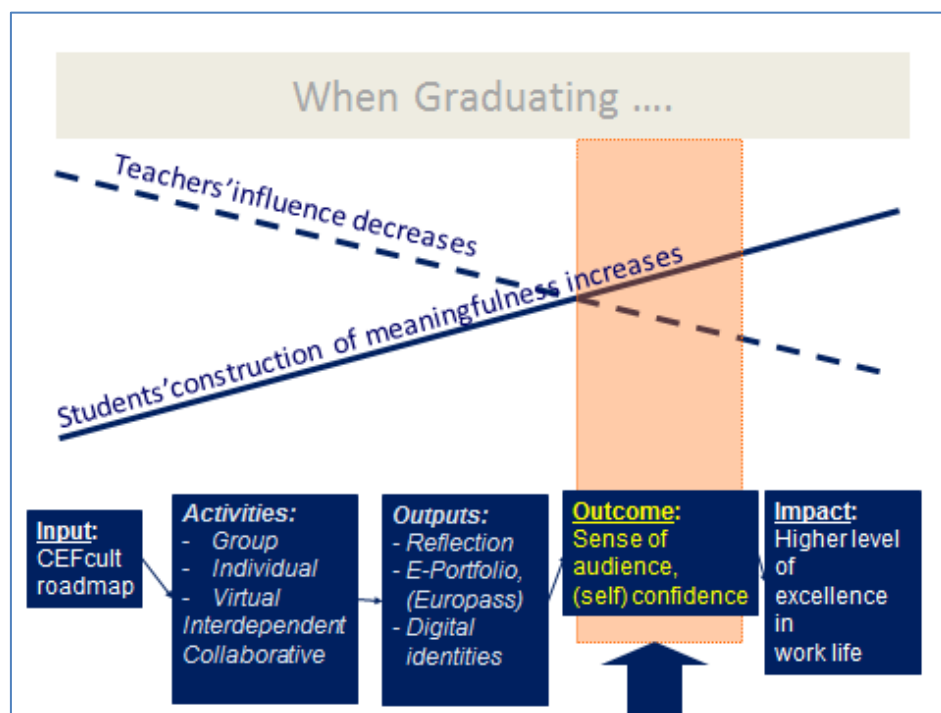
1. Goal

This toolkit contains activities, building blocks and checklists to inspire you to construe a 'Personal Frame of Reference of Intercultural Communicative Competence' (ICC) – *a wiki, journaling, social media group, ..* - to go with the guided job interview simulation for 'learning by doing and sharing'.

'ICC' may not yet be part of your vocabulary. But as you probably know, studying and working across borders and cultures comes along with uncertainty on how to adjust to new and changing environments. Also the use of *English as lingua franca* by non-native speakers is often a source of stress and misunderstanding. To deploy successful international collaboration, trust and mutual understanding are the keys that lead to an acceptable result. It is essential to remove misunderstandings that lie at the root of dysfunctions. The CEFcult learning environment can help you identify these.

2. Why a 'Personal Frame of Reference'?

To prepare for a highly competitive and globalized work environment using English as *lingua franca*, CEFcult sets the scene for a High End-Learning experience: the CEFcult tool should be viewed as a vehicle in which learners can apply their interests, critical thinking, and creative ideas to self-selected areas of interest. A real work-life case (virtual job screening interview) is the 'raw material' of the learning experience. Our course curriculum may be summarized as follows:



3. Communicating in English for global business performance

There is widespread agreement among experts that the number of intercultural encounters in which English is not the native language of any of the interlocutors is greater than those in which native speakers take part. In these cases this English tends to be detached from the culture of the countries that constitute the traditional base of English. This range of varieties of language is referred to as International English.

The assumption that communicating in English will be successful as long as both parties speak it 'well' is not valid. Hidden cultural codes exist and are transferred from the native language to English. Mutually incomprehensible and hidden, culturally based communicative patterns form the background of this communication – lurking under the surface to emerge unexpectedly and destroy any hope of mutual understanding in a real sense.

4. Five basic and learnable interaction capacities to Intercultural Communicative Competence-development:

- ✓ The ability to respond to others in non-judgmental ways, to be open to *new cultural knowledge* (Inca Scale: *Knowledge Discovery*)
- ✓ The ability of listening responsively, making efforts to understand and find ways to *connect* to the other (Inca Scale: *Communicative Awareness*)
- ✓ The ability to show *respect* and a positive regard for another person (tolerance for accents, levels of proficiency) (Inca Scale: *Respect for Otherness*)
- ✓ The ability to react to new and *ambiguous* situations without being overwhelmed (Inca Scale: *Tolerance for Ambiguity*)
- ✓ The ability to participate in *social practices of learning* in larger virtual environments. (Evaluation: *appraisal talk*)

5. CEFcult Assessment for Learning:

Intercultural communicative Competence (ICC) is a measure of one's ability to communicate with people different than oneself – culturally, linguistically, gender-wise. In order to learn and acquire ICC, you are invited to observe, to produce and to assess (stretches of) a simulated online job screening interview in which interviewer and applicant have a different native language and use English as *lingua franca*.

Selecting the most appropriate approach to handle assessments and interviews, only based on textbooks can be challenging. There is no such thing as a single solution or a single set of strategies. Based on the learn-do-share principle of a collaborative intercultural dialogue, you will be asked to do the CEFcult exercises. The models, frameworks and concepts assembled in this manual should help you perceive meaningful patterns. They correspond to the five objectives cited above:

- 1) knowledgeable about the cultural bias of an online job screening interview
- 2) an understanding of (the INCA) assessment scales for intercultural communicative competence
- 3) culture-general frameworks to learn to detect when cultural differences cause a turn of events
- 4) interaction skills necessary to operate globally
- 5) exporting the learning results in your portfolio (ELP), thus turning the CEFcult experience into a retrievable milestone in the field of competence development.

CHALLENGE: Build Your Frame Of Reference For ICC Learning

With respect to learners' autonomy and selected areas of specific interest, this toolkit presents you and your team with activities, building blocks and checklists for consultation.

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1. Review Strategic Business Case

1.1. Selecting a showcase scenario

One has to recognize that whatever the future may hold, countries and people differ ... in their approach to life and their ways of living and thinking. In order to understand them, we have to understand their way of life and approach. If we wish to convince them, we have to use their language as far as we can, not language in the narrow sense of the word, but the language of the mind. That is one necessity.
Jawaharlal Nehru,
Visit to America
(1950)

WORK LIFE TESTIMONIAL: “Smile, You’re on Camera – Assessing Candidates by Video”

Dow Jones wanted to improve the quality of its new hires and turned to HireVue as a hiring solution. Satisfied with the results of the video interviewing process, Dow Jones now uses HireVue for all recruitment events. Video interviewing allows recruiters to view and assess candidate knowledge, skills, abilities and characteristics against the job requirements – while easing the scheduling process, reducing time spent with unqualified candidates and eliminating the need for costly travel. Organizations also use captured video interviews to establish job interview video databases. <http://www.hirevue.com/content/why-hirevue/>

One of CEFcult’s scenario builders’ main considerations was that of the authenticity of situations, tasks, and type of language activity. The scenarios published in CEFcult are selective, not comprehensive, and are based on experience and consensus.

The virtual screening interview-scenario for a career in an international organisation proved to be a valid strategic business case, fitting in the ‘English for global business’ curriculum of ILT/GroupT . However, one has to consider the cultural bias of the sample interviews:

- The sample interview ‘The Other Side of the table’ (task 1, Observation scenario) was recorded at a **multinational corporation** (MNC) that has its management headquarters in the US, and operates in several *host countries* (actually Belgium and The Netherlands). The cultural overlap (US corporate culture, interviewer’s national culture, occupational culture) cannot be denied. E.g. a feedback comment: ‘*We want to work with somebody we like*’. ‘*Likability*’ is an issue in intercultural trainings for Flemish employees dealing with US co-workers and bosses.

The FlashMeeting simulations in the premises of K.U.Leuven include interviewers and interviewees from different cultures and nationalities: a Chinese female interviewer, interviewees from Cameroon and Nigeria next to native Flemish students and observers. We noticed attempts of some African students to fit in the host culture, whereas in the debriefing the difference with the own culture was stated (e.g. questions about family situation and origins considered normal at home, appeared to be considered sensitive in Belgium). “*We should bear in mind the ultimate goals of foreign language education, in other words, we are no longer aiming at native-like proficiency but rather at multifaceted language skills complemented fully with well-acquired or adopted intercultural sensitivity*”.²

² Excerpt Report CEFcult Partner Meeting Bologna, 24 June 2010

1.2. Virtual job screening interview

Screening interviews are used as a first step in the recruitment & selection process to shortlist applicants who might be a good fit with the organization. These interviews are usually conducted by Skype or videoconferencing, and can be recorded.

A common procedure is to develop pre-selection procedures in the (overseas) corporate headquarters, whereas the criterion data (candidates ranking) are gathered across the globe³. The interviews are often organized and conducted by a Recruitment & Selection firm on behalf of the client. Usually the interviewer follows a structured scheme in order to compare responses from candidates from all over the world.

A virtual screening interview takes about 30-40'. It is shorter than the formal face-to-face job interview as the context of interaction is not entirely present or exploited. But it is even more important as the recruiter will base the final selection upon it⁴.

- *The recruiters'* goal is to identify those individuals that are a good fit with the organization in terms of attitude, behavior and values. Therefore a structured interview is used for comparing the recorded responses from candidates across the globe.
- *The applicants'* objectives are:
 - 1) to understand and answer questions about one's background and motivation in order to establish credibility;
 - 2) to arouse a desire to be wanted for a job by providing examples of skills and achievements that make you the best candidate;
 - 3) to choose an adequate position when confronted with questions that could be perceived as privacy violation in a given situation;
 - 4) to unlock the gate to the next step in the recruitment process when the interviewer closes the interview.



³ www.learninterviewtips.com/screening-interview.

⁴ <http://www.glassdoor.com/blog/>

1.3. AIDA, borrowed from Marketing & Sales

While many of us may not think of job interviews as a presentation, it may be the first presentation we ever make. It may also be the most critical one. In a job interview we "sell ourselves", not just ideas. As first impressions are extremely important, we should be properly prepared for an interview. It is most important to anticipate the series of questions the interviewers might ask and how to answer these. Afterwards, the interview should be reflected upon.

In much the same way that a golf player examines distance, wind conditions, and obstacles before selecting the appropriate golf club, so also should you examine job screening interviews with an eye towards selecting and applying the most appropriate response

Looking at a job interview as a sales process brings us to the AIDA principle. The acronym AIDA stands for Attention, Interest, Desire, Action. These four parameters of interaction can be used to organise the content of the letter of application. In the end, the goal of all letters of application is to obtain an interview. That is why they end in action: asking for an interview. These four principles also serve as stages in the Interviewing Process and thus help the applicant to prepare for the job interview.

- **EXPLORATION (phase 1)**
First the applicant needs to catch the interviewers' Attention. Without attention, you can hardly persuade the interviewers of anything. Once their attention caught, i.e. a common ground is established, that attention will be sustained if the other persons Interest is raised. This is a brief moment.
- **INVESTIGATION (phase 2)**
Once the interviewers are interested in the applicant and what he/she has to say, the next step is to create a Desire in them to learn more about the applicant. 'Desire' is the lengthiest part of the interview. Here, the applicant's desire is also at stake. The applicant emphasizes his/her profile and what he/she seeks in the company. Why is this applicant different from anyone else?

Notice that the interest is theirs, i.e. why should the interviewers go on listening to the applicant? It is their interest in the applicant which is of prime importance, not vice versa, although the applicant should communicate his acquaintance and appreciation towards the interviewers.

- **CLOSING AGREEMENT (phase 3)**
The last stage should unlock the gate to the next step but it is also the hardest phase in which the interviewer takes Action on his/her desires and actually 'buys or denies'.

The manner in which the interview is closed depends on the style of the interviewer: no-nonsense high-achievers are likely to wrap up very quickly and may be a little irritated if you continue after they've indicated they're happy; cautious people will may need time to think, so don't push them; very friendly types may actually give you the impression of a 'premature yes'.

1.4. “Where will you be in five years’ time?” - Frequently Asked Questions

In a structured interview the recruiters ask each candidate the same series of (behavioural and non-behavioural) questions so that they can compare the results. Structured job interview are said to represent achievement oriented and individualistic cultural styles’. (Lievens, p.16)

Although there is no set format that every screening interview will follow, there are a number of questions that you can almost guarantee will crop up.

Phase 1: EXPLORATION (Attention & Interest)

1. What motivated you to submit your application?
2. What attracts you in our company?
3. What image do you have of our company?
4. Let’s kick off. Tell me about yourself.
5. Could you please introduce yourself?
6. Please talk us through your C.V.

Observe the applicant’s ability to understand and answer introductory questions about background and motivation in order to establish initial credibility.

Phase 2: INVESTIGATION (Desire)

1. What was your role in group projects? What went well, who contributed to it, in what role?
2. Tell me about an achievement you are proud of?
3. Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
4. How do you think a friend would describe you
5. Tell me about a time when you've had to deliver a difficult message?
6. Tell me about a time when you handled a difficult situation with a team member
7. Tell me about a time when you were tolerant of an opinion that was different to yours
8. Tell me about a time when you had to adapt to a difficult situation
9. Tell me about a time when you had to make an important decision with limited facts?
10. How do you evaluate your ability to combine a family and a job?
What is an acceptable life-work balance ?

Observe the applicant’s ability to arouse a desire to be wanted for the job by providing examples of skills and achievements that make him/her the best candidate; his/her ability to handle values and personalities questions, perceived or real privacy invasion.

Phase 3: CLOSING AGREEMENT

1. Do you have any further questions?
2. What are your salary expectations?
3. Would you be willing to relocate?
4. The allotted time for the interview is up. Do you have any questions for me?

Observe the applicant’s ability to ability to close the interview in a way that is respectful and appropriate. How does the candidate deals with the ‘frightening’ moment of the next step.

1.5. How cultural values affect behavioural questions

"Research has shown that **cultural values** affect corporate strategy and all forms of organizational behaviour, including selection and reward systems, superior/subordinate relationships, and group behaviour, communication, leadership and conflict management styles"

(Nancy Adler quoted by Doug MacDonald, Centre for Intercultural Learning, Canadian Foreign Service Institute).

Blog: "Questions were all behavioural. In this stage ABInbev does not interview, but it is Hudson. Interviewer poses question and was very quiet (didn't talk or gave signs of understanding when I was talking)"⁵

Depending on the responsibilities of the position and the working conditions, a candidate may be asked to describe a situation that required problem solving skills, adaptability, leadership, conflict resolution, multi-tasking, initiative or stress management. The interviewer wants to know how the candidate handled these types of situations⁶. This type of interviewing is based on a philosophy that a comprehensive assessment of the past behaviour and experiences of a candidate is a reliable indicator of his/her response to identical situations in the future.

But:

"We heard from HR personnel working in China that behaviour description interviews do not yield useful information in China because it is socially more acceptable to construct fictitious stories about one's achievements than not to answer the question". (Lievens p.16)

Preference for behavioural questions or proven work experience?

'Countries such as Australia, Canada, Germany, and the U.S. assign great importance to proven work experience in a similar job and technical skills for deciding whether someone should have the job.

Conversely, companies in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, placed a relatively low weight on job-related skills. In these countries, people's potential and teamwork skills seemed much more important.

Other evidence comes from Triandis and Vassiliou (1972) who asked both Americans and Greeks to make decisions about job candidates. The Greek sample emphasized much more information from interpersonal sources than the American sample. In countries such as Mexico (Kras, 1988) or South Korea (Koch, Nam, & Steers, 1995) it has also been found that recruiters attach much more importance to information provided by interpersonal sources of information such as friends or relatives of the candidate'. (Lievens p.24)

⁵ <http://www.glassdoor.com/Interview/InBev-Interview-Questions-E5533.htm>

⁶ http://humanresources.about.com/cs/selectionstaffing/a/interviews_3.htm, 19/2/2011



1.6. Virtual Simulated Job Screening Interview; experience of class 2010-11

The goal of the job interview simulation is to immerse learners into what is called a **lifelike experience**. It gets as close as possible to real life behaviour, appearance, senses, etc. therefore enabling its subject to experience what is happening as if it were real. In other words, simulating reality with its physical laws is the objective of lifelike experience.

- In 2010-2011 Belgian and international students of the University of Leuven/ILT & Group T and professionals of a multinational company volunteered as applicant or interviewer in online screening interviews for a career in an international organization using FlashMeeting or Telepresence. The aims were:
 - to gain awareness of the culturally different 'other' while sharing the same non-native language (*sensitivity to context*)
 - to introduce the INCA assessment scales and the concept of 'intercultural communicative competence' (*openness to new knowledge*)
 - to learn to observe and to evaluate: present-centred, non-judgmental, on purpose (*looking for multiple perspectives*).

This exercise resulted in 2 scenarios: an observation task (*'Sharpen your observation skills'*) to execute before the production task (*capturing of simulated interview stretches in a context where applicant and interviewer have little or no information about each other's culture*). These captured performances inform the CEFcult scenario 'Screening Interview – Observation'. They proved to be a valuable learning experience to all, as may be apparent from the survey analysis underneath (table 1)

Table 1: Q1 How did you experience the virtual job interview-simulation?

| M.(male) applicant | To what extent did you... | hardly 1 | slightly 2 | fairly 3 | very 4 |
|--------------------|--|-------------|---------------|-------------|-----------|
| | ... feel at ease during the interview? | | | X | |
| | ... feel in control during the interview? | | | X | |
| | ...convince the interviewer that you are a suitable applicant? | | | | X |
| | ... manage to convey the information that you wanted? | | | | X |
| | ... manage to demonstrate your language proficiency? | | | | X |
| | ...manage to demonstrate your intercultural competence? | | | | X |
| MM(fem) applicant | To what extent did you... | hardly 1 | slightly 2 | fairly 3 | very 4 |
| | ... feel at ease during the interview? | | | X | |
| | ... feel in control during the interview? | | | X | |
| | ...convince the interviewer that you are a suitable applicant? | | X | | |
| | ... manage to convey the information that you wanted? | | X | | |
| | ... manage to demonstrate your language proficiency? | | | X | |
| | ...manage to demonstrate your intercultural competence? | | | X | |
| P (male) applicant | To what extent did you... | hardly 1 | slightly 2 | fairly 3 | very 4 |
| | ... feel at ease during the interview? | | X | | |
| | ... feel in control during the interview? | | | X | |
| | ...convince the interviewer that you are a suitable applicant? | | X | | |
| | ... manage to convey the information that you wanted? | | X | | |
| | ... manage to demonstrate your language proficiency? | | X | | |
| | ...manage to demonstrate your intercultural competence? | | X | | |

Q2: What would have been different with the interviewer sitting in the same room?

- It would have been a lot more difficult to manage to convey the information that I wanted to.
- I would feel more nervous to convince the [interviewer] with a handshake. I could have more eye contact with the interviewer.
- I will feel very tense if the interviewer asks personal questions. In a live interview, the interviewee would have to be very formal in all domains.
- I think I would have answered the questions much better. Also the voice is not clear. Also, using the internet, the interviewee may be distracted by a ringing phone
- There is hardly any eye contact, body language can't be used in a convincing way; you lose this aspect. If you cannot hear the question properly, the interviewer might think that your language skills are less good."
- I really missed body language, eye contact. Talking to a computer is a bit strange.

All participants expressed the interview being different from live conversations due to the virtual factor: absence of physical proximity, no possibility of physical contact, harder to read body language, difficult to make eye contact, etc.

Q3: We discussed

- The simulation experience brought cultural differences among students to light, e.g. the importance of personal contacts or the attention given to soft skills in a global-local job screening interview
 - Differences brought up by Cameroons, Nigerian, Chinese, Syrian, ...):
 - Initial Contact
 - Upload C.V. on job site or call relevant people in your network
 - Personal network and recommendations give a head-start
 - Interview themes:
 - Salary discussed in first talk
 - Tribe you belong to
 - Religious (prove it), sex life (girlfriend/married), father's profession
 - References checked, extracurricular involvement
 - Dress code is important (black suit, white shirt, clean haircut); long sleeves
 - Three sensitive issues are defined for Belgians: family life, personal background and religion. Religion tends to be the least sensitive, especially in our secularized society.
 - Potentially sensitive questions:
 - Would your partner approve of this job?
 - Do you want children? How many?
 - What job does your father have?
 - Strategies for dealing with sensitive Qs:
 - Answer truthfully anyway
 - Politely refuse by saying 'Sorry, this isn't relevant'
 - When of same culture: very offended, when of other culture: not at all offended.





ISSUE FOR RESOLUTION 1: (Perceived) PRIVACY VIOLATION

Q: "If ambiguous situations with high engagement arise, an applicant should:

- 1) answer truthfully?
- 2) have the right to refuse?
- 3) signal the sensitive impact?"

Job Interview Training in Mumbai (India): "How do you feel today?"

Q: 'Tell me about your family background?'

A: 'My father is a manager ..., my mother is a housewife, my brother ...'

Source: www.letstalk.co.in (English speaking Institute Mumbai)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qp4HjYuy56g&feature=results_video&playnext=1&list=PLDE82CA7E8D71B3CF

- Privacy Violation: Legally
When asked explicitly or indirectly following questions are considered unlawful according to an EC Directive:
 - Ethnicity, race
 - Religion, beliefs
 - Sexual orientation
 - Handicap
 - Gender
 - Age (for elderly applicants)(EC [Directive 2000/78/CE](#) & [Directive 2000/43/CE](#) against racism and discrimination)
- Perceived Privacy Violation: cultural bias

'The **overlap roles work-family life** is more prevalent in collectivistic cultures because these cultures are more concerned with group harmony or individuals in need' (Lievens, p.9). Conversely, they asserted that the equity rule would be most salient in individualistic cultures. So far, these assertions have not been fully tested. Candidates' perceptions of invasion of privacy have remained unexplored, even though there is a large literature on organizational privacy that might be integrated into the organizational justice literature

(Eddy, Stone, & Stone-Romero, 1999; Stone & Stone, 1990).

<http://www.globalhrnews.com/story.asp?sid=1072>

Discussion

"When a question resonates negatively, responding to it does not necessarily mean agreement or even compromise. It means willingness to relativism of one's own values, beliefs and behaviours, not to assume that they are the only possible and naturally correct ones".

2. Review concepts and skills for Intercultural Communicative Competence Assessment

2.1. Selecting an ICC reference model

While recruiters and employers with regard to 'Intercultural Competence'-assessment need to know if applicants are able to interact successfully in intercultural business encounters, educators aim most for the learners 'personal growth. Also the definition of IC can differ in business-oriented ('to perform effectively and appropriately when interacting with linguistically and culturally different others'- Fantini, 2009:458) versus education-oriented contexts ('seeing relationships between cultures,... have a critical understanding of own culture,... conscious of own perspective' - Byram, 2000).

The CEFcult partnerships' members have established experience with **WebCEF** (CEFR-based assessment tool) that provides validated descriptors for all aspects of language proficiency except for intercultural competence: 'sociolinguistic appropriateness' does not figure in WebCEF. Linking WebCEF- scales to scales of intercultural 'communicative' competence is the practical make-up of the CEFcult tool.

'Cultural awareness' is one of the aims of foreign and second language teaching. We believe that communicative competence stands for intercultural communicative competence⁷. Teachers and learners now need to be aware of other people's cultures as well as their own, and therefore, the term 'intercultural (communicative) competence' has emerged.

A first task is to select a reference model for intercultural competence assessment – which is difficult since there is no clear consensus about the definition of IC and its inherent components or properties. The INCA⁸ project was selected among intercultural competence assessment models because it "promotes intercultural awareness and understanding as part of a vocational languages programme"⁹. Moreover INCA builds on Byram's (1997) *Framework for Intercultural Competence Learning*¹⁰, a widely used framework in foreign language education.



⁷ Coperías Aguilar, M. J. (2009). Intercultural communicative competence on the context of the European higher education area. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 9, 242–255.

⁸ A Leonardo da Vinci II-project of the European Community.. <http://www.incaproject.org>

⁹ <http://www.incaproject.org> Assessor manual, 2

¹⁰ Byram, M., Gribkova, B. & Starkey, H. (2002)

Competence 'refers to 'the speaker-hearer's knowledge of his language' and 'Performance' to 'the actual use of language in concrete situations'.
Chomsky, 1965

2.2. INCA scales: criteria for ICC assessment

INCA's assessment was developed for young engineers and professionals offered postings abroad, or working in multicultural or multilingual teams in their own country¹¹.

A person with limited linguistic competence may be an excellent communicator in intercultural encounters, and the opposite may be true as well. So what makes a person an intercultural competent communicator? The answer is a combination of knowledge, awareness and willingness as well as ability, expressed in performance. Drawing on relevant research on descriptors, the INCA framework selected 6 constituents of Intercultural Competence, the existence of which can only be revealed through performance:

Communicative awareness (CA)

The ability in intercultural communication to establish relationships between linguistic expressions and cultural contents, to identify and consciously work with various communicative conventions of partners from other cultural backgrounds and to modify correspondingly one's own linguistic forms of expression.

Knowledge discovery (KD)

The ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to act using that knowledge, those attitudes and those skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction.

Respect for otherness (RO)

Curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own.

Tolerance of ambiguity (TA)

Tolerance for ambiguity is understood as the ability to accept ambiguity and lack of clarity and to be able to deal with it constructively.

Empathy (E)

The ability to intuitively understand what other people think and how they feel in concrete situations. Empathic persons are able to deal appropriately with the feelings, wishes and ways of thinking of other persons.

Behavioural flexibility (BF)

Behavioural flexibility is the ability to adapt one's own behaviour to different requirements and situations.

For the CEFcult scenario, we chose to work with the first 4 scales as they appeared to be more readily observable in the learners' communicative behaviour in the different tasks of the scenario.

¹¹ www.incaproject.org, *Assessee manual*, 1.2

2.3. Levels of intercultural *communicative* competence

When engaging in CEFcult tasks, we follow the INCA reasoning that there is no 'below basic' level: the learner's willingness to cooperate is considered the starting point to intercultural competence.

The INCA developers agreed on both 'low' and 'high' levels of Tolerance for ambiguity, of Respect for otherness; they also agreed that there was probably an 'intermediate' level between 'high' and 'low'. Please keep in mind these connotations when confronted with the Intercultural Competence grid. The table below shows the levels translated into descriptors or 'can do' statements.

"The CEFR avoids relative labels such as 'intermediate' because these mean different things in different contexts" (British Council – Eaquls. A core inventory for General English, p.6).

| Level Competence | 1 'Basic' (low) | 2 'Intermediate' | 3 'Full' (high) |
|---|---|---|---|
| General profile | The candidate at this level is on the ladder of progression. They will be disposed to deal positively with the situation. Their responses to it will be piecemeal and improvised rather than principled, even though mostly successful in avoiding short term difficulties. These will be based on fragmentary information. | The candidate at this level has begun to induce simple principles to apply to the situation, rather than improvise reactively in response to isolated features of it. There will be evidence of a basic strategy and some coherent knowledge for dealing with situations. | The candidate at this level will combine a strategic and principled approach to a situation to take the role of a mediator seeking to bring about the most favourable outcome. Knowledge of their own culture and that of others, including work parameters, will be both coherent and sophisticated. |
| The three levels indicate to what extent the selected scales are developed and put into action: | - individual is reasonably tolerant, willing to interact successfully but responds only to events instead of planning for them; | - individual prefers responding in a neutral way to difference, and is prepared to respond and adapt to the demands of unfamiliar situations; | - individual is confident enough of his/her own position in order to take a polite stand over issues and is constantly ready to use a large repertoire of strategies, knowledge and skills to deal with difference. |

2.4. Two scenarios



2.4.1. Observation Scenario Tasks

1. *The other side of the table: CISCO*

Scale: **Communicative Awareness**

To observe: how successful is the applicant in adapting to Cisco's corporate communicative conventions (language use, verbal and non verbal behavior) of a screening interview? To what extent is he aware of the impact of his performance on his chance of success?

Setting: CISCO Telepresence Conference Amsterdam (interviewer) - Brussels (applicant); staging IT-professionals and a graduating student.

2. *Would you be willing to relocate?*

Scale: **Knowledge Discovery**

To observe: To what extent does the applicant demonstrate familiarity with the interviewer's cultural background? To what extent does he notice or act on signals sent by the interviewer?

Setting: FlashMeeting, staging a female Chinese business consultant screening a Flemish male graduating student.

3. *Tell me about a situation in a team*

Scale: **Respect For Otherness**

To observe: to what extent is the applicant aware of diversity in values and norms in a multicultural team? Observe his (in)ability to tactfully cope with the situation.

Setting: FlashMeeting staging a Flemish male trainee (interviewer) and a Nigerian graduating student (applicant).

4. *Life is full of wonders*

Scale: **Tolerance for Ambiguity**

To observe: the applicant's ability to manage a question that can be considered sensitive or imply high involvement. To what extent does the applicant accept and tolerate ambiguity as a challenge?

Setting: FlashMeeting staging a Flemish male trainee (recruiter) and a female graduating student from Cameroon (applicant).



2.4.1. Production Scenario Tasks

1. Please answer the following question using your webcam:

" PLEASE TALK US THROUGH YOUR CV"

"WOULD YOU PLEASE INTRODUCE YOURSELF?"

- Task: attract the interviewer's interest by your understanding and answering of the introductory question on your background, potential and motivation
 - Purpose: in the exploration phase the applicant must quickly find out how to establish credibility and make a strong first impression.
 - For assessment: Communicative Awareness
 - Setting: be aware that a virtual interview is just as important as a face-to-face meeting. It needs the same level of involvement and preparation.
 - Timing: you have a time span of 3'. Therefore don't be too brief and answer clearly. Cover the question in full according to the (assumed) expectations of the interviewer.
-

2. Please answer the following question using your webcam:

"TELL ME ABOUT A TIME WHEN YOU HANDLED A DIFFICULT SITUATION WITH A TEAM MEMBER"

"WHAT WAS YOUR ROLE IN TEAM PROJECTS? WHAT WENT WELL, WHO CONTRIBUTED TO IT, IN WHAT ROLE?"

- Task: arouse a desire to be wanted for the job by providing examples of skills and achievements that make you the best candidate.
- Purpose: this question is based on the assumption that a comprehensive assessment of past experiences and behaviour is a reliable indicator of an applicant's response to similar situations in the future. In the investigation phase, the applicant must be aware of what the interviewer really wants to learn about her/him, and what he/she should learn about the organization.
- For assessment: Respect for Otherness
- Setting: be aware that a virtual interview is just as important as a face-to-face meeting. It needs the same level of involvement and preparation.
- Timing: you have a time span of 3'. Therefore don't be too brief and answer clearly. Cover the question in full according to the (assumed) expectations of the interviewer.

The candidate can draw from a list of achievements, personal strengths and weaknesses. When explaining a situation to the interviewer, can give the complete story *and* mentions the key points and results obtained. Does not make vague proclamations of his/her skills.

3. Please answer the following question using your webcam:

"WHAT IS AN ACCEPTABLE WORK-LIFE BALANCE FOR YOUR CAREER, FOR YOUR (FUTURE) KIDS AND PARTNER?"

"HOW DO YOU EVALUATE YOUR ABILITY TO COMBINE A CAREER AND A FAMILY?"

- Task: arouse a desire to be wanted for the job by choosing an adequate position when confronted with questions that can be perceived as personal or as a privacy invasion.
 - Purpose: a question to assess the applicant's ability to find out quickly what the interviewer really wants to learn about her/him. An applicant may be asked about beliefs and values affecting work and private life.
 - For assessment: Tolerance for Ambiguity
 - Setting: be aware that a virtual interview is just as important as a face-to-face meeting. It needs the same level of involvement and preparation.
 - Timing: you have a time span of 3'. Therefore don't be too brief and answer clearly. Cover the question in full according to the (assumed) expectations of the interviewer.
-

4. Please answer the following question using your webcam:

"DO YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS" (ABOUT SALARY EXPECTATIONS, RELOCATION) OR

"THE ALLOTTED TIME FOR THE INTERVIEW IS UP. DO YOU HAVE A LAST QUESTION FOR ME?"

- Task: trigger action to unlock the gate to the next step in the recruiting process. How to conclude, what last question to ask when the interviewer is about to close the interview.
 - Purpose: testing how the applicant deals with the last step of the screening interview, the 'closing agreement'.
 - For assessment: Communicative Awareness
 - Setting: be aware that a virtual interview is just as important as a face-to-face meeting. It needs the same level of involvement and preparation.
 - Timing: you have a time span of 3'. Therefore don't be too brief and answer clearly. Cover the question in full according to the (assumed) expectations of the interviewer.
-

2.5. Customizing the INCA levels

INCA levels reveal the importance given by the target culture (interviewer) to the displayed behaviour and communication patterns of the applicant.

Developing and evaluating communicative competences is not a linear process like foreign language competence in terms of six levels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2).

From the beginning some concerns arise, not from the scenarios, but from the appraisal of the INCA levels 'Basic – Intermediate – Full'. These levels indicate to what extent the applicant puts the INCA constituents Communicative Awareness, Knowledge Discovery into action. Assigning a level must come with a meaningful feedback.

However, understanding the academic register of the INCA scales and levels has proved to be a brain breaker to many learners, even in a higher education environment.

For the 'Screening Interview - Observation' learning experience, we decided to add 'task specific' descriptors to elucidate 'what to observe' in the interaction and the applicants' performance.



Cultural awareness is a concept which describes one of the aims of foreign and second language teaching. It thereby stands in a certain competitive relationship to another concept, intercultural competence. The latter refers to and supplements the concept of communicative competence, and therefore includes a skills dimension. Karen Risager (2004: 161)

2.5.1. Communicative Awareness

More specifically Observation Scenario task 1: The other side of the table



Basic

Attempts to relate problems of intercultural interaction to different communicative conventions, but lacks the necessary knowledge for identifying differences; tends to hold on to his conventions and expects adaptation from others.

MORE SPECIFICALLY

The applicant is not at all successful in adapting to the communicative conventions of the screening interview. He expects the interviewer to adjust to his communication style. He is not aware of the potential impact of his style on his chance of success in the interview.



Intermediate

Begins to relate problems of intercultural interaction to conflicting communicative conventions and attempts to clarify his own or to adapt to the conventions of others.

MORE SPECIFICALLY

The applicant is not quite successful in adapting to the communicative conventions of the screening interview. He has some awareness of the potential impact of his style on his chance of success in the interview.



Full

Is able to relate problems of intercultural interaction to conflicting communicative conventions and is aware of their effects on the communication process; is able to identify and ready to adapt to different communicative conventions, or to negotiate new discourse rules in order to prevent or clarify misunderstandings.

MORE SPECIFICALLY

The applicant is successful in adapting to the communicative conventions of the screening interview. He is clearly aware of the potential impact of his style on his chance of success in the interview.

2.5.2. Knowledge Discovery

More specifically Observation Scenario task 2: "Willing to relocate?"



Basic

Draws on random general knowledge and minimal factual research about other cultures. Learns by discovery and is willing to modify perceptions but not yet systematic.

MORE SPECIFICALLY

The applicant does not demonstrate familiarity with the interviewer's cultural background. He may be willing to learn by discovery but he does not systematically notice or act on signals sent by the interviewer.



Intermediate

Has recourse to some information sources in anticipation of everyday encounters with the other cultures, and modifies and builds on information so acquired, in the light of actual experience. Is motivated by curiosity to develop his knowledge of his own culture as perceived by others.

MORE SPECIFICALLY

The applicant demonstrates some familiarity with the interviewer's cultural background. He notices and acts on signals sent by the interviewer to modify his communication where needed.



Full

Has a deep knowledge of other cultures. Develops his knowledge through systematic research-like activities and direct questioning and can, where this is sought, offer advice and support to others in work situations.

MORE SPECIFICALLY

The applicant demonstrates a thorough familiarity with the interviewer's cultural background. He manages to use that knowledge to support the interviewer in her task.

2.5.3. Respect For Otherness

More specifically Observation Scenario task 3: "Tell me about a situation"



Basic

Is not always aware of difference and, when it is recognised, may not be able to defer evaluative judgment as good or bad. Where it is fully appreciated, adopts a tolerant stance and tries to adapt to low-involving demands of the foreign culture.

MORE SPECIFICALLY

Through his story the applicant demonstrates that he is aware of the difference. He tries to adapt as best as he can to the Indonesian teammate's values, norms and behaviours.



Intermediate

Accepts the other's values, norms and behaviours in everyday situations as neither good nor bad, provided that basic assumptions of his own culture have not been violated. Is motivated to put others at ease and avoid giving offence.

MORE SPECIFICALLY

Through his story the applicant demonstrates that he is aware of the difference. He is motivated to put everyone at ease without condemning any party.



Full

Out of respect for diversity in value systems, applies critical knowledge of such systems to ensure equal treatment of people in the workplace. Is able to cope tactfully with the ethical problems raised by personally unacceptable features of otherness.

MORE SPECIFICALLY

Through his story the applicant demonstrates that he can see the situation from the Indonesian teammate's perspective. Although he finds her values, norms and behaviours unacceptable, he copes tactfully with the situation.

2.5.4. Tolerance For Ambiguity

More specifically Observation Scenario task 4: The wonders of life



Basic

Deals with ambiguity on a one-off basis, responding to items as they arise. May be overwhelmed by ambiguous situations which imply high involvement.

MORE SPECIFICALLY

The applicant is overwhelmed by the interviewer questioning whether she can combine the responsibilities of family life and a management position. She shows visible signs of discomfort.



Intermediate

Has begun to acquire a repertoire of approaches to cope with ambiguities in low-involvement situations. Begins to accept ambiguity as a challenge.

MORE SPECIFICALLY

The applicant is not overwhelmed by the question, even though it addresses a sensitive matter. She tries to find a way out by simplifying the issue but is only partially successful.



Full

Is constantly aware of the possibility of ambiguity. When it occurs, he/she tolerates and manages it.

MORE SPECIFICALLY

The applicant successfully manages a question that highly involves her and might have caused considerable stress. She does not do so by simplifying the situation but leaves it open ended.



ISSUE FOR RESOLUTION 2 : ‘Likability’

Q: "Does adapting to the conventions and corporate culture at stake make you a winner ?"

What Siemens, CISCO interviewers say:

- ‘We want to work with somebody we like’
- ‘The winner is the person we like’
- ‘You must find ways to connect with the interviewer’
- ‘Let your personality shine through’

(25/11/2010 Siemens IT, Brussels)

(8/12/2010, CISCO Brussels - Amsterdam)

Avoiding the too-easy answer of “When in Rome, ...”?

- ✓ Assimilate? Act as a Roman ?
- ✓ Compromise? Find an appropriate way to convince the interviewer that you are a likable person?
- ✓ Sticking to your own personality, culture?

Claire Kramsch (Berkeley, 2011) thinks that 'to find **appropriate** subject positions in the multiple situations' is a modernist approach that focuses on ‘**empowerment**’.

Breaking with the context, not assimilating to a defined context is according to prof. Kramsch a post-modernist approach focusing on a ‘**future of possibilities**’.

Discussion

Flanders-US presentation styles as defined by Flemish workers in an intercultural workshop addressing issues of ‘likability’ and ‘connecting’ when dealing with US headquarters (June 2011). Do you agree?

| <i>Flanders presentation style: ‘To Convince’</i> | <i>US presentation style: ‘To Connect’</i> |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Content is king: good, detailed, compact</i> • <i>No fringes, to the point</i> • <i>Looking for feedback</i> • <i>Insightful</i> • <i>Provide a basis for understanding</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Contact is king: connect with a joke, humor</i> • <i>Enthusiasm</i> • <i>Looking for interaction</i> • <i>Emotions</i> • <i>Self-confident, well prepared</i> |

Connecting seeks to forge relationships by creating person-to-person linkages rather than group-to-group linkages. Connecting occurs when individuals step outside their group identities and step inside a neutral zone where people can interact with one another as individuals. When this happens people suspend or put on hold their group differences, they begin to make connections based on their individual similarities. Over time and sustained interaction, the cultural differences that created rigid borders between groups begin to fade into the background. The result is intergroup trust - a state of mutual confidence and integrity that develops when boundaries are suspended and new relationships built.

(Boundary Spanning Leadership Toolkit, 2011, Center for Creative Leadership)

3. Culture General Frameworks

"When we speak (or listen), our attention is focused on words rather than body language. But our judgment includes both. An audience is simultaneously processing both verbal and nonverbal cues. Body movements are not usually positive or negative in and of themselves; rather, the situation and the message will determine the appraisal."

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nonverbal_communication

CEFcult tasks are designed to help students gain personal knowledge about their intercultural communicative abilities in a given work life situation. This type of learning includes how to interpret and select from an expanded communication repertoire and knowledge of different communicative strategies: how to behave harmoniously with one another while remaining true to one's own emerging system of attitudes, beliefs, and values; how to confront, clarify, and act upon situations in constructive and creative ways.

Culture general frameworks provide learners with tools and vocabulary to better express their intercultural experiences, to better understand and negotiate the norms and values conveyed by the INCA-scales.

It is widely recognized that cultures are multi-layered with visible and hidden aspects. The selected frameworks start from outer appearances and expressions, and make you aware of the most meaningful part of culture, norms and values hidden beneath the surface layers, often below the level of consciousness. Norms and values are mainly implicit, non-written rules, and determine how people think about good and bad, polite and impolite, about dealing with hierarchy, women...



Always consider cultural difference when you send or receive nonverbal and verbal messages. A message that has a particular meaning in one society can have a completely different meaning in another society. Only assume similarity after your hypothesis is checked.

3.1. NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

Language is not the only source of communication, there are other means also. Messages can be communicated through gestures, by body language or posture, by facial expression and eye contact. Meaning is also be communicated through object or appearance (such as clothing or what you show of your room during the recording).

We focus on issues of nonverbal communication in **virtual face-to-face interaction** in a specific hierarchical context.

They can be categorised into four principal areas:

- Speech: nonverbal acts
- Physical characteristics of the communicators
- Behaviour of communicators during interaction
- Environmental conditions of the communication.

3.1.1. HIGH – LOW CONTEXT COMMUNICATION

A prime example of how deep cultural understanding may be applied to specific communication behaviours, we introduce at first E.T. Hall's work on high and low context communication cultures.

- **High context communication:**
Emphasizing implicit messages and reliance on contextual cues for meaning. High-context cultures are relational, collectivist, intuitive, and contemplative. This means that people in these cultures emphasize interpersonal relationships. Developing trust is an important first step to any business transaction.
- **Low context communication:**
Focusing on explicit verbal messages and specific communication messages. Low-context cultures are logical, linear, individualistic, and action-oriented. People from low-context cultures value logic, facts, and directness.

Edward T. Hall, a cultural anthropologist who pioneered the study of nonverbal communication and interactions between members of different ethnic groups, died July 20 2009 at his home in Santa Fe (NM). He was 95. His most influential book, "The Silent Language" (1959) outlines his theory of explicit versus informal forms of communication.

As the communication pattern of high-context cultures depends heavily on the non-verbal aspect, the verbal message is considered as only a part of the message being communicated. Silence, indirectness, understatements and pauses, too, carry a meaning. The Japanese for instance have developed *haragei*, or the 'art of the belly', for the meeting of minds without clear verbal interaction. Japanese leaders are actually supposed to perform *haragei* rather than having verbal abilities.

3.1.2. Nonverbal cues in speech

Silence, pauses

Silence is a very important aspect in high-context and high uncertainty avoidance cultures. Whereas members of low-context cultures feel rather uncomfortable when silence occurs in an interview, the Japanese have even developed an "*aesthetics of silence*". Hall¹² states that in Japan, *it is the silences between the words that also carry meaning and are significant.*"

Indirectness

Saying "yes" or nodding affirmatively to a request might have vastly differing meanings from one type of culture to another. To a member of a low-context, explicit communication culture, the expectation may be that the request will be carried out no matter what. To a member of a high-context, informal communication culture, the expectation may be that all parties understand that "yes" is qualified by the context in which that member is situated.

Vocal Cues

Loudness. Without enough loudness you cannot be heard. However shouting or a harsh sounding voice may be perceived as disruptive.

Pitch. A monotone pitch may be perceived as indicating apathy or boredom. A high pitched voice may be perceived as indicating excitement, nervousness.

Rate. Be aware that both are non-native speakers and you may have to adapt your rate of speech. A fast rate may be perceived as an indicator of nervousness and it may also be difficult to understand.

Pronunciation. To be understood, use the correct sounds and emphasis in pronouncing each word. Mispronouncing a word might be perceived as indicator of ignorance or incompetence.

¹² E.T.Hall, The Silent Language, 1959.

3.1.3. Physical characteristics of the communicators

Subliminal nonverbal communications

Subliminal messages are communicated to the subconscious mind of the receiver. Receivers are not consciously aware of the message. However, these messages are important.

E.g. gut reactions are frequently based upon your subconscious reading of subliminal nonverbal communications: how we perceive uniformed professionals (police, military), well-dressed or poorly dressed executives. It is likely that the interviewer unconsciously projects his/her perceived appearance of the applicant to the desired public image of the company's staff.

Dress for Success?

Make sure that your clothing is appropriate for the recording. In a virtual interview people adopt for more casual dress. Remember that your look (dress, hygiene, haircut, ..) is perceived as paying respect to the interviewer, stating his importance.

3.1.4. Body talk of communicators during interaction

"The applicant emphasizes the profile the company is seeking. Also body talk should speak the same language"

Some people use and understand body language differently, or not at all. It should also be stated that people from different cultures can interpret body language in different ways.

Gestures

Unintentional human gestures such as making an eye rub, a chin rest, a lip touch, a nose itch, a head scratch, an ear scratch, crossing arms, and a finger lock have been found conveying some information in specific context.

Shaking your head up-and-down means "yes" in the United States and left-to-right means "no." In some parts of the world the meanings are just the opposite. The hand signal for O.K. in the United States is an obscene gesture in some societies.

Body posture

The study of body movement and expression is known as kinesics. One of the most basic body-language signals is when a person crosses his or her arms across the chest – often interpreted as defensiveness.

In virtual interviews body posture can show uncertainty or anxiety, or even disinterest.

Insecurity is often exhibited by:

- o Constant fidgeting
- o Frequent coughing.

Listener boredom or indifference can be indicated by:

- o Eyes looking elsewhere
- o Head in hand
- o Sloppy or informal body posture
- o Preoccupation with something else.

Listener frustration can be shown by:

- o Rubbing back of neck
- o Drawing eyebrows together.

Eye contact (oculesics)

Maintaining eye contact "can indicate that a person is thinking positively of what the speaker is saying". In the United States eye contact is considered an indicator of honesty and interest. Women in some African societies think that they should look down when talking to another person to indicate deference and respect.

Smile

In some cultures, smiles precede greetings. In the virtual screening interview, we expect this too. It is said that:

Europeans use the smile as the ability to remain calm under stress. The "Anatolian smile" of Turkey is used to mask emotions. The Japanese may smile when they are confused or angry. In other parts of Asia, the smile is perceived as the most appropriate "answer" to any possible situation. For foreigners they look all the same but for Thais, Malays, .. Their smiles offer an amazing array of shadows and tones. Many people in Russia consider smiling at strangers to be unusual and even suspicious behaviour. African chiefs and clan heads use smiles in resolving disputes as a healing peace-broker.

3.1.5. Physical environment of the communication

Space: 'No disturbing artifacts captured by the camera'

- The physical environment captured in the recording transmits nonverbal messages that can be extremely important. Key elements of the environment include: room arrangement, clean desk, food & drinks cleaned up, disturbing or unflattering posters or images removed; adequate lightening ... This image may increase the confidence of the interviewer in the applicant, and heighten the self-assurance of the applicant.
- Space ('Proxemics') is also about the physical distance between the applicant and the screen as perceived by the interviewer: not too close (only face visible), not too far (anxiety?), use of headset for quality of sound or not?

Proxemics (E.T.Hall, 1963) is the study of set measurable physical distances – close or far - between people as they interact: intimate distance for embracing, touching or whispering, personal distance for interactions among family members and good friends, social distance for interactions among colleagues and business partners, and public distance used for public speaking.

Time: 'Gives impression to be ready when the interview gets started'

Should I be online a bit before 10 if the online interview starts at 10? Does the interview starts exactly at 10? Or more probably at a quarter past?

(The use of time in regulating communication can be seen in the executive or the movie star who keeps a client waiting for a precisely calibrated number of minutes (E.T. Hall, Beyond Culture, 1976).

Time orientation refers to the degree to which people believe adhere to schedules and expect other to follow, or are unconcerned about time slots and deadlines.

The terms "**polychronic**" and "**monochronic**" were first used to describe whole cultures and not individuals by the anthropologist Edward Hall in his book *The Silent Language*, 1959.

- In monochronic cultures, time is thought of as being linear divided into fixed elements that can be organized, quantified and scheduled. People are expected to do one thing at a time, and they will not tolerate lateness or interruptions.
- In polychronic cultures, time is thought of as being cyclical. In such cultures, it is acceptable to interrupt someone who is busy.

These two types of behavioural tendencies are likely to exist side by side in many work environments and may be a source of conflict because of their contrasting approaches to time management. To a polychron, switching from one activity to another is both stimulating and productive; to a monochron it is uncomfortable. Persons who are monochronic are expected to lean more toward strict planning, time allocation, and prioritizing in attempting to meet their obligations.

3.2. VERBAL COMMUNICATION STYLES

This covers matters like how directly or indirectly people speak, and whether brevity or detail is valued in communication.

- Direct communication is when individuals say exactly what they mean. Direct communicators believe that it is better to say what needs to be said. Indirect communicators do not believe everything needs to be said and will leave it up to the listener to fill in the blanks and make out the meaning by correctly reading the contextual clues.
- Self enhancement ('I') emphasizes the importance of boasting about one's accomplishments and abilities, whereas self-effacement ('We') emphasize humbling oneself via verbal restraints, hesitations, modest talk. Self enhancement is correlated with cultural individualism, taking more turns, inclined to talk more and be more assertive. Self-effacement is correlated with cultural collectivism, sharing turns is more important than self-expression.
- Circular is often described as storytelling style. Communication is conducted in a circular manner around the main point. The point may be left unstated because the verbal and nonverbal information provided is sufficient for understanding. Linear communication is conducted in a straight line moving in a linear way toward the main point. "Getting to the point" is very important and the point is stated explicitly.

3.3. CULTURAL VALUE DIMENSIONS

The innermost layer of culture is the least tangible, and contains universal value dimensions. Often they are located from two poles: more group feeling or more individualism, more equality or more hierarchy, more or less risk-averse ... These orientations develop over time and are deeply anchored in a group. When unconsciously confronted with different basic assumptions, emotional reactions may arise.

Cultural dimensions are standards to measure the similarities and differences among various national, societal and organizational cultures. They have been an often-used tool of intercultural researchers for decades. The most cited cultural dimensions refer to G.Hofstede. Hofstede built his theories after extensive surveys of IBM managers in 64 countries resulting in four independent dimensions of national cultural orientations.

1. **Power Distance** – the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions accept and endorse authority, power differences, and status privileges.

Hierarchy refers to the way in which and the extent to which the applicants defer to the interviewer in authority, whether they feel entitled to express themselves and how empowered they feel to take the initiative on matters before them.

2. **Individualism and Collectivism** – In individualist societies the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after themselves and their immediate families. People from more collectivist societies tend to be integrated into strong and cohesive groups, often extended families and good friends that continue protecting them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty.

Group focus: “What was your role in team projects?” This refers to whether the interviewer/interviewee considers accomplishment and responsibility as achieved through individual or group effort, and whether they tend to identify themselves as individuals or members of a group.

3. Masculinity and Femininity – This dimension classifies countries according to the distribution of roles between the genders: masculine (achievement, result oriented) or feminine values (work-life balance). In the more masculine countries the ideals are economic growth, progress, material success and performance. In the more feminine societies, individuals are likely to treat men and women equally, and value the quality of life, human contact and caring for others.

Motivation: work/life balance: This characteristic examines whether people work to live or live to work. Some applicants/interviewers may be driven by work and the status it provides, while others treasure family-work balance as a more sustainable approach to career building.

4. Uncertainty Avoidance – This dimension reflects the resistance to change and the attitude to taking risks by individuals from different countries. Uncertainty avoiding cultures try to minimize the possibility of novel and unstructured situations by strict policies and rules, tending to be more emotional. Uncertainty accepting cultures are more tolerant of opinions different from what they are used to—they try to have as few rules as possible.

Change tolerance: How people are comfortable with change, risk-taking and innovation. One can imagine that people in R&D, sales functions must be flexible and tolerant of change, while compliance officers in banking, quality assurance .. are more reluctant to change.

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Survey of fundamental attributes or cultural dimensions, of both societal and organizational cultures, and how these affect leadership. Scope:17,300 middle managers in 951 organizations by researchers based in 62 of the world cultures.



ISSUE FOR RESOLUTION 3: STEREOTYPING

Q: *"To be culturally effective doesn't mean you are an authority in the values and beliefs of every culture. What it means is that you hold a deep respect for cultural differences and are eager to learn, and willing to accept, that there are many ways of viewing the world"* (Okokon O. Udo)

True or false?

Strong eye contact indicates a high level of self confidence

The Czechs never come to the point

Russian business women dress provocatively

Mexicans are exuberant but they never get their work done

The Chinese think Belgians are friendly but ask stupid questions about their country

In the US, you shouldn't worry of being too simple

Americans are not impressed with your body of knowledge, but with how beautiful you deliver your ideas

Source: Living Stone trainings

Is there a manual for dealing with an American, Chinese, Indian interviewer?

It is dangerous to generalize national culture traits (this leads to prejudice, stereotyping), but it is even more dangerous not to do so. Established general principles may pave the road to acquire insight in the national culture of an organization. However, there are no absolute rules for dealing with specific national cultures in all circumstances at full power. Each situation requires its own dosage. Hence, ask, don't assume.

The Golden rule of Confucius reads: *"What you do not wish for yourself, wish that another not."* (Conversations XV: 23). We are exploring the Platinum rule: *"Treat others the way they want or expect to be treated (or at least be aware of what that is)"* (Milton Bennett).

- Cultural generalization: Tendency of a majority of people in a cultural group to hold certain values and beliefs, and to engage in certain patterns of behaviour
- Cultural stereotype: Application of a generalization to every person in a cultural group; or, generalizing based on only a few people in a group
- To use generalizations without stereotyping: test the generalizations and be aware of deviance, be prepared to adjust.

Discussion: Belgians seen through the eyes of the others

- Has anybody ever made assumptions about you, because of your nationality?
- How did you feel?
- How much effort to get to know you individually did the other person make?

4. Interaction Skills

A main issue for resolution is whether trust and relationships are viewed as a prerequisite for working with someone - establishing relationships first, or whether the focus is primarily result oriented – handling key turn projects well, cost effective use of time (time is money, making the deal, ..).

Job interviews are a flexible method for assessing and selecting candidates for all levels and types of positions. However, information from interviews is open to potential interviewer/assessor bias.

- ✓ In a short time span applicants should be able to establish a common meaning about what is said and understood.
- ✓ At the same time, they need to quickly find out how to adjust to the interviewers' communicative conventions.

To find out and learn about your own cultural profile, we present you with 3 concepts that encourage a holistic view on the interaction skills in virtual and face-to-face settings:

Mindful Observation,
Active Listening,
Facework Management

These are three key competences for a global mind-set, integrating the ability to recognize and adjust to cultural differences.

All 3 are of oriental inspiration (*seeing the whole and the interdependency of all parts, accepting uncertainty, plans change easily*), whereas the Culture General Frameworks (non-verbal and verbal communication) reflect western thinking patterns (*a solution oriented approach valuing analysis, categorizing, decision making*).

It must be stated that in a globalizing world, when people work together across borders and time zones, differences between East and West, North and South fade and intertwine.

4.1. Mindful Observation: Describe, Interpret, Evaluate (DIE)

Mindful Observation is a powerful skill for those who hold a deep respect for cultural differences, and are eager to learn, and willing to accept, that there are many ways of viewing the world.

Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally” (Kabat-Zinn, 1994)

Mindful observation helps to:

- (1) view a situation from several perspectives
- (2) see information presented in the situation as novel
- (3) relate to the context in which we perceive the information.

We present you with a tool that summarizes the discrete stages in decoding communication: *Describe – Interpret- Evaluate* (Suspend Your Judgment) (DIE) as a rule of thumb to acquire new cultural understanding.

Describe observable details of the applicants' verbal and non-verbal behaviour.

Observe what is actually said and done without assigning motivation or meaning to it. See the information as new. As if you are taking a picture, see dialogue, movement and spatial relations from the point of view of a photographer; and feel tone of voice, rhythm, mood through your senses.

Interpret: Unlike description, interpretations and evaluations tell me more about myself than about the situation. Although as assessor you must evaluate the applicant's performance, interpret the situation from the perspective of all cultures involved (national, gender, occupational, ..).

This step requires that you try to understand what the observed behaviour of the applicant means in the context of the interviewer. If the applicant's behaviour seems obvious to you, you have to consider that tone of voice, facial expressions, direct or indirect way of responding may have a different significance in the culture of the interviewer. Assume difference until similarity is proven rather than assuming similarity until difference is proven.

Evaluate: this step requires you to develop an explanation for a situation. Treat the explanation as a guess (as a hypothesis to be tested) and not as a certainty. Evaluate to the best of your ability by comparing to the selected CEF and/or INCA scales and descriptors.

Then check your explanation with other foreign and home country assessors to make sure that your guesses – your interpretations – are plausible. This checking process allows you to converge meanings.

You will remember that in order to learn about cultural differences you have to DIE first, then you will approach the learning situation with an open mind and leave with new cultural understanding.

4.2. Active listening

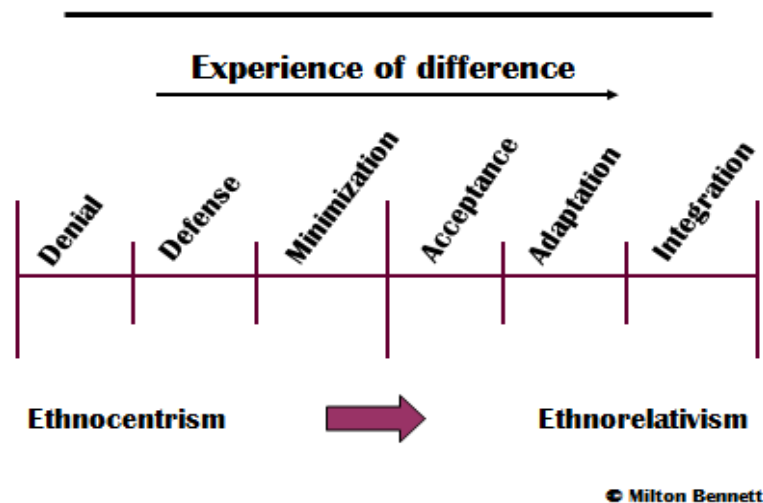
Active listening means being aware of one's assumptions, attitudes and prejudices that affect a productive intercultural dialogue.

In view of a virtual job screening interview, qualities to develop are cultural (self) awareness, and the ability to negotiate appropriate language and behaviour in the forms of address, in arousing desire to be wanted for the job, and the closing agreement.

4.2.1. Assuming cultural difference to gain self awareness DMIS: Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

Milton Bennett's *Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity* posits a continuum of increasing sophistication in our experience and navigation of differences. This model begins with 3 ethnocentric stages in which our own culture is experienced as central to reality in some particular way. The latter 3 stages of the model are termed ethno relative, in which our own culture is viewed in the context of other cultures. The organising concept of the model is differentiation. The 6 stages of increasing sophistication in our experience and navigation of difference are: denial, defence, minimization, acceptance, adaptation, integration.

Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)



- **Denial:** "I don't know and I don't need to know"
Disinterest, Avoidance, Aggressive ignorance.
Adherence to traditional values and support for the community of like minded people.
Issue for resolution: recognize that cultural differences exist and that change is inevitable.

Bennett, Milton. 1993. *Towards Ethnorelativism: A Developmental model of intercultural sensitivity*. In R.M. Paige (ed.) *Education for Intercultural Experience*. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press

- **Defence:** *"We know best, see our success"*
"They have to take me the way I am"
(Reverse: 'I am ashamed of my co-nationals')
Denigration, Superiority
Attitudes of superiority may lead to overconfidence or arrogance and damage cross-cultural partnerships.
Issue for resolution: reduction of us/them by minimizing negative stereotypes of others.

- Minimization:** *"We are all the same."* *"We are open and tolerant"*
"I understand you perfectly"
Is assuming similarity where there is difference, is being colour-blind. Well-intentioned actions may be perceived as "cultural imperialism" and discourage creativity based on cultural diversity.
Issue for resolution:
cultural self-awareness, reconciling difference and similarity
Projected similarity refers to the assumption that people are more similar to you than they actually are. It reflects both a natural and common process. Projected similarity involves assuming, imagining and perceiving similarity when differences exist.

DMIS-practice shows that a majority of the people thinking about intercultural competence development are in 'Minimization' stage.

- Acceptance:** *"Know the talk but not sure about the walk".*
Respect for Behavioural Differences
Respect for Value Differences
Recognizes cultural differences between own and other groups, but appropriate adaptations may still be unclear.
Issue for resolution: ethical ambiguity of cultural relativism.

Learners should be encouraged to take a calculated risk; to trust and become trustworthy. Pitfall of this stage is indecisiveness.

- Adaptation:** Behavioural Code-Shifting
Creativity and flexibility in perspective along with a deep understanding of at least one other culture.
Effective intercultural communicators '*know that they don't know*'.
They assume difference until similarity is proven.
Issue for resolution: authenticity in behaviour.

The most difficult skill in cross-cultural communication involves standing back from yourself, being aware that a situation may not make sense, that your guesses may be wrong, and that the ambiguity in the situation may continue. In knowing yourself, you gain power over your perceptions and reactions; you can control your own behaviour and your reactions to other's behaviour.

ETHNOCENTRISM

means that we hold views and standards that are 'own group/centric' and make judgments about other groups based on our own group's values and beliefs.

'Integration' is not at stake in assessments as it refers to 'global nomads' and 'third culture kids' moving in and out of different cultural worldviews. Despite the periodic confusion in identity, people will often say "I truly enjoy participating fully in both of my cultures"

ROLE REVERSAL

*The best way for transgressing ethnocentrism is **role reversal**: imagine that you are the foreign interviewer. Imagine the type of family you come from, the number of brothers and sisters you have, the type of education you received, the social and economic conditions you grew up with, the ways in which you choose your profession and position, the ways you were introduced to your wife, your goals in working for this organization, your life goals. It forces you to see both the differences and similarities. Moreover role reversal encourages highly task-oriented people like West-Europeans to see the foreigner as a whole person rather than someone with a position and set of skills needed to conduct the selection interview. (Nancy Adler, *Communicating across Cultural Barriers*, p.12)*

4.2.2. Understanding: Converging Meanings

Adapting to Western communication norms is not adopting them. In intercultural encounters the enemy is called "it is obvious", "it goes without saying".

Everything has to be checked, paraphrased otherwise misunderstanding will creep in and highly jeopardize or even destroy the relationship.

There are many ways to increase the chances for accurately understanding when talking (virtually) to foreign interviewers that are not native English speakers. Each technique is based on presenting the message through multiple channels (for instance face and hand gestures...), paraphrasing to allow the interviewer to understand your meaning (and not just your words), and converging meanings (do not simply ask if s/he understands, explain how a friend or colleague communicated about the situation...).

Converging meanings involves identifying the situation and moving from the level of direct discourse to the negotiation of communication itself.

Examples are the use of appropriate language in the forms of address, clarifying the terms used as well as concepts of time and punctuality.

Converging meanings stresses the relation between verbal and nonverbal communication:

1) Review of the relative importance of verbal and nonverbal communication

1) **Nonverbal Behaviour**

- Eye contact. Maintain eye contact to show you understand the question.
- Gestures. Use facial and hand gestures to emphasize the meaning of words.

2) **Verbal Behaviour**

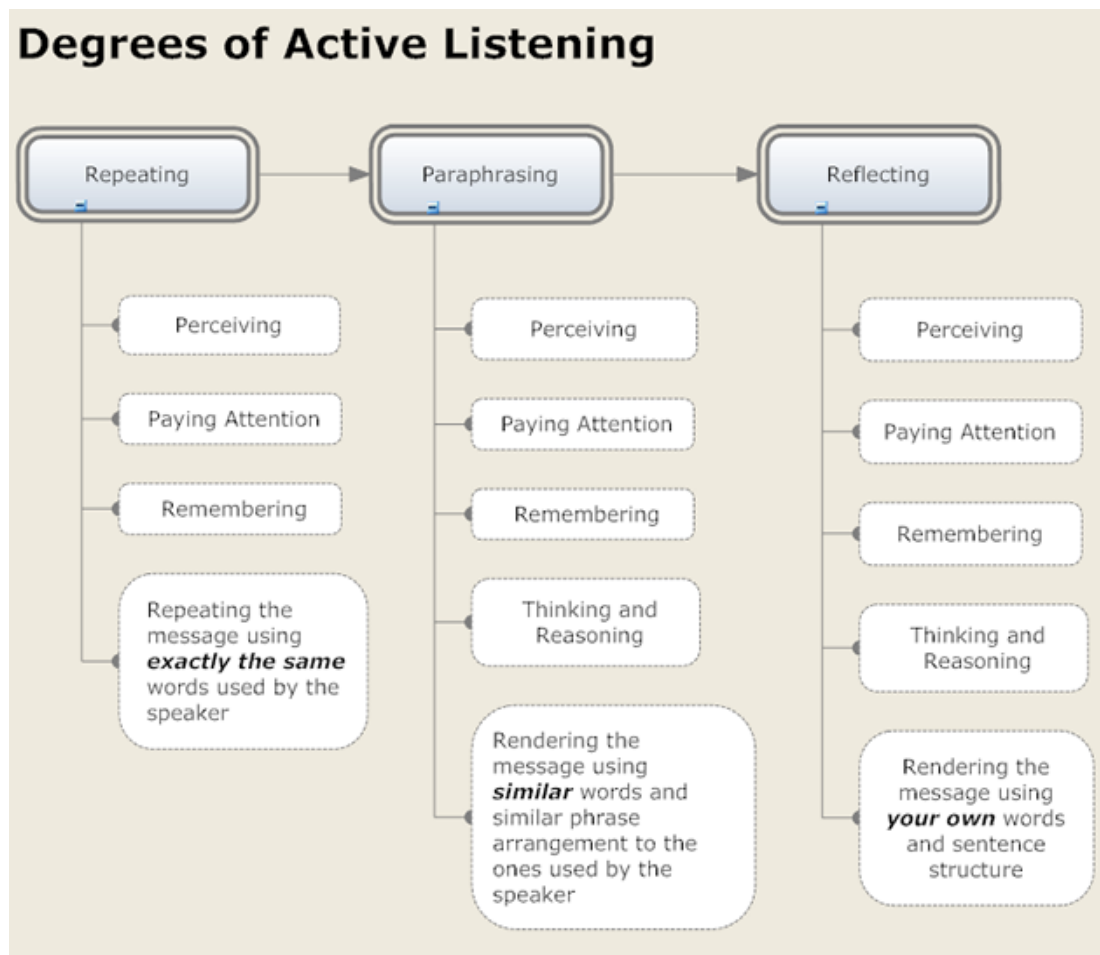
- Clear speech, do not use informal (slang) expressions
- Repetition. Repeat important ideas using different words
- Active verbs. Avoid passive verbs.

3) **Attribution**

- Silence. Do not be afraid of pauses (rather than talk unstructured)

- Tolerance. Poor grammar and mispronunciation can be seen as lack of intelligence; it is a normal sign of second language use.
 - Difference. If unsure, assume difference, not similarity.
- 4) **Comprehension**
- Understanding. Do not assume that they understand; assume that they do not understand. But do not embarrass fluent speakers.

2) Increased sophistication of Active Listening



ACTIVE LISTENING is a communication technique that requires the listener to understand, interpret, and evaluate what they hear. Active listening is a structured way of listening and responding to others, focusing attention on the speaker: from (i) repeating what is said, (ii) to paraphrasing and (iii) to reformulate the message in one's own words or as related by others - always check with the sender. Suspending one's frame of reference, suspending judgment and avoiding other internal mental activities are important to fully attend to the speaker. As a result, the listener not only transforms information into knowledge, but even more important is rapport building: the relationship will be strengthened, trusted.

Source: Creative Commons http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Active_listening, 4 Sept.2011

4.3. Facework Management

“Face” (our public self-image, sense of worth and dignity) and its function in intercultural communication interactions is very important. At the bottom of many cultural misunderstandings are hurt feelings about respect, honour, status, reputation, and competence.

FACE NEGOTIATION THEORY (Stella Ting-Toomey):

.. continues earlier theories regarding the differences between Western and Eastern societies. Accordingly Westerners (individualists) generally interact in such a way as to save face; whereas those in the East (collectivists) tend to give face to others. But the East-West difference appears not to be valid: beware of judging someone’s communication style on the basis of their cultural background alone.

FACEWORK STRATEGIES:

- Face giving (other face concern) : avoiding & obliging tactics
(*Avoiding saying “no”, avoiding a sensitive issue, joking, silence, submissive emotion*)
- Face saving (self-face concern): dominating tactics
(*Demanding, persuading, requesting compliance*)
- Mutual face concern: compromising & integrative styles
(*Disclosure, problem solving, asking for help, offering concessions*)

MOST LIKE ME?

We recommend you to study the chart below to understand the differences and to analyse your personal level of attraction to one style over the other. Be aware that a person will usually consider his/her own style the more significant one, and evaluate others accordingly. Be aware there is no right or wrong style; the difference comes into play as we approach situations in which our interests or goals do not match those of the other.

| <i>Western communication strategies</i> | <i>Eastern communication strategies</i> |
|---|---|
| 1. 'I' identity 2. What is said 3. Direct 4. Assertive 5. 'Self' defined according to abilities, feelings 6. Being unique and expressing the self 7. Personal goals before group goals (presumably 1/3 of the world) | 1. 'We' identity 2. What is not said 3. Indirect 4. Hesitate 5. 'Self' defined according to roles, status, family 6. Belonging and fitting in 7. Engaging in appropriate interaction before personal goals (presumably 2/3 of the world) |
| <i>Saving Face (Self Face concern)</i> | <i>Face Giving (Other Face concern)</i> |
| 1. Self-enhancing 2. Repair damage & re-assert self 3. Justify actions or blame situation 4. Task put before relations 5. Low context communication style | 1. Self-effacing 2. Avoid potential face threat 3. Apologize and take blame 4. Relations before task 5. High-context communication style |



**ISSUE FOR RESOLUTION 4: INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH,
DEFYING STANDARDS!**

Q: "If you disagree with prejudices on race or ethnicity of a majority group you belong to, should you speak out and make your voice heard?"

"Interviewers who speak more than one language are preferred so there is a sensibility with respect to vocabulary, articulation and word choice"¹³

Female applicant from France using International English. The male interviewer's feedback: "I didn't understand her at all. But she is beautiful".

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sDA0o1M2bVo&feature=related>

International English and Intercultural Communication

Is a friend (Facebook) a 'Freund'?

Our knowledge of English will not help if the perception of the words we use differs. A list of critical language functions for intercultural situations probably includes first encounters, small talk, finding agreement, convincing, instructions ... All involve questions of social relations, hierarchy, politeness conventions, appropriate register, non-verbal communication etc.

On the other hand it is probably the skill of metacommunication (paraphrasing, asking for clarification, ..) which plays the most important role in these situations, and should not be ignored. However, metalanguage may be difficult or impossible to employ when communicating with members of some so called '*high context communication styles*' (avoiding, obliging tactics..), but in most intercultural encounters, metacommunicative skills will play an essential role (Byram 1997).

Discussion

Considering the many varieties of the new world Englishes (Chinese-English, Flemish-English, Nigerian English, South African English, Indian English ..) these manifest themselves in terms of language use, politeness conventions, degree of formality .. in:

- Email
- Text messaging (SMS)
- Blogging (e.g. reflections on interviews)
- Social Media (Facebook, LinkedIn)
- Twitter

What does this mean for the type of English to be taught and learned?

¹³ RABOTIN, M. (s.d.), Behavior Interviews in an Intercultural Context, www.globalhrnews.com/story.asp?sid=1072

5. ASSESSMENT of Intercultural Communicative Competence

‘In intercultural communication it is not about what you say but how you are heard, not about what you show but how you are seen’

5.1. Formative Assessment

Assessment is often divided into summative and formative categories. Summative *assessment* is generally carried out at the end of a course or project, to assign students a course grade. *Formative assessments* are part of a learning cycle in an educational setting. CEFcult assessment tasks are ‘formative’, used to aid learning. The assessor might be a teacher, a peer, or the learner.

Self-assessment¹⁴ is an educational assessment *for* learning; it is the process of looking at oneself to seek information to confirm their uncertain self-concept rather than their certain self-concept for the purpose of considering different objectives for assessment practices. *Self-assessment* is a form of diagnostic assessment which involves students assessing themselves.

Peers in CEFcult are those assessors who adopt a similar perspective as the test-taker. This means that:

- They are co-learners of the language that is used in the task
- They consider the task from the same viewpoint as the test-taker.

It appeared in the pilot phase that peer reviews by students do not provide specific feedback to test takers about the strengths and weaknesses of their performance; raters from the world of work tend to apply scales more consistently, resulting in more reliable measurement. A.Prechtl & Davidson Lund, 2007:486.

Communication is *appropriate* when it meets contextual and relational standards (you did it right given the context); *effective* when it achieves desired ends or goals or provides satisfaction of both communicators’ needs and concerns.’ Smith, Paige and Steglitz (1998: 71 – 72)

Experts in CEFcult are assessors who meet the following criteria:

- a) They are knowledgeable about the assessment instrument; they understand the rating scales and the construct referred to, and they can apply the descriptors to the task at hand.
- b) Their role in the feedback process as that of a "resident escalator". Sensitive and specific recommendations about how particular aspects of the oral performance can be improved will help students move toward higher and higher levels of excellence.
- c) Their appreciation of the performance is valued by the test-taker, who accepts them as authoritative norm-setters. Consequently, the status of expert assessor cannot be absolute: it is the user who endorses an assessor as an expert assessor with regard to some domain or task.
- d) Expertise is neither about proposing a single solution nor a set of strategies on the task. Experts perceive meaningful patterns in their domain and they access knowledge mainly for its applicability in a given situation.

¹⁴ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self-assessment>

5.2. Appreciative Inquiry

Notice that the assessment is *offered* to the assesseees, not imposed on them. The assessment is a subjective evaluation and is never an objective statement. It is what we perceive according to what we have been trained to see from our occupation, our education.

Cultural differences including speakers' accents, vocabulary, and misunderstandings due to cultural assumptions often obstruct the listening process. Multilingual professional environments thrive where there is an appreciative eye, where people are tolerant of foreign accents.

We recommend the principles of **APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY**¹⁵ pioneered by David Cooperrider of Case Western Reserve University in the mid-1980s. Appreciative Inquiry emphasizes inquiry into strengths rather than focusing exclusively on fixing weaknesses. To understand the basis of Appreciative Inquiry it is useful to look at the meaning of the two words in context.

- *Appreciation* means to recognize and value the contributions or attributes of people around us.
- *Inquiry* means to explore and discover, in the spirit of seeking to better understand, and being open to new possibilities.

When combined, this means that by appreciating what is good and valuable in the present situation, we can discover and learn about ways to effect positive change for the future.

Discussion

“The extensive work of Smith and colleagues is probably the best example of how managerial behaviour (e.g., handling disagreement, seeking guidance) is differently valued across countries. Given these well-established cross-cultural differences, the same situation or the same response to the same situation might be differently scored/rated across cultures. (Lievens p.22)

“It should be emphasized that the INCA tests are a training tool [...]. Scores cannot be regarded as a reliable guide to the intercultural competence of an individual. Firstly, because only observation of behaviour in real time allows us to know whether an individual would act as stated and secondly, because longer and more detailed answers will tend to score more highly in some cases.” (INCA website, *Intercultural Encounters guidelines*).

Therefore, individual assessments may diverge on published samples; this may be because the speaker is on the borderline between two CEFcult levels, because the task does not provide enough or not the right kind of evidence for a particular level, or because different assessors may weigh criteria slightly differently. Also a joint consensus, averaging out the individual assessments, is not at stake.

¹⁵ <http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu>

5.3. Annotations templates

COMMUNICATIVE AWARENESS

Q: "Tell me about yourself", "Please talk us through your CV"

1. DESCRIBE: observe mentally the applicant's verbal and nonverbal behavior *as is*, non-judgmentally.
2. INTERPRET: try to see through the eyes of the interviewer, think 'role reversal', do not take own culture as measurement for what is good or bad.
3. EVALUATE with an appreciative eye, as a hypothesis to be tested, not as a certainty.

Explain:

MY SCORE CA :

_____ (mark X)

BASIC INTERMEDIATE FULL

4. CHECK your score with assessment scores made by others

OTHERS' SCORES CA : PEER EXPERT (pick one)

_____ (mark X)

BASIC INTERMEDIATE FULL

5. CONVERGING MEANINGS: were your interpretations plausible? What do they tell about you? Would you restate your annotations, review your score?

6. REFLECTION

Do you agree with the following statement: *"Adapting to the conventions and corporate culture at stake (e.g. values and behavior of an American multinational) makes you a winner"*

KNOWLEDGE DISCOVERY

Q: "Would you be willing to relocate? Where do you see yourself in five years' time? Why do you want to work here?"

1. DESCRIBE: observe mentally the applicant's verbal and nonverbal behavior *as is*, non-judgmentally.
2. INTERPRET: try to see through the eyes of the interviewer, think 'role reversal', do not take own culture as measurement for what is good or bad.
3. EVALUATE with an appreciative eye, as a hypothesis to be tested, not as a certainty.

Explain:

MY SCORE KD :

_____ (mark X)

BASIC INTERMEDIATE FULL

4. CHECK your score with assessment scores made by others

OTHERS' SCORE KD : PEER EXPERT (pick one)
 _____ (mark X)

BASIC INTERMEDIATE FULL

5. CONVERGING MEANINGS: were your interpretations plausible? What do they tell about you? Would you restate your annotations, review your score?

6. REFLECTION

Complete the following statement and expand: "*To be interculturally effective doesn't mean you are an authority on the values and beliefs of every culture. It means... "*

RESPECT FOR OTHERNESS

Q: "Tell me about a situation....." , "What was your role in team projects?"

1. DESCRIBE: observe mentally the applicant's verbal and nonverbal behavior *as is*, non-judgmentally.
2. INTERPRET: try to see through the eyes of the interviewer, think 'role reversal', do not take own culture as measurement for what is good or bad.
3. EVALUATE with an appreciative eye, as a hypothesis to be tested, not as a certainty.

Explain:

MY SCORE RO :

_____ (mark X)

BASIC INTERMEDIATE FULL

4. CHECK your score with the assessment scores made by others

OTHERS' SCORE RO : PEER EXPERT (pick one)

_____ (mark X)

BASIC INTERMEDIATE FULL

5. CONVERGING MEANINGS: were your interpretations plausible? What do they tell about you? Would you restate your annotations, review your score?

6. REFLECTION

Please react to and motivate the following: *"If you disagree with prejudices on race or ethnicity of a majority group you belong to, you should speak out and make your voice heard."*

TOLERANCE FOR AMBIGUITY

Q: "What about children, family situation ... " "What is an acceptable work-life balance"
(Potentially sensitive)

1. DESCRIBE: observe mentally the applicant's verbal and nonverbal behavior *as is*, non-judgmentally.
2. INTERPRET: try to see through the eyes of the interviewer, think 'role reversal', do not take own culture as measurement for what is good or bad.
3. EVALUATE with an appreciative eye, as a hypothesis to be tested, not as a certainty.

Explain:

MY SCORE TA:

_____ (mark X)

BASIC INTERMEDIATE FULL

4. CHECK your score with assessment scores made by others

OTHERS' SCORE TA: PEER EXPERT (pick one)
_____ (mark X)

BASIC INTERMEDIATE FULL

5. CONVERGING MEANINGS: were your interpretations plausible? What do they tell about you? Would you restate your annotations, review your score?

6. REFLECTING

Pick one statement and motivate your choice: "*If ambiguous situations with high engagement arise, an applicant will: 1) answer truthfully; 2) have the right to refuse; 3) signal the sensitive impact*".



ISSUE FOR RESOLUTION 5: 'DO I PASS THE GOOGLE TEST?'

"Digital literates vs illiterates: are we going towards the right direction?"

1 in 5 corporate recruiters will screen candidates by checking their social networking profiles. This raises the important question:

"Do I Pass the Google Test?" Learn the facts on building your personal brand (LinkedIn, Flickr, YouTube): the entire image you present will influence the decision making, it can work for and against you.

Be aware of what you share:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gsCfF0dpMAs&feature=related>

Discussion:

"Being active in multiple online social networks can easily get out of control and destroy your chances of being hired or destroy your professional career."

(8/12/2010, K.U.Leuven and Group T students welcomed at Cisco Systems Belgium)

Tip: Check your web profile (assuming you have no homonym) on

<http://personas.media.mit.edu/personasWeb.html>

Enjoy!

6. European Language Portfolio (ELP)

From here ...

“A milestone passed, new things begun, dreams as shining as the sun, a goal achieved, a victory won! That's Graduation!”

... To there:

“My path has not been determined. I shall have more experiences and pass many more milestones” (Agnetha Faltskog, Abba Singer)

Portfolio

In education a portfolio consists of three parts: a passport, a biography (reflection area) and a dossier (files). It is used to document the learning process and make the acquisition of new competencies transparent.

The purpose of the European Language Portfolio (ELP) is not limited to a personal and portable record (*Biography*). *Passport* and *Dossier* sections are suitable for presentation of evidence for recruitment, for diagnostic language testing based on online tools allowing access for interested parties worldwide.

Europass Language Passport is becoming a standard and recognised element of the professional and academic curriculum of all European citizens. It is used in all 27 European Union countries to promote mobility and increase employability. It provides documents which show your skills, abilities and qualifications in a common, recognised format. The forms are currently completed online or by downloading the forms and filling them in.

With the **Europass Language Passport**, people can describe their language skills, using a six-step scale based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (levels A1-C2). **The section ‘LINGUISTIC EXPERIENCE’ is intended to showcase your intercultural competence-learning by means of CEFcult.**



The elp-DESK App lets you complete and save your Europass Language Passport (ELP) quickly and easily on your iPhone or iPod touch. It lets you identify and enter:

self assessed language skill levels

any qualifications you may have

language-related experience you may have had.

<http://www.elp-desk.eu/elpPageEnglish.html>

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Portfolio_EN.asp

7. LIBRARY

Selected data & recordings

1. Simulated Job interviews with Flemish and Unesco students using Flashmeetings.
<http://fm.ea-tel.eu/fm/953a38-23388>, October 2010
2. Captured job screening interviews with students of English IV and scholars from Syrie, China, ... using Flash meetings. Testing the usability of the INCA scales. December 2010
<http://fm.ea-tel.eu/fm/fmm.php?pwd=6a62ba-23939>
<http://fm.ea-tel.eu/fm/125867-24083>
3. English IV job interviews with Siemens Business Solutions Brussels. November 2010
4. English IV Job interviews with Cisco (Telepresence) on the premises of Cisco in Brussels (and online with Amsterdam). Available online Avnet (streamed version). December 2010.

JOB INTERVIEW

_Lievens, F. (2007). Research on selection in an international context: Current status and future directions. In M.M. Harris (Ed.) *Handbook of Research in International Human Resource Management* (pp. 107-123). Lawrence Erlbaum's Organizations and Management Series.

'Most Frequently Asked Questions':

Thill, John V. And Bovée, Cotland L. (2011), *Excellence in Business Communication*, Pearson, p. 543,549

Schneider, Susan C. and Barsoux, Jean-Louis (1997), *Managing Across Cultures*, FT Prentice Hall, 2003, p.154-155

Glassdoor is a free inside look at interview questions and advice:

<http://www.glassdoor.com/Interview/IBM-Interview-Questions-E354.htm>

<http://www.glassdoor.com/Interview/InBev-Interview-Questions-E5533.htm>

"Questions were all behavioural. In this stage ABInbev does not interview, but it is Hudson. Interviewer poses question and is was very quiet (didn't talk or gave signs of understanding when I was talking)"

Wikijob

<http://www.wikijob.co.uk/wiki/procter-gamble-interview-questions>

<http://www.wikijob.co.uk/forum/accounting-professional-services/deloitte-pre-screen-tel-interview-guide>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Job_interview

Miscellaneous

<http://career-advice.monster.co.uk/job-interview/job-interview-questions/virtual-job-interview/article.aspx>

<http://career-advice.monster.co.uk/job-interview/job-interview-behaviour/what-does-my-body-language-tell-my-interviewer/article.aspx>

<http://www2.monster.co.uk/virtualinterview/>

<http://www.learnirect.co.uk/improve-your-job-prospects/help-getting-job/virtual-job-interview/>

<http://www.hypergridbusiness.com/2010/09/what-to-wear-to-a-virtual-job-interview/print/>

Multicultural Toolkit <http://www.awesomelibrary.org/multiculturaltoolkit.html>

A US-based kit of different scales and background classifications. Even if biased towards US, it might give us a few insights of what to ask and what not.

Join Google and be prepared to odd questions!

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QuDoFHgcrNA&feature=related>

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DCuu1L9irUw&feature=relate>

INCA

Theoretical basis: http://www.incaproject.org/en_downloads/24_INCA_THE_THEORY_eng_final.pdf (5 May 2008).

You can find a Glossary of terms at: http://www.incaproject.org/en_downloads/25_INCA_project_glossary_eng.pdf

The original document explaining the theory behind the INCA project can be found at:

http://www.incaproject.org/en_downloads/24_INCA_THE_THEORY_eng_final.pdf

www.sit.edu/SITOccasionalPapers/feil_appendix_f.pdf

http://www.worldlearning.org/search_results.htm?cx=006260246060202060170%3Aogs1b7jwqms&cof=FORID%3A11&ie=UTF-8&q=yoga&sa=Search+World+Learning#962

If you are interested in the Framework, go to <http://www.incaproject.org/framework.htm>

If you are interested in the Assessment tools, go to <http://www.incaproject.org/tools.htm>

If you are interested in the Inca Portfolio, go to

http://www.incaproject.org/en_downloads/23_INCA_portfolio_English_final.pdf

To read the Manuals, go to <http://www.incaproject.org/manuals.htm>

Savouring the intercultural momentum

English for Enterprising

“Characterized by a bold and daring energetic spirit or by independence or by originality of thought; prompt or ready to undertake or experiment” (Jan Van Maele & Merriam-Webster).

21st Century Assessment

*“It has been widely noted that with the emergence of social media and Web 2.0 technologies and mind-sets, learning is increasingly collaborative and knowledge increasingly distributed across many members of a learning community. Traditional assessment practices, however, focus in large part on the individual and fail to account for knowledge-building and learning in context. As researchers in the field of assessment consider the **cultural shifts** that arise from the emergence of a more participatory culture, they will need to find new methods of applying assessments to learners”.*

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Educational_assessment, 12 Sept. 2011

Intercultural Competence

... ‘the ability to get by in a multicultural society where none of the interactants may use their mother language and all bring to the interaction their own cultural and personal background’ (Living Stone Centre, www.lscope.com).

To connect

Connecting seeks to forge relationships by creating person-to-person linkages rather than group-to-group linkages. Connecting occurs when groups step outside their group identities and step inside a neutral zone where people can interact with one another as individuals. When this happens people suspend or put on hold their group differences, they begin to make connections based on their individual similarities. (Boundary Spanning Leadership Toolkit, 2011, Center for Creative Leadership)

Speech performance

*“The keenness of hearing and those powers of oral persuasion that will enable one to encourage the most productive harmony out of relevant circumstances.” (Sun-tzu. *The art of war*).*

‘Culture is Communication. Communication is Culture’ (E.T. Hall)

