ACHTIVING ‘EFFECTIVE’ DEVELOPMENT: AN EXAMINATION OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE FROM THE DEVELOPMENT PRACTITIONER’S PERSPECTIVE

By

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To Corey, Aiden, Riley, Connor and Mason. My world.
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Intercultural communication from the development practitioner’s perspective has received little to no attention from the academic community. This dissertation addresses that gap via mixed methods research into the current communication practices of individuals conducting development work within non-government organizations, government organizations, religious organizations, non-profits, and the like. In grounded theory qualitative interviews with 22 practitioners, 7 communication and development categories encompassing 44 themes emerged regarding intercultural communication strategies, practitioner best practices and characteristics, communication challenges, being on the ground, perceptions of the field, and intercultural communication training. Then, 346 practitioners participated in a survey regarding intercultural communication using scales intended to measure some of the components that emerged from the qualitative research. Practitioner responses indicated correlations between Arasaratnam’s (2009) Intercultural Communication Competence scale and various self-report instruments used to measure listening, flexibility, trust, self-efficacy, superiority, respect, and practitioners’ perceptions of the field. Based on these results, a new
grounded theory of intercultural development communication is presented, Cultural Separation Theory, to explain the process of cultural separation unique to the U.S. native development practitioner. Additionally, the Constructing Effective Development Communication model represents the process of communicating across cultures from this unique perspective.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION


These are just some of the headlines posted daily by major development organizations across the world. They demonstrate the sheer number of individuals and dollars spent on development and social change efforts. Hundreds of thousands of people struggling daily to eat, live, work—all influenced by the world powers via aid monies and programs like USAID and the International Monetary Fund. These organizations have the unique responsibility of offering assistance to developing societies and disaster victims while maintaining cultural sensitivity. This dissertation will explore the ways in which communication practitioners, many of whom are the aid workers of these organizations, combine development and social change efforts with intercultural communication competence (ICC) to achieve their goals. I will also offer a theoretical impetus for combining the fields in a manner applicable to future practice.

The following discussion justifies the need for combining communication for development and social change (CDSC) with ICC and will set the stage regarding topic salience, timeliness, and application.

In 2000, 189 countries across the world came together via the United Nations (UN) with the mission of eradicating poverty and providing freedom to those living in the margins of the world society. The results of this meeting yielded the U.N. Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals for the world, which address poverty, education, gender equality, child mortality, maternal health, HIV/AIDS,
environmental sustainability, and global development partnerships via U.N. Development Programme (UNDP) efforts. The declaration focuses on human dignity, equality, peace, and economic support for the developing world. The five lines of this document devoted to tolerance offer the only mention of respect for cultural diversity in achieving these goals ("United Nations Millennium," 2000). The UNDP supports programs in 177 countries around the world and calls for a focus on equity and environmental sustainability ("Human Development Report," 2011).

Ten years after this historic meeting, Secretary of State Hilary Clinton released the first ever Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) as a strategic framework for the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) as they look to the future (Clinton, 2010). The report calls for revising development efforts to focus on “high-impact development” rather than mere program implementation, requiring greater cooperation with host-country organizations and cultures, creating better practices by including local leaders, and evaluating processes, among several other changes (QDDR, 2010). Each of the changes presented will depend on the skills and training of individuals working in the field. Changing the focus from creating dependence on outside systems to partnerships for sustainable development will require cultural knowledge and communication competence, among other proficiencies.

Unfortunately, the authors of the QDDR still appear to be focused on the United States’ version of modernist development; those measured in economic terms and the ability of host countries to become future democratic allies of the United States. While these are important goals to many, the focus of development efforts should be on
empowering individuals to reach their potential, with the freedom to do so—without the “catch” of serving the U.S. agenda (Apthorpe, 2013). True development communication efforts should be culturally grounded, with goals relevant to the host country, and built upon competencies and understandings of complex cultural structures and systems, many of which have been in existence much longer than capitalism and GDP. In order to achieve these goals, development organizations must equip workers and employees with the necessary tools to design and implement programs that are truly beneficial to the host country or community. This begins with understanding.

While the thought of offering some earth-shattering new philosophy on development and how we can improve and move away from neo-imperialism and dependent development practices is appealing, the truth is that the literature is full of theories, critiques, and suppositions about the best ways to do development. Scholars such as Frank (1966), and Falletto and Cardoso (1979) have already identified some of the major issues with development practices. The goal of this dissertation is to take a small portion of that discussion and expand upon it—to explore one small subset of how we can fix the problem of modernist development by building understanding among aid workers and the individuals they seek to help. Specifically, the goal is to explore intercultural communication competence from the perspective of CDSC practitioners through qualitative interviews, then to analyze those responses to identify key concepts and relationships in intercultural interactions.

The intercultural interaction will serve as a means to bridge the gap between ICC and CDSC from an applied and theoretical perspective. Academic research offers the opportunity to analyze practical efforts through the lens of communication theory. In his
2005 “Social Change in the 21st Century” essay, development communication scholar Jan Servaes indicated that future studies in social change should focus on training and intercultural communication competence of practitioners in the field. Eight years later, the field still lacks substantive research and results with regard to the tools, skills, and sensitivities necessary to combine global and local perspectives in effecting social change. As Stirrat (2008) stated, “we probably know more about the missionaries and civil servants of the 19th and early 20th centuries than we do about contemporary development workers” (p. 407). This doctoral dissertation seeks to address that gap by merging intercultural communication competencies with CDSC paradigms and then exploring practitioners’ perspectives in present-day development.

**Why Is Culture Important to CDSC?**

Current issues within the CDSC discourse include the argument between human rights and human needs, cultural imperialism, ethics in development efforts, and globalization and localization, among many others (Melkote & Steeves, 2001; Schech & Haggis, 2000). Particularly relevant here is the loss of cultural diversity that results when the First-World imposes its beliefs, practices, and ethnocentricities on the Third or developing-world. In the second edition of “Communication for Development in the Third World,” Melkote and Steeves (2001) referred broadly to this issue as a lack of ethics in development activities. Essentially, as modernization and globalization take root, “the traditional social support structures that had provided security for many hundreds of years are being destroyed” (p. 332). Researchers are predicting an increasing need for cross-cultural collaboration in development efforts due to the changing landscape of our world and the individuals who need aid (Kavazanjian & Jayawickrama, 2011).
But the literature lacks information about how to apply culturally sensitive work efforts and intercultural competence training to maintain and strengthen native cultures while empowering people to make positive changes for themselves. As a field, the concepts and tactics are constantly evolving and becoming more culturally sensitive, but are those individuals working in the field increasing their intercultural communication competence? Are non-government organizations (NGOs) and state-run programs fitting practitioners with the tools they need to effect change? And more importantly, is academia providing the research necessary to evaluate and analyze current training practices for cross-cultural sensitivity?

While research is lacking, there is evidence that international aid organizations recognize the need for competent intercultural communication practices in development programs. Servaes (2005) discusses the 2002 Bellagio Meeting as a prime example. The Bellagio meeting, which brought together delegates from the Rockefeller Foundation, the Pan American Health Organization, and various USAID entities, was an opportunity for development practitioners to outline objectives for intercultural competence in the field, to include ICC and training development. The outcome of the meeting was a functional map that consisted largely of concepts related to intercultural communication research. This meeting was an important step in the right direction for improving the way development practitioners approach host country nationals in terms of communication proficiencies, but researchers need to determine if these objectives have taken hold in aid organizations.

**How Can This Topic Inform Current Theories of CDSC and ICC?**

First, research from the ground up can provide information about the cultural competencies necessary for successful communication interaction. Those who work
with international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and national or international
government organizations among other programs come into contact with aid recipients
on a daily basis. Recording and analyzing these interactions from the perspective of
ICC and CDSC theories will provide a new framework that merges the two fields.

Secondly, this research is needed now more than ever. As globalization
continues with the influence of technology, media, travel, foreign investment and the
like, local cultures and ways of life are changing. Whether or not these changes are
good is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but we must better equip development
organization members with the training and competencies necessary to do the least
harm to value and belief systems, while effecting change that equates to improved living
conditions in the developing world.

This dissertation seeks to explore how we are equipping CDSC practitioners to
conduct development work in culturally sensitive ways, specifically to gain an
understanding of what concepts related to ICC, if any, are present in current field work
and development approaches. To gain this understanding, the current study will
qualitatively investigate practitioners’ experiences and quantitatively measure their
competencies from the perspective of intercultural communication and ICC theories as
well as training in these fields. These theories combined with CDSC perspectives form
the basic theoretical position of this study. The following literature review offers a
synthesis of each of the key theories. Then, the methods section offers an overview of
the qualitative and quantitative structures for the research, followed by the results and a
discussion of those results to include implications for the field.
Why Does This Topic Matter to Me?

During my second semester in graduate school, I took a course called Communication for Development and Social Change. That class was life changing for me. As an United States citizen interested in intercultural communication, I learned many new things, and more importantly, I learned how much I did not know with regard to our position in the world. As I learned about the efforts to effect change, the successes and failures alike, as well as the theoretical history of the field I began to better understand the precarious position of workers in the field. I also became aware of the horrible atrocities that occur around the world.

In one very eye-opening day of class, we watched the documentary “Darwin’s Nightmare.” To this day, I am still trying to process what was presented. We watched as foreigners first introduced a species of fish, destroyed an ecosystem, and then harvested the fish for export while the local population starved. We learned of personal stories of strife and suffering. We watched small boys, homeless and left to the streets to try and live, just survive. These images spoke to my mother’s heart and I could not and cannot shake them. When the film was over, our professor asked the class to discuss what we had seen. I could not speak, could not make a sound for fear of bursting into tears. I had been moved. There was a shift and I knew at that moment, that if nothing else, I should try to make a small difference. Even if just in the field of development communication, I had to make an effort to help. I could no longer be oblivious.

When it came time to decide on a dissertation topic, I knew CDSC had to be an integral component. Intercultural communication as my degree focus was also a topic of interest, and after some discussion with my advisor, the decision was made to try to
combine the two. After some initial research indicated that these two fields had beginnings in the Peace Corps, but had not been merged in the literature, I knew that combining ICC competence and CDSC would be my topic.

**Why Should You Care?**

For starters, there are about 1.6 million development practitioners working globally. The field of international development has far-reaching implications for social, political, environmental, and economic systems the world over. Additionally, OECD reports that U.S. net official development aid (ODA) for 2012 was $30.5 billion, down 2.8% from the previous year (“Aid to Poor Countries,” 2013). In addition to cuts in funding due to budgetary constraints within U.S.-based organizations, aid is also shifting toward middle-income countries instead of the poorest areas of the world, making it even more difficult to help those most in need. OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurria mentions the 2015 MDG deadline in relation to this shift, with a “hope that the trend in aid away from the poorest countries will be reversed. This is essential if aid is to play its part in helping achieve the Goals” (“Aid to Poor Countries,” 2013). The next deadline for the MDGs is fast approaching, and U.S. development practitioners play an integral role in the success or failure of development efforts. The U.S. spends more than any other nation in the world on international development. We must be leaders in this field but also leading in such a way that we can be proud of our worldwide reputation and the legacy we leave behind. Effective intercultural communication is critical to accomplishing these tasks, but little attention has been paid to the development practitioners actually conducting the work. This fact spurred “Third World Quarterly” to dedicate its entire September 2012 issue to remedying the problem by bringing attention to how “development practitioners’ personal relationships and values
significantly shape perspectives and practices of aid work” (Fechter, 2012, p. 1387).

This dissertation seeks to add to this emerging field by further exploring development through the eyes of the individuals doing the work. The next chapter presents a review of the most relevant literature as related to intercultural communication competence and international development communication.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

The following overview offers valuable insight regarding intercultural communication theories, ICC perspectives, and CDSC paradigms. Each of these components serves to inform this dissertation by providing an historical and theoretical framework within which research and interview questions have been developed. Additionally, the literature further qualifies the need for an overlap in ICC and CDSC perspectives in achieving development work. First, key concepts and paradigms from intercultural communication are explored, followed by the broader intercultural communication theories that have influenced the development of specific ICC models and theories. Finally, a discussion of CDSC’s historical progression and most influential paradigms leads to the justification for connecting these bodies of literature into the current topic of research.

Definition and Background of Key Terms

The following section offers a synthesis of the best definitions for the key terms used in this dissertation as well as some historical background for each. Moving from generalized ideas to specific concepts, this section will also serve to solidify the specific direction of the study. The key terms include culture, communication, development communication, and cross-cultural training.

First, the term culture has been defined in a multitude of ways, ranging from focus on the symbols, rituals, artifacts, and languages that characterize cultural members to regional boundaries that separate people-groups from one another, to customs, norms, beliefs, and values (Lustig and Koester, 1999) and shared ways of life (Corder & Meyerhoff, 2009). However, Keesing (1974) offered a definition that portrays
cultural members as “actors” playing out unconscious theories of language and life on a self-defined stage. Keesing (1974) posited: “Culture in this view is ordered not simply as a collection of symbols fitted together by the analyst but as a system of knowledge, shaped and constrained by the way the human brain acquires, organizes, and processes information and creates ‘internal models of reality’” (p. 89).

Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997) described seven cultural dimensions from the perspective of international business and management, building on Parson’s work with interpersonal relationships. The first dimension, universalism versus particularism, describes the emphasis cultures place on rules in society: universalists approach relationships from the perspective of one right and good way to interact, while particularists have a more open view of acceptable behavior as dictated by the relationship itself. Individualism versus collectivism indicates the degree to which members of a society think of themselves either as part of a group or as individuals. The neutral versus emotional dimension relates to the ability of individuals to express emotion or operate in an emotion-free state, especially in the business setting. The specific versus diffuse construct shows the degree to which relationship development is considered more important than a strictly contractual interaction. The achievement versus ascription dimension depicts the ability of an individual to rely in business and social settings on his or her achievements, school or otherwise, or on the breeding and connections ascribed to him or her. The final two dimensions are related to time—the fluidity of time and effects of past, present, and future—and the environment—the effect of outside forces and the way individuals perceive those outside forces (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997).
Like Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, Hall offers his depiction of culture via a specific dichotomy. In “Beyond Culture,” Hall (1981) explained high- and low-context cultures in terms of the legal systems utilized by different nations in order to represent cultural inclinations. According to Hall (1981), in high-context cultures “one has to know considerably more about what is going on at the covert level” (p. 112), and the culture itself “make[s] greater distinctions between insiders and outsiders” (p. 113). Hall indicated that the purpose of cultural context lies in the requirement in some cultures that members be able to fill in the blanks in communication exchanges more so than in others, where information is more explicitly stated (1981). Essentially high-context cultures call for more implicit knowledge on the part of the individual, whereas in low-context cultures, information is more likely to be explicitly stated during the communication interaction. Hall’s work provided the basis for other scholars in the field to expand on the concept of context, as in the work of Hofstede and Bond (1984) discussed below.

In trying to understand how we make meaning of our world, Geert Hofstede has proposed five (originally four) dimensions of culture that have been widely accepted and applied to intercultural communication settings. Hofstede and Bond’s (1984) work is perhaps the most highly recognized of the intercultural concepts and theories explored in this dissertation, and the most often utilized in the field of intercultural communication. The dimensions were devised from work with IBM corporation as a multinational enterprise that represented many different cultures. Employees were surveyed and from their responses the dimensions were created. Hofstede’s dimensions reflect characteristics of 53 national cultures (Hofstede & Bond, 1984). The original four
dimensions are power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism-collectivism, and masculinity-femininity.

Power distance “is defined as the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations accept that power is distributed unequally” (Hofstede & Bond, 1984, p. 419). Gudykunst (2003) asserted two different types of power distance, namely cultural and individual-level. Cultural power distance in high-distance societies is viewed as a fact of life and basic institution, whereas in low-power-distance cultures, power is seen as a force used only when justified and legitimate (Gudykunst, 2003). In individual-level power distance, the concept of egalitarianism can affect how communicators interact with one another, with higher levels of egalitarianism found in low-power-distance cultures than in high-power-distance cultures. Because power and empowerment have become such important themes in current communication research, particularly in communication for development, it is important to note that a culture’s particular view on power distance can dictate how communication practitioners should approach a research or social-improvement project.

The next dimension in Hofstede’s work is the concept of uncertainty avoidance. Hofstede and Bond (1984) defined it as “the extent to which people feel threatened by ambiguous situations, and have created beliefs and institutions that try and avoid these” (p. 419). Gudykunst (2003) described uncertainty by stating:

members of low uncertainty avoidance cultures have lower stress levels and weaker superegos, and they accept dissent and taking risks more than members of high uncertainty avoidance cultures...high uncertainty avoidance cultures tend to have clear norms and rules to guide behavior for virtually all situations. (p. 19)
Gudykunst’s Anxiety/Uncertainty Management (AUM) theory relates to this dimension of Hofstede’s work and will be explored in depth in the following theoretical analysis.

Another Hofstede dimension, individualism-collectivism, refers to the ways in which a culture emphasizes the individual good over the collective good and vice versa; or as described by Hofstede and Bond (1984), “in individualistic cultures ‘people are supposed to look after themselves and their immediate family only,’” whereas its opposite pole, collectivism, is defined as “a situation in which people belong to in-groups or collectivities which are supposed to look after them in exchange for loyalty” (p. 419). An interesting component of the individualism-collectivism dimension is the idea of ingroups proposed by Triandis. Triandis (1988) asserted that individualistic cultures have a variety of different ingroups and therefore display more standard behaviors in relating to others. On the other hand, more collectivist societies display membership with fewer ingroups and display behaviors that are more tailored to each of the few groups with which they come in contact (Gudykunst, 2003). This concept of ingroups and relational behaviors as a result of membership will show up again in a later theory discussion.

The final of the original four dimensions is masculinity-femininity. In this construct, masculinity “is defined as a situation in which the dominant values in society are success, money, and things,” and femininity “is defined as a situation in which the dominant values in society are caring for others and the quality of life” (Hofstede & Bond, 1984, p. 420). Essentially, gender attributes of a society determine whether the focus will be performance-driven or socially driven. Gudykunst (2003) again made a division among cultural level masculinity-femininity constructs and individual-level
constructs. Here cultural examples of the dimension are played out in the roles of men and women, particularly in families. In masculine cultures men “deal with facts” in the family setting while women “deal with feelings,” whereas in feminine cultures, men and women can do both (Gudykunst, 2003, p. 21). At the individual level, masculinity-femininity is displayed through the traditional stereotypes held for men and women and the extent to which those are present and enforced throughout society (Gudykunst, 2003).

In an effort to mitigate any “western” bias to the creation of the first four dimensions, Hofstede (1993) relied upon the research of a previous co-author in viewing cultural constructs from an “eastern” point of view. Through an analysis of Michael Harris Bond’s work in uncovering the idea of culture from the eastern perspective, Hofstede (1993) issued a fifth cultural dimension entitled long-term orientation. This dimension is based on the teachings of Confucius and indicates that short-term cultures focus on “the past and present, like respect for tradition and fulfilling social obligations” while long-term cultures focus on “the future, like thrift (saving) and persistence” (Hofstede, 1993, p. 90). Gudykunst (2003) focused solely on the connection to Confucianism and his concept of Confucian Dynamism included eight values that resembled the ones laid out by Hofstede.

Culture can be conceptualized and categorized in a variety of ways, but one implicit aspect of culture is the idea that communication is used to create culture and is indeed a dynamic process in the cultural experience. In the course of communication, cultural members can exchange information and meaning through languages and symbols. When meanings are not shared, individuals are experiencing intercultural
communication. The topic of intercultural communication is a key component of this study in that it provides the basic opportunity to display the presence or absence of competence in interactions. The next section offers an overview of intercultural communication.

**Selected Theories of Intercultural Communication**

The following overview of major theories in intercultural communication informs the research portion of this dissertation by highlighting the strategies that individuals use to deal with intercultural interactions. Each of these theories provides a unique perspective on cross-cultural interactions and serves as a lens through which we can analyze intercultural competence and training techniques and what, if any, adaptations may be necessary for accomplishing development work across cultures. For the purposes of this dissertation, I have chosen several theories or perspectives that deal specifically with the ways in which communicators adapt, accommodate, or change their approaches when faced with intercultural situations as well as motivations and behaviors associated with communicating cross-culturally. The first two theories are unique in the field and most relevant to this study because they offer a basis for “intergroup communication that includes cross-cultural variability,” where other theories omit the cross-cultural variables (Gudykunst & Lee, 2002, p. 40). The third theory adds a relational component to the discussion that best explains how development practitioners in intercultural settings negotiate new relationships. Additionally, these perspectives are some of the most well-known and studied in the field, providing much of the backdrop against which ICC researchers have developed their own models and perspectives.
Communication Accommodation Theory

The first theory of intercultural communication for explication and review is Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT). This theory deals specifically with how individuals assess and adjust their communication interactions based on several different spoken and unspoken factors. This theory was derived from work done by Giles in 1973 as Speech Accommodation Theory (SAT) which focused on the “linguistic strategies” that communicators use in order to “gain approval or to show distinctiveness” (Gudykunst, 2002, p. 187; Gudykunst, 2003), as well as the motivations of the speaker in the communication interaction, and the behaviors they display reflecting those motivations (Gallois, Giles, Jones, Cargile, & Ota, 1995). By 1988, the theory had evolved to the CAT through the collective work of several different authors and projects including Giles, Mulac, Bradac, and Johnson (1987); Coupland, Coupland, Giles, and Henwood (1988); Gallois, Franklyn-Stokes, Giles, and Coupland (1988); and had come to include additional components such as “addressee focus,” the adaptation to cross-cultural interactions and the “influence of situations” (Gudykunst, 2002, p. 188).

Seven years later Gallois et al. (1995) offered a new iteration of CAT. Gallois et al. explained the theory as “focusing attention on the language, nonverbal behaviors, and paralanguage used by interlocutors to realize moves of speech convergence and divergence, that is linguistic moves to decrease and increase communicative distance” (1995, p. 115). Essentially, individuals display their assessment of the communication encounter through the use of body language that either accommodates the outgroup speaker by physically moving toward that individual, or fails to accommodate the speaker by physically moving away. Another aspect of this concept is referred to as
maintenance and involves the communicator maintaining his or her physical position during the encounter, neither accepting nor rejecting the other individual.

Gallois et al. (1995) also identified several theoretical challenges to the use of the CAT in a predictive manner. First, the authors suggested that simply defining accommodation and how it can be observed is a challenge. There are three main forms of accommodation: psychological, linguistic, and subjective versus objective (Gallois et al., 1995). The original theory was divided into 17 propositions, later revised into 11 propositions (Gallois, Ogay, & Giles, 2005) and organized into four categories: initial orientation; psychological accommodation; focus, accommodative strategies and behavior; and attributions, evaluations, and future intentions. Each of these components works to assess, explain, and even predict the communication situation experienced between two or more individuals with different cultural backgrounds (Gallois et al, 1995). According to CAT, communicators take into account the historical and preconceived notions that communicators bring to the situation in addition to the characteristics of the current relationship. Communicators consider the behaviors and tactics and interpret those within the context of their own cultural values (Gudykunst, 2002, 2003). In the end, each communicator evaluates the interaction and makes a determination in regard to future intent (Gudykunst, 2002, 2003).

McCann and Giles (2006) applied Communication Accommodation Theory in their study of U.S. and Thai bankers as they communicated across age gaps among individuals not in management positions within the organizations. The study focused on the “social stereotypes” in the “age domain” that are part of the communication process and use of language. The authors asserted, “CAT predicts that people of different
generations may communicate in ways that are biased in favor of their own age group and not the other age group" (McCann & Giles, 2006, p. 76). In order to measure this phenomenon, the authors focused on the acts of accommodation, non-accommodation, and respectfully avoidant communication among the participants.

McCann and Giles (2006) focused on young (less than 34 years old) U.S. bankers in the Santa Barbara, California-area and young Thai bankers in Bangkok, Thailand, to form their sample of 348 respondents. Utilizing the Global Perceptions of Intergenerational Communication (GPIC) survey, the researchers collected data with regard to the respondents' perceptions of communication both with age-in-group and age-out-group individuals. In order to accomplish this, the researchers administered eight different versions of the survey, measuring communication perceptions for four different target groups varying by managerial status and age, as well as allowing for a mixed order of the questions (McCann & Giles, 2006).

The authors hypothesized that young bankers perceived older bankers as being less communicatively accommodating, and that they communicated differently with older bankers through respectful avoidance and that this trend would be more pronounced among young Thai bankers than the young U.S. bankers surveyed. McCann and Giles also extended these hypotheses to communication perceptions between these young non-managers—namely that the respondents believe they were being less accommodated by managers than non-managers in communication interactions, and that they themselves behave differently when interacting with either of the two groups. This was extended yet again to measure the cultural differences in communication, as the researchers expected that young Thai bankers would perceive
more pronounced differences in these situations than their U.S. counterparts. The results suggest that the young bankers perceived communication encounters with older bankers to be less accommodating, and that they used more respectfully avoidant tactics with older bankers than with their peers. There did not appear to be an increased occurrence of these phenomena in Thai communication exchanges over U.S. communication exchanges. As related specifically to the correlates of CAT, the authors explained that “young people favor their age ingroup over age outgroups” (McCann & Giles, 2006, p. 94).

**Anxiety/Uncertainty Management Theory (AUM)**

The major proposition of Gudykunst’s theory, originally introduced in 1995, is that “effective communication emerges from mindfully managing uncertainty and anxiety,” and that anxiety levels vary across cultures (Gudykunst & Lee, 2002, p. 43). Uncertainty avoidance is a means by which cultures can be understood and distinguished from one another in terms of individuals’ ability to mitigate the issues associated with the unknown or unfamiliar. The following theory takes into account these differences and then offers a means by which communicators in intercultural exchanges can deal with these challenges. Gudykunst (1995) formulated the propositions of Anxiety/Uncertainty Management (AUM) theory from previous work with Uncertainty Reduction Theory (URT). URT deals with interpersonal communication within a group, while AUM deals with intergroup communication of individuals across cultures (Gudykunst, 1995).

The AUM theory begins with several concepts including strangers, uncertainty, anxiety, effective communication, and mindfulness (Gudykunst, 1995). The concept of interacting with a stranger, different from the usual definition of the term, occurs any time individuals meet someone from outside of their ingroup (particularly in cross-
cultural settings), thus resulting in anxiety and uncertainty. Individuals work to manage this anxiety and uncertainty each time they are faced with a stranger (Gudykunst, 1995).

The concept of uncertainty was a central aspect of URT, and is repeated in AUM. Here initial uncertainty can take on several different forms: predictive uncertainty and explanatory uncertainty. In predictive uncertainty, the challenge is the inability to predict what an outgroup member will say, do, or believe. In explanatory uncertainty, the challenge is the inability to explain how the outgroup member is acting. In attempting to explain what strangers are thinking or feeling, we are exercising our explanatory uncertainty reduction skills. Additional types of uncertainty include cognitive uncertainty and behavioral uncertainty. In cognitive uncertainty we are challenged by a lack of knowledge about the outgroup member, and in behavioral uncertainty we are challenged by our ability or lack thereof to predict how an outgroup member will behave. In total, “we all have maximum and minimum thresholds for uncertainty” that affect our abilities and desires to communicate with members of outgroups (Gudykunst, 1995, p. 11). If uncertainty levels are above our maximum threshold, we may choose to end the communication interaction; if uncertainty levels are below our minimum threshold, we may become bored with the situation. In total, we need the appropriate balance of “predictability and novelty” to continue with communication interactions, thus building relationships (Gudykunst, 1995). Overall, uncertainty can lead us to avoid communication situations, much as Hofstede’s related dimension suggests.

Anxiety is the next basic concept underlying the AUM theory. Anxiety refers to the emotional tensions we experience from “feeling uneasy, tense, worried, or apprehensive about what might happen” (Gudykunst, 2005, p. 287). This phenomenon
can occur any time we are communicating with others, but is compounded when communicating with outgroup members or interculturally. Similar to uncertainty, we have a maximum and a minimum threshold for anxiety. When our maximum threshold is exceeded, we end the communication interaction and when our minimum threshold is not met, we fail to give ample attention to the interaction and may “miss important cues” (Gudykunst, 1995, p. 13).

Another element of AUM is mindfulness. Langer (1989) offered the best definition of mindfulness as “(a) creation of new categories; (b) openness to new information; and (c) awareness of more than one perspective” (p. 62). When we are mindful in communication interactions, we are not only relying on our implicit understandings and rules for communication processes, but we are really paying attention to the interaction as an individual occurrence with its own nuances and uniqueness. We cannot always fit our communication interactions into the constructs with which we are equipped. Being mindful means recognizing our lack of understandings across individuals and cultures, especially in our assumptions about the meanings expressed through our interactions (Gudykunst, 1995).

Gudykunst (1995; 2005) identified effective communication, a key component to intercultural communication competence as discussed in the rest of this dissertation, as the desired outcome in AUM. The idea here is that effective communication is harder than it may appear to us during the interaction. We make assumptions about our communication strategies that are born in the implicit communication rules we learn throughout our youth. The fact that many of the implicit rules we have acquired differ from person to person, much less from culture to culture, often escapes us during
communication opportunities. As such, misunderstandings and misinterpretations are a part of every conversation—we just are not always aware of what is happening. As Gudykunst (1995) stated, “no two people ever interpret a message in the same way” (p. 15). So when we talk about effective communication, we are referring to interactions that “minimize misunderstandings” (Gudykunst, 1995, p. 15).

AUM theory focuses on the relationship between uncertainty and anxiety and effective communication. This is the main factor in AUM. There were a total of 94 axioms presented in the 1995 version of AUM theory and they are divided into seven categories: self and self-concept; motivation; reactions to strangers; social categorization; situational processes; connections with strangers; and anxiety, uncertainty, mindfulness, and effective communication (Gudykunst, 1995). Because there are far too many axioms to list them for the purpose of this study, an explication of each of the seven categories and an example of one or two axioms are provided here.

The category of self and self-concept relates to how we define “ourselves in terms of our human, social, and personal identities” (Gudykunst, 1995, p.19). This is particularly important in intercultural communication because our definition of self and the ingroups with which we associate are the key components that differentiate us from outgroup members. Further to this concept of how we define ourselves is viewing ourselves in light of the other individual; are we the same gender? Are we the same nationality? How well does the other individual fit into the stereotypical construct that we have created for them? Each of these questions relates to identity, an important aspect of uncertainty management. Two of the axioms from this category that most apply to the current study are:
Axiom 4: An increase in our dependence on our ingroups for our self-esteem when interacting with strangers will produce an increase in our anxiety and a decrease in our ability to accurately predict their behavior.

Axiom 5: An increase in our self-esteem (pride) when we interact with strangers will produce an increase in our ability to manage our anxiety (Gudykunst, 1995, p. 22).

What is interesting about these two axioms as applied to development work when communicating across cultures is that the perceptions of the individual in the ingroup may not match the responses initiated cognitively within the outgroup member. We may be gaining self-esteem because we feel that our ability to predict the behavior of the stranger is on target, but it would be interesting to know if this is really what is occurring. In reality, is our self-esteem unfounded?

The second category in the AUM theory is motivation. Gudykunst (1995) indicated that we all have needs to be met through communication and interaction with others, and that “if our needs are not met, we are not motivated to communicate with strangers” (p. 23). On the other hand, “if our needs are met ... we tend to be motivated to manage our anxiety and uncertainty” such that we can communicate with others (Gudykunst, 1995, p. 23). Concepts that are key to the motivation category are trust, predictability, group inclusion, and self-concept confirmation (Gudykunst, 1995). The axiom from this category that is most related to intercultural development communication is: Axiom 9: An increase in the degree to which strangers confirm our self-conceptions when we interact with them will produce a decrease in our anxiety (Gudykunst 1995, p. 24). In this case, development communicators need to be aware of self-conceptions pertinent to the individuals, or perhaps work to identify the most meaningful self-conceptions prior to the beginning of work. This will certainly help to increase the motivation to communicate for all parties involved.
The third category is referred to as reaction to strangers. In this category, our cognitive complexity plays a role in the ways in which we evaluate strangers—the higher the complexity the more accurate the evaluation (Gudykunst, 1995). Part of this cognitive complexity refers to our attitudes, however rigid, in regard to what we expect from strangers behaviorally and how we interpret their behavior. Other components of the reaction to strangers category include self-monitoring, or our evaluation of ourselves in the communication process, empathy in the communication process, and behavioral adjustments that we make during the encounter (Gudykunst, 1995). The axioms from this section are:

Axiom 12: An increase in our ability to complexly process information about strangers will produce an increase in our ability to accurately predict their behavior.

And,

Axiom 16: An increase in our ability to empathize with strangers will produce an increase in our ability to accurately predict their behavior (Gudykunst, 1995, p. 28).

Both of these axioms deal with our own abilities in the communication interaction. The ability to accurately assess others and see things from their point of view is difficult enough in ingroup conversation and only compounded by cultural differences. As communicators, if we are able to constantly evaluate our own efforts in communicating, we can be more successful in reducing uncertainty for ourselves and improving the opinions held by strangers in the interaction.

The fourth category is social categorization. As with self-conception, we organize our world and the people in it by categories. These categories may be defined by stereotypes or personal experiences, but they are shaped by each individual. The goal with this theory is to recognize the categories and then work actively throughout
the communication encounter to find similarities. Not only does this assist in the communication situation, but it also allows us to eradicate stereotypes that are often negative and unfounded (Gudykunst, 1995). The following axiom is the most pertinent to the purpose of this study:

Axiom 19: An increase in our understanding of similarities and differences between our groups and strangers’ groups will produce an increase in our ability to manage our anxiety and our ability to accurately predict their behavior (Gudykunst, 1995, pp. 32-33).

This category is salient for communication in any situation. We have to force ourselves sometimes to avoid focusing on our differences in communication encounters, and instead take note of our similarities. This would certainly be a useful tool in development as we seek to form alliances based on commonalities.

The fifth category in AUM is situational processes. As Gudykunst (1995) noted, “the situation in which we interact with strangers affects our communication with them” (p. 33). Here, the situation includes the unspoken scripts we have in mind as we communicate as well as the context within which we are operating. Cooperation among the communicators is key to the situational processes construct and involves each member of the interaction working toward a common goal in order to establish a “positive relationship” (Gudykunst, 1995, p. 34). It is the cooperative axiom that follows that most relates to development communication:

Axiom 28: An increase in the cooperative structure of the goals on which we work with strangers will produce a decrease in our anxiety and an increase in our confidence in predicting their behavior (Gudykunst, 1995, p. 35).

Cooperation is key to reducing uncertainty in communication interactions and must be established prior to and throughout the exchange.
The sixth category in AUM is connection to strangers. Here we are concerned with the attractiveness of the stranger or the communication situation, the respect and moral inclusion we offer, and quantity and quality of the interaction (Gudykunst, 1995). Each of these concepts plays a role in our attempts to maintain a relationship interdependently. All of these relational cues can be pertinent in development communication, especially the following axiom:

Axiom 37: An increase in the networks we share with strangers will produce a decrease in our anxiety and an increase in our confidence in predicting their behavior (Gudykunst, 1995, p. 39).

Our effectiveness in the development field can be influenced by our ability to build and maintain relationships. The more relationships and network connections we have, the better we will be able to understand the culture of interest in development work.

The seventh and final axiom in AUM is anxiety, uncertainty, mindfulness, and effective communication. This category relates most to the main postulates of AUM, particularly in our desire to reduce anxiety in communication interactions. We have previously discussed each of these components, and here the author adds the need to reduce negative expectations in our experiences with others. The following axiom is most pertinent to intercultural communication:

Axiom 44: An increase in our awareness of the perspectives strangers use to interpret our messages (and the perspectives strangers use to transmit their messages to us) will produce an increase in our ability to accurately predict their behavior. Boundary condition: This axiom only holds when our anxiety and uncertainty are between our minimum and maximum thresholds. Once again, we must view the world from the opposite or outgroup individual’s perspective and keep in mind their situations and cultures (Gudykunst, 1995, p. 42).

The remainder of the 94 axioms in the 1995 version of the AUM theory are a repeat of the same seven categories with a cultural component added in each case.
Because the cultural component is largely an explication of the cultural dimensions, and we have already accomplished this task in a previous section, I have chosen to rely on the tenets above in order to explicate the main ideas of AUM. Additionally, in the 2005 version of this theory, Gudykunst (2005) also reduced the number of axioms to 47, making essentially the same edit, but added another categorization to reorganize the theory to include ethical interactions with strangers.

Essentially, AUM theory explores the challenges in intercultural communication that create anxiety and uncertainty for interactants. These challenges can be mitigated through an understanding of the basic needs of individuals in communication interactions, particularly as they relate to uncertainty avoidance, threat, fear, and the possible resultant misunderstandings. Hofstede’s uncertainty avoidance dimension helps communicators to make sense of uncertainty from a cultural perspective, while the AUM takes this dimension even further, to the individual cognitive level for assessment and understanding.

**Intercultural Communication Competence**

Drawing from each of the theories previously explained, intercultural communication competence offers a more specific perspective on the motivations, behaviors, and outcomes of intercultural communication, and how communicators achieve or fail to achieve their goals in interactions. A variety of terms have been used to identify the concept of intercultural communication competence (ICC), to include cross-cultural adjustment, cross-cultural adaptation, cross-cultural success, cross-cultural effectiveness, cross-cultural awareness, multiculturalism, cultural competence, intercultural effectiveness, intercultural consciousness, intercultural understanding, overseas success and intercultural communication competence (Bradford, Allen, &
Beisser, 2000; Landreman, 2003; Wiseman, 2002). The two most frequently occurring, intercultural communication competence and intercultural communication effectiveness, have previously been discussed in the literature as two separate ideas, with one (the former) leading to the other (the latter) (Dodd, 1995; Bradford et al., 2000). However, a meta-analysis of the two concepts has shown that quantitative research results in both areas are related and that the terms can be used interchangeably (Bradford et al., 2000). For the purposes of this dissertation, intercultural communication competence (ICC) will be used as the main term.

ICC has been defined as the ability to communicate appropriately and effectively in order to avoid misunderstandings across cultural contexts (Imahori & Cupach, 2005; Spitzberg, 1988; Wiseman, 2002). The first component of this definition, that the communicator can interact appropriately and effectively, encompasses several areas of the interaction. To communicate appropriately means that communicators are able to assess the communication situation from a contextual perspective and then determine the best approach (Wiseman, 2002). For effective communication, the communicator is focused on the desired outcomes of the interaction (Wiseman, 2002; Imahori & Cupach, 2005). Wiseman (2002) further explicated that effective intercultural communicators “should be able to identify their goals, assess the resources necessary to obtain those goals, accurately predict the other communicator’s responses, choose workable communication strategies, and finally, accurately assess the results of the interaction” (p. 209). Ting-Toomey (1993), on the other hand, offered a definition of ICC rooted in individual identities and the “negotiation process between two or more interactants in a novel communication episode” (p. 73). Ting-Toomey (1993) defined effectiveness and
appropriateness constructs as “communicative resourcefulness” in which individuals use cognitive, affective, and behavioral tools to display competence (p. 74).

But ICC competence and the resulting behaviors are intentional outcomes derived from the communicator’s desires to attain the necessary knowledge, motivation, and skills for success (Wiseman, 2002; Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984). Knowledge refers to the body of information necessary for intercultural interactions as well as the cognitive ability to process and apply that information (Wiseman, 2002). Motivational factors identified in ICC include emotive factors that create a need in individuals for effective cross-cultural communication (Lustig & Koester, 1999). And finally, the idea that a certain set of skills can assist in communication across cultures is a point of contention for researchers. One perspective is that certain behavioral skill sets geared toward self-monitoring capabilities aid in ICC competence (Wiseman, 2002). But other scholars question assertions that the presence of a core set of skills will suffice in intercultural interactions (Redmond, 2000).

Application of the ICC components previously addressed point to behavioral mechanisms as necessary outcomes to communicating appropriately and effectively. For instance, Ruben and Kealey (1976) proposed seven components to intercultural competence with behavioral foci: display of respect, interaction posture, orientation to knowledge, empathy, self-oriented role behavior, interaction management, and tolerance for ambiguity. There is some disagreement in the literature as to the operationalization of these terms, with some concluding investigations are lacking (Martin, 1993; Arasaratnam, 2007), while others point to studies of overseas technical assistance personnel, Japanese student sojourners, and ICC workshop participants
(Wiseman, 2002) as evidence of how communication competence has been operationalized.

While definitions of ICC are generally agreed upon in the literature, conceptual approaches, theories, and models of ICC are not; the sheer amount of research on the topic is overwhelming (Koester, Wiseman, & Sanders, 1993; Deardorff, 2009). One reason for the inundation of perspectives in the field is the relative youth of communication study. Another is the desire to pose new theories rather than building on previous research (Deardorff, 2009; Wiseman, 2002). Additionally, the approaches taken in research are based on how the key terms are defined (Wiseman, 2002), and as previously noted, there are multiple terms and multiple definitions for the underlying components of ICC studies, including culture, identity, types of interactions, competence, etc. Essentially, a lack of true consensus in the field for these basic ideas results in varying perspectives. Fortunately, several scholars have organized the literature on ICC models and theories based on varying perspectives, and the following discussion will present ICC models and theories accordingly.

Spitzberg and Changnon (2009) organized the various models of ICC into five distinct categories: compositional, co-orientational, developmental, adaptational, and causal process. A brief description of the first four model types will be followed by an in-depth explanation of the causal process models, to include rationale for their relevance and application to CDSC intercultural communicators. Compositional models offer listings of traits interculturally competent individuals might display, but do not offer concrete connections between those traits. Examples provided by Spitzberg and Changnon (2009) included the Intercultural Competence Components Model (Howard
Hamilton, Richardson & Shuford, 1998), the Facework-Based Model (Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998), the Deardorff Pyramid Model (Deardorff, 2006), and the Global Competencies Model (Hunter, White & Godbey, 2006). Each of these models is composed of the various characteristics that interculturally competent individuals should possess (in the case of knowledge, skills, attitudes, etc.) or display (in the case of behaviors, actions, reactions, etc.). These models are not suitable to the current topic of study because they lack explanation for how the knowledge, skills, behaviors, etc., lead to intercultural competence, aside from stating that this would be the expectation. Additionally, they are “theoretically weak in leaving fundamentally undefined the precise criteria by which competence itself is defined” (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009, p. 15).

The next set of models described by the above authors is the co-orientational set, and they imply outcomes relating to comprehension. These models, including the Worldviews Convergence Model (Fantini, 1995), the Intercultural Competence Model (Byram, 1997), the Intercultural Competence Model for Strategic Human Resource Management (Kupka, 2008), and the Coherence-Cohesion Model of Intercultural Competence (Rathje, 2007), emphasize establishing joint understanding, or a sort of co-orientation to the world, among the communicators in intercultural interactions (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009). Each involves meaning-making processes, but with different foci ranging from identity tensions and formations to coherence versus cohesion. In any case, these models are less accurate than others, mainly because they lack consideration of that fact that, in competent intercultural interactions, individuals balance “directness and indirectness, understanding and misunderstanding, clarity and ambiguity” (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009, p. 20).
The third collection of models is labeled developmental models and gains perspective from developmental psychology and the idea that competence develops over time. These models include the Intercultural Maturity Model (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005), Bennett’s Developmental Intercultural Competence Model (1986), and the U-Curve Model of Intercultural Adjustment (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1962). King and Baxter Magolda’s (2005) model is based on Kegan’s (1994) work with “self-authorship,” and previous research in student development, human development, and intercultural communication. King and Baxter Magolda asserted a tri-dimensional “trajectory” incorporating cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal components along three levels of development, the initial level, the intermediate level, and the mature level (2005) as individuals move from ethnocentric orientations to ethnorelative orientations (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009). Similarly Bennett’s (1986) model suggests that individuals move from denial phases in experiencing cultural difference to adaptation and integration. Finally, the U-Curve plots the phases of culture shock through to adaptation into a culture (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009). The main weakness of these models was the strength of the first set—they lack an explanation of the traits inherent to competent intercultural communicators. These models do not fit the current study because we are not exploring individuals who have no experience with intercultural difference to understand how they move from ignorance of culture to adapting into cultures. The focus of this study is rather on how individuals working across cultures perceive their roles in effecting social change within a host culture.

The fourth set of models, adaptational, refer to dyadic communication and incorporate outcomes in which communicators exhibit adaptation. These models include
the Intercultural Communicative Competence Model (Kim, 1988), the Intercultural Communicative Accommodation Model (Gallois, Franklyn-Stokes, Giles, & Coupland, 1988), the Attitude Acculturation Model (Berry, Kim, Power, Young, & Bujaki, 1989), and the Relative Acculturation Extended Model (Navas et al., 2005). These models take into account cultural-environmental pressures, accommodation of communication styles (as a product of CAT theory previously discussed) and resulting acculturative stresses, and the need to adapt in order to display competence (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009). Critiques of these models show that they lack the developmental or phase constructs explained in previous models.

The final set of models, called causal path, focuses on the influence of variables in intercultural communication on one another in linear and empirically justifiable manners. These include the Model of Intercultural Communication Competence (Arasaratnam, 2008), the Intercultural Communication Model of Relationship Quality (Griffith & Harvey, 2000), the Multilevel Process Change Model of Intercultural Competence (Ting-Toomey, 1999), the Anxiety/Uncertainty Management Model of Intercultural Competence (Hammer, Wiseman, Rasmussen & Bruschke, 1998), the Deardorff Process Model of Intercultural Competence (Deardorff, 2006), and the Relational Model of Intercultural Competence (Imahori & Lanigan, 1989; Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984). These offer the opportunity to show causation in intercultural competence, but perhaps offer too many links among variables such that “they reduce their value as guides to explicit theory testing through hypothesis verification of falsehood” (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009).
For the purposes of this study, the final model mentioned, originally from Imahori and Cupach (1989; following Spitzberg & Cupach’s research in 1984) is the best-suited to assessing and analyzing CDSC practitioner’s communication competence. Strengths of this model include explication of motivations, an important component of achieving ICC (Lustig & Koester, 1999), by communicators on each side of the interaction as well as the goals held by each. In CDSC, one communicator attempts to affect change (goal) in social situations, motivated by some intrinsic desire to do good (one hopes) for the community. On the reverse side, the individual considered the recipient of the change efforts has his/her own motivations and goals for the interaction. This model not only demonstrates the complexities of navigating conflicting cultures, but also accounts for conflicting motivations and goals. This model and theory are further explicated in the following section.

Identity Management Theory (IMT)

Because the focus of this dissertation is how individuals interact across cultures, an identity theory is necessary to offer a relational perspective in addition to the motivational and behavioral components found in CAT and AUM. IMT is the most relevant to CDSC of all the identity theories in intercultural communication because of its focus on relationship building—a skill inherent to the success of a social change project—and most relevant to the ICC discussion because competence was the main focus in its development (Gudykunst, 2002). Imahori and Cupach (2005) defined identity as the frame through which individuals view themselves in interactions, and it particularly influences behaviors and motivations. IMT supposes that as individuals develop relationships through the stages of superficiality to more integrated interactions,
individuals must manage their own identities and the ‘face’ they present others (Imahori & Cupach, 2005). As Spencer-Oatey (2007) explained:

these authors seem to differentiate identity and face in terms of individuality versus relationship; in other words, they treat identity as situated within an individual and they treat face as a relational phenomenon. Certainly, face entails making claims about one’s attributes that in turn entail the appraisal of others, so in this sense the notion of face cannot be divorced from social interaction (p. 8).

Imahori and Cupach (2005) developed IMT from a culture-synergistic perspective that allows for the influence of individual cultures and cultural expectations, but also the influence of individuals and the unique characteristics they bring to a relationship while maintaining a specific face in interaction. Facework is the term used to describe how individuals strive to maintain a desired face during interactions. IMT shares some commonalities with other identity theories of intercultural competence, but is best suited to this research because of the relational component and the culture-synergistic perspective.

There are several components of IMT that align the theory while also differentiating it from other identity theories in the field. These ideas build upon one another and are presented in order. First, IMT only deals with dyadic communication, not group situations. Second, Cupach and Imahori (2005) added a component to competence that requires interactions to be effective, appropriate and mutually satisfying. This coincided nicely with some CDSC perspectives that call for mutually beneficial participatory communication. Thirdly, the theory builds on other intercultural identity theories by incorporating the idea of self and how individuals understand their world based on the groups with which they identify. These can be cultural, gender, ethnic, national, generational, political, occupational, experiential, extracurricular, or
even gang-based groups. Fourthly, IMT focuses on cultural identities and relational identities that relate to the dyadic nature of the theory as well as cultural inclusion in those groups previously mentioned (Imahori & Cupach, 2005).

A fifth component to IMT is the idea that interactions and relationships can be characterized by what part of the identity is most salient throughout the communication: cultural or relational (this can change even during one interaction). As Imahori and Cupach (2005) noted, “although two people from two different cultural groups may form an intercultural relationship, their communication may be intercultural in one instance, but shift to interpersonal or intracultural communication in another” (p. 198).

And lastly, from these interactions, we develop a face that is often mutually supported in the dyad reflecting our cultural and relational identities. Our face consists of positive attributes in gaining acceptance and negative attributes in desiring autonomy. To support the face, communicators employ facework in which face-sustaining behaviors are undertaken to protect the face and ensure “the mutual achievement of personal goals” through mutually satisfying interactions (Imahori & Cupach, 2005, p. 199). This leads to creation of a relational identity—“an abstract concept, [that] can be defined as a reality or culture that reflects the values, the rules, and the processes of the friendship and helps the dyad to maintain the relationship” (Lee, 2008).

Based on this groundwork, Imahori and Cupach (2005) suggested two propositions, each with several components, as follows. The first proposition (1) to the theory relates to facework and contains four different problematics in this area. The first problematic (1a) is that individuals are stereotyped by culture and experience face
threat as a result (Gudykunst, 2002). Imahori and Cupach called this “identity freezing” because it is based on our first cultural impressions of others, not their actual identity.

The second problematic is at the other end of the spectrum from stereotyping issues. When individuals over-accommodate for stereotyping tendencies and try to ignore cultural characteristics, the intercultural partner experiences positive face threats. This is referred to as the nonsupport problematic (1b).

Again, related to the previous problematic, the “self-other face dialectic” (1c) refers to an individual’s ability, or lack thereof, to support his or her own cultural beliefs and values in a conversation while simultaneously supporting those of the other individual. This give-and-take creates tension in the relationship due to the sacrifice of personal cultural identity in some circumstances.

The fourth and final problematic related to face refers to the “positive-negative face dialectic” in which individuals struggle to show approval for or understanding of the intercultural other’s cultural identity while not constraining that identity in a negative way. For instance, complimenting an individual on a cultural characteristic assumes that the person identifies in a positive way with that characteristic.

Based on Imahori’s (2002) research, there are a variety of tools individuals employ to cope with the propositions explained above (with the exception of 1b, for which coping strategies were not identified in the study). Several communication strategies are utilized, such as educating the other about one’s culture, joking about or laughing off incorrect stereotypes, avoidance, acceptance, adaptation, and recognizing differences, among many other strategies identified by the authors. It will be interesting
to identify whether or not CDSC professionals employ any of these coping mechanisms in their attempts to communicate competently.

The second proposition to the IMT relates to identity management as relationships develop based on the concepts of trial, enmeshment, and renegotiation, further subdivided into five sub-propositions (a-e). In the trial stage of a relationship, communicators enlist trial and error type strategies to avoid the pitfalls of the first proposition and find some common ground in the form of interests, organizations, etc. In addition to commonalities, trial and error strategies allow communicators to establish boundaries and learn about one another’s cultural identities. The sub-propositions of proposition 2 state that individuals avoid 1a and 1b (identity-freezing and nonsupport) while equalizing the foci in 1c and 1d (self-other and positive-negative) (2a), while also exploring the identities of others to establish relational boundaries (2b).

Once through the trial phase, intercultural communicators proceed to the enmeshment phase in which commonalities have been sufficiently established to warrant continuation of the relationship. During this stage, the dyad identifies symbols, artifacts, etc., as well as communication rules that are unique to the relationship (2c). With these symbols and rules, the relationship begins to take on its own identity, though according to IMT, this is still the early stage of development in which cultural differences are deemphasized in place of commonalities and face problematics are unresolved (2d).

The final phase of IMT is renegotiation, and as the name suggests, this phase allows the dyad to work through the face problematics and dialectics that have been thus far neglected in order to redefine the relationship (2e). The dyad continues to
solidify symbols, rules, and ultimately a shared perspective on the world that leads to positive perceptions of cultural differences (2f).

In responses to criticisms of this theory, Imahori and Cupach (2005) noted that individuals experience IMT phases in different ways, and perhaps cyclically as the relationship progresses and new intercultural challenges are presented (Gudykunst, 2002). The challenge of taking this theory at face value is that it is a relatively recent perspective with little empirical research testing each of the propositions. With that said, the final section of the IMT discussion will offer some of the findings from research using the perspective. Lee (2008) considered IMT from the perspective of intercultural friendships and explored the stages of relational development to fill in knowledge gaps in the original IMT.

As a final note to the review of these theories, there are many, many more theories of Intercultural Communication than the ones described here. I have chosen these few because of their relevance to the topic at hand, particularly as related to the type of work that individuals in the development and social change field seek to accomplish. Like other types of sojourners, CDSC practitioners are not planning to assimilate into the culture per se. They focus on building relationships cross-culturally; these relationships are established through competent communication and sensitivity to cultural biases and differences in order to accomplish a set of tasks or implement a program. They may accomplish this task through accommodation, uncertainty management, and relational identity techniques, but the work they seek to accomplish is certainly different from the work found in many of the studies accomplished to date. Further detail on CDSC theories and the work of CDSC practitioners abroad is
described in the next section of this literature review and will add insight on the main goals and challenges experienced by CDSC professionals.

**Concepts from Communication for Development and Social Change (CDSC)**

In the post-war era, aid programs began to function worldwide to support those dealing with "poverty, illiteracy, poor health and a lack of economic, political and social infrastructures" (Waisbord, 2001, p. 1). During this period, development was focused on encouraging democratic, capitalist visions of economic success with health and educational standards to match (Waisbord, 2001). We often refer to these programs as development work, or development and social change efforts. In order to affect change, development communication was introduced as a way to present ideas and programs that fostered development work. Development communication, as defined by Servaes (2005), is “the sharing of knowledge aimed at reaching a consensus for action that takes into account the interests, needs, and capacities of all concerned. It is thus a social process” (p. 2). And Waisbord added that “the current aim of development communication is to remove constraints for a more equal and participatory society” (2001, p. 2). Other terms found in the literature that refer to development communication concepts include development education, development journalism, international communication, transnational communication, international journalism, cross-cultural and intercultural communication, development support communication, and communication for sustainable social change (Melkote & Steeves, 2001; Servaes, 2005). For the purposes of this dissertation, development communication will be the main term. Communication is thus an agent for change, but the underlying assumptions, theories, and approaches to implementing communication for development and social change have differed across time, across scholars, and across
the various organizations that conduct development work. One important note about development communication approaches is that the field did not develop linearly, and indeed while new approaches have been introduced, older approaches are still very much in practice today (Waisbord, 2001). The following discussion offers several organizational perspectives from CDSC scholars and coinciding theories and approaches to development communication. Where possible, program examples have also been introduced.

Waisbord simplified the positions utilized by development scholars to explain their approaches in the field to two basic underlying issues in developing populations: 1) Lack of information and 2) power inequality (2001). Waisbord offered very basic dichotomies for each of these positions that speak to the problems and the answers derived from each. Those dichotomies are:

Cultural vs. environmental explanations for underdevelopment
Psychological vs. socio-political theories and interventions
Attitudinal and behavior models vs. structural and social models
Individual vs. community-centered interventions development
Hierarchical and sender-oriented vs. horizontal and participatory communication models
Active vs. passive conceptions of audiences and populations
Participation as means vs. participation as end approaches (Waisbord, 2001, p. 2)

These dichotomies and positions are evident in the following discussion of theories and approaches, grounded in the work of Waisbord (2001), Melkote (2003), and Servaes (2005).

Melkote (2003) organized the main historical paradigms of development communication, while other scholars offer similar, overlapping classifications (Servaes 2005; Waisbord, 2001). Melkote categorized development communication perspectives as modernization, critical, liberation, and empowerment (2003). Here I offer a discussion
of each perspective and theoretical communication approaches to development utilized
within each.

**Modernization**

The concept of modernization in development communication has its roots in the
earliest attempts at offering development support via communication channels, to
include diffusion of innovations techniques with rural farmers. The basic idea of
modernization as applied to the post World War II world was that there were two kinds
of societies: those that were modern, industrialized, capitalist economies, known as the
first world--and the third world, characterized by poor, traditional, perhaps agrarian
communities, with non-economic value systems and little ability to accommodate
change or deal with disasters (Gumucio-Dagron & Tufte, 2006; Melkote & Steeves,
2001; Melkote, 2003; Servaes, 2005). As transnationalization increased and first world
economies sought out natural resources, first world leaders initiated development
projects aimed at increasing the economic sustainability of third world markets, often
using concepts from Roger’s Diffusion of Innovations theory to distribute technological
advances (Gumucio-Dagron & Tufte, 2006). What these early modernization efforts,
and even some current programs, were missing was a focus on the communities in
which change was initiated. As Melkote and Steeves (2001) noted:

> Many large and expensive projects promoting social change have failed to
> help their intended recipients, or have resulted in even worsened conditions
> for them. Development’s primary focus on economic growth has ignored
> other crucial, yet non-material aspects of human need (pp. 19-20).

In most of the current literature, Third world has been replaced with terms like
developing countries, or less developed countries (Melkote & Steeves, 2001); however,
the overall sentiment, at least from the developed world’s perspective, remains the same.

But modernization is more than identifying differences between economies; the term is also defined by attempts to change beliefs and values of individuals considered less modern. The main tenet of the modernist approach is that “cultural and information deficits lie underneath development problems” (Waisbord, 2001, p. 2). With this idea in mind, and using concepts learned regarding propaganda during the world wars, scholars began to note the importance of mass communication in changing attitudes, behaviors and values in the third world to coincide with first world perspectives (Melkote, 2003; Waisbord, 2001). Concurrent with these development communication strategies were the early models of one-way communication such as those introduced by Lerner and Schramm (Servaes, 2005; Waisbord, 2001). These early models depict communication as a one-way event where information flows from the speaker to the receiver with little to no feedback, and in Lerner’s perspective of mass media, communication is a top-down process of disseminating information (Servaes, 2005). For development practitioners, this meant that the only necessity to affecting social change was a captive audience. The audience is indeed the focus of various development strategies. Some strategies espoused by modernistic practitioners include social marketing, entertainment education and various forms of health communication, each aimed at providing the target market with some sort of information geared toward changing attitudes and behaviors (Melkote & Steeves, 2001; Waisbord, 2001). While some participation in the form of focus groups and the like is used in these strategies,
critics still see a missing link between development of goals in these approaches and meeting the needs of the target society.

In short, those who espoused modernization as a development tactic saw the need to eradicate non-dominant, traditional cultures in favor of first-world beliefs and modern value systems. They focused on neoclassical, positivistic, enlightenment approaches to economies, truth, and epistemology with increased industrialization and GNP as the main goals (Melkote, 2003). Early critics of modernization identified the ethnocentric qualities of this approach (Melkote 2002) that called more for assimilation than understanding—just one indication that Servaes (2005) definition of development communication was some years from taking form.

By the 1970s a more progressive perspective on modernism had taken hold, in that scholars such as Rogers recognized the importance of cultural understanding in effective communication strategies (Waisbord, 2001). The revised attitude regarding development reflected cognitive awareness, but still held fast to modernist goals in that “development was theorized as a participatory process of social change intended to bring social and material advancement” (Waisbord, 2001, p. 5). Here we still see the Western influence in terms of how one might define “development,” but we also see the incorporation of cultural and interpersonal differences that would be further explored and included in future perspectives.

**Critical Perspectives**

The work of critics of modernization eventually espoused what is known as the critical perspective. Unsatisfied with the dominant paradigm, critical scholars, called critical culturalists, were able to challenge modernists as imperialists and expansionists. Critical culturalists view development efforts as western-oriented with one “right way” of
doing and being, certain economic goals that should be achieved, and little to no regard for native cultures and native leaders. Additionally, they perceive culture and communication as inseparable entities: rather than using communication channels only to transmit information, the view is that “the processes and institutions of communication, of culture, and of development are all woven together” (Melkote & Steeves, 2001, p. 31). The only problem with this perspective is that proponents did little to offer alternative approaches to development communication efforts (Melkote & Steeves, 2001).

Dependency theory is one perspective derived from critical culturalism that pinpoints the issues with modernist development approaches. Rooted in Marxism and the work of various economists and scholars (including Hans Singer, Raul Prebisch, and Andre Gunder Frank), dependency theory is defined as “the unequal economic relations between metropolitan societies and non-European peripheries—a factor accounting for the development of the former at the expense of the underdevelopment of the latter” (McMichael, 2012, p. 6). Essentially, dependency theorists view underdevelopment in third world countries as being the result of capitalism and the economic position of those countries within the world economy. First-world countries dominate the economic landscape and exploit lesser economies, while third-world countries become increasingly dependent upon the rest of the world for survival (Waisbord, 2001).

Another perspective that can be included in the critical category is participatory communication. While the modernist perspective promoted top-down communication, participatory communication requires involvement from the ground-up. Derived from
traditional ideas about the meaning of communication, participatory communication considers all of the members of interactions, not just the sender—an area in which earlier conceptualizations and theories fell short. Additionally, participatory communication “stresses the importance of cultural identity of local communities and of democratization and participation at all levels—international, national, local and individual” (Servaes, 2005, p. 6). Participatory communication is a central concept to this dissertation because of this cultural focus. It is a step toward merging ICC with CDSC. Here the lines also blur because participation is an important component in the liberation perspective (Waisbord, 2001), as described below.

**Liberation Perspectives**

Latin American scholars such as Paolo Freire championed the ideas in liberation theology as a component to the liberation perspective in social change. The main idea of liberation is release from oppression (Melkote & Steeves, 2001). Freire espoused participatory communication, cultural understanding, and the recognition that traditional approaches to life (particularly in the case of agriculture) should not be equated with “backward” ways of life (Waisbord, 2001). Additionally, liberation theology “supports development for personal and collective empowerment” (Melkote & Steeves, 2001, p. 275).

This idea of empowerment has become a perspective in and of itself that draws on components from each of the previous three areas. While in many ways not a fully developed concept (lacking clear levels of analysis and research in CDSC), empowerment can be defined as “the process by which individuals, organizations, and communities gain control and mastery over social and economic conditions; over democratic participation in their communities; and over their stories” (Melkote &
Steeves, 2001, p. 37). The goal is to bring power over lives back from the global elite to the local poor as a way to encourage development.

**Connecting Intercultural and Participatory Communication with Competence**

Participatory communication efforts offer the best conceptual linkage between intercultural communication competence and social change. Participatory communication requires participation and collaboration among interactants and the development of relationships, which fits nicely with each of the intercultural communication theories previously referenced. Using AUM and CAT perspectives as a lens, one can make a case for the need to accommodate others in participatory communication efforts as each interactant strives to attain certainty and familiarity. From the IMT perspective, relationships must be formed to garner the requisite amount of trust, which will inevitably vary by culture, to establish connections through which change can be developed and implemented. As participatory communication teaches us, this is a collaborative effort based on the competencies individuals can utilize regarding cultural differences, commonalities, and the acknowledgment of the real needs of the communities practitioners seek to help. This competence is based on training, knowledge, and most of all, experience. The following section offers a brief overview of training models that will inform this study regarding current practices in training for competence.

**Intercultural Communication Training**

In effect, we start in the field as ‘cultural experts,’ which causes us to view training as transferring to others a certain body of knowledge or facts rather than the processes through which this knowledge was derived. ...We rarely get to a point where we consider adult education principles, training techniques, educator/trainer styles, the relationship between method,
content, and environment, and the overall aim of cross-cultural training and orientation. (McCaffery, 1993, p. 225)

The goal of intercultural communication training is to “prepare people for more effective interpersonal relations when they interact with individuals from cultures other than their own” (Fowler, 2006, p. 402). As Paige (1993) indicated, intercultural training programs’ “curricular content and instructional methodologies have developed over the years in response to the needs of learners and the demands intercultural experiences place upon them” (p. 1). And Korhonen added that “developing intercultural competence is a slow, gradual transformative learning process consisting of foreign language studies, intercultural training, and hands-on experiences of other cultures and their people” (2009, n.p.). With the knowledge of intercultural communication theories and ICC perspectives previously discussed, considering current practices in intercultural training is the next logical step in the progression toward understanding how CDSC professionals gain ICC.

**Background of Intercultural Communication Training**

Intercultural communication training has developed originally from the research of anthropologists, United States government programs, the seminal works of Edward T. Hall in the 1950s and ‘60s (“The Silent Language,” (1959) and “The Hidden Dimension” (1969)), various councils, networks and workshops in the 1970s, the formation of the Society for Intercultural Education Training and Research (SIETAR) in 1974 (“History,” 2008) and the introduction of academic outlets such as the Intercultural Communication Institute (ICI) (Pusch, 2004). Training personnel focused on sensitivity training for navigating human relationships in the 1970s (Fowler, 2006). During the course of these advancements, multinational corporations were developing their own
training programs to deal with the issues and challenges of working in an international marketplace, and individuals in academia were seeking outlets for their work in the field (Pusch, 2004). Against this backdrop, various training programs and assessment instruments have been developed to try to meet the growing demand for intercultural communication training, particularly in the business sector.

Content and Approaches to Intercultural Communication Training

Gudykunst, Guzley, and Hammer (1996) identified two different types of intercultural training content: culture-general and culture-specific, and two basic approaches to teaching that content: didactic approaches and experiential approaches. Culture-general content is presented with the goal of enhancing trainees’ overall cultural sensitivity and awareness while culture-specific content focuses on one culture and its beliefs, values, customs, traditions, communication methods and other defining qualities (Brislin & Yoshida, 1994; Gudykunst et al, 1996; Levy, 1995). As Gudykunst & Lee (2002) noted:

Understanding communication in any culture, therefore, requires culture-general information (i.e., where the culture falls on the various dimensions of cultural variability) and culture-specific information (i.e., the specific cultural constructs associated with the dimensions of cultural variability” (pg. 27).

Experiential training requires the active participation of trainees in the learning environment while didactic training focuses on the transfer of knowledge, particularly in the form of lectures (Fowler, 2006; Levy, 1995). Combining each approach with each content description, we discover the main techniques for intercultural communication training: didactic/culture-general, didactic/culture specific, experiential/culture-general and experiential/culture-specific (Gudykunst et al, 1996).
Once trainers have determined their content-based approach to intercultural communication training, the question becomes, what method of training will they utilize to accomplish their task? In terms of training methods, what began as lecture-style dissemination of information, case study analyses, and simulations has transformed into the interactive, technology-driven opportunity for learning that we see as intercultural communication training today, or more precisely, the division between traditional and modern training methods (Fowler & Blohm, 2004). Fowler and Blohm’s (2004) distinctions for current training methods are: Cognitive Methods, Active Methods, and Intercultural Methods. The examples offered here are by no means exhaustive of the intercultural communication training methodology, but merely attempt to demonstrate the variety of techniques utilized.

**Cognitive Methods**

Lecture, one of the most often utilized training methods, is an inherently knowledge-based approach to intercultural training because it provides the trainer, lecturer, or a panel of experts an opportunity to impart a great deal of information to an audience (Cushner & Brislin, 1997). This training method is very effective in presenting new knowledge or a great deal of information (Brislin & Yoshida, 1994), although “retention may be low,” and the method may limit trainee learning to mere knowledge acquisition about cultures or about a specific culture (Fowler & Blohm, 2004, p. 49).

Fowler and Blohm (2004) defined computer based-training as using tools such as CDs, DVDs, and online programs to assist in intercultural learning, to include Web conferences and discussion boards. In this sense, computer-based training is still relegated to the cognitive, and lecture-type training processes. However, computer-based training has also been referred to as providing new learning environments for
learners in which multimedia and hypermedia tools are utilized “to promote learning that is continuous, individual, autonomous, and self-directed” (Korhonen, 2004, n.p.). This is certainly one of the newest forms of intercultural communication training and one that has yet to reach its full potential as technology continues to develop. The ability to simulate real-world situations in which trainees may explore another culture would certainly be an ultimate goal of this type of learning. Until that point, virtual classrooms and the ability to bridge distance is the largest benefit to computer-based training.

**Active Methods**

Simulation games are a popular tool in training and classroom settings in order for individuals to gain a better understanding of the real challenges experienced when interacting cross-culturally. For the purpose of intercultural training, simulation games are “operating imitation[s] of a real process” that include characteristics of games in which trainees take on an active role (Sisk, 1995, pg. 81). One strength of this method of training is that participation serves as an opportunity for individuals to practice and apply what they have learned. And weaknesses revolve around manpower and preparation—many players are needed and trainers must be prepared for moderating and debriefing after what can be a lengthy game (Fowler & Blohm, 2004; Sisk, 1995). There are many aspects to the “game” portion of a simulation that should be included, such as rules or constraints, winning, roles for each player, goals or objectives, and consequences for decisions (Fowler & Blohm, 2004; Sisk, 1995).

Role-play is a training method used to allow trainees to act out scenarios and situations relevant to the intercultural communication training experience. Role-play offers a “dress rehearsal in a safe and supportive environment with feedback and a chance to replay the situation or see others do it differently” (Fowler & Blohm, 2004, p.
60). The challenge, however, is that trainees must feel comfortable enough to really engross themselves in the act of taking on a role while others are watching in order to gain the skills presented as the purpose of the role play scenario (Fowler & Blohm, 2004; McCaffery, 1995). Much of the responsibility for a successful role play falls on the trainer as the scenario must be well prepared and thought out, avoid shaming or embarrassing trainees in front of colleagues and strangers alike, and be believable or realistic (Fowler & Blohm, 2004; McCaffery, 1995). Role play requires an intricate set of steps in delivery that must include a pre-game sort of set-up of the skills required, background information of the scenario, descriptions of each role with individuals assigned, preparation time, coaching by the trainer, the role-play itself, and then multiple types of debriefing that include helping the trainees make connections between what they have seen and what can occur in the real world (McCaffery, 1995). When done correctly, role play can be quite effective in helping trainees gather new skills and apply them in a safe setting, solidifying learning and application (Fowler & Blohm, 2004).

**Intercultural Methods**

Culture assimilators actually began as Intercultural Sensitizers (ICS) and were utilized to assist in intercultural understanding among organization members (Albert, 1995). Culture assimilators work to increase awareness of culture, both that of the trainee and that of other cultures, through the presentation of various incidents that are nothing more than hypothetical situations to be evaluated and answered by the trainee through the selection of the best response from a list of possibilities. These incidents involve interactions between “persons from the trainees’ cultures and from the target culture that resulted in a problem or misunderstanding” (Fowler & Blohm, 2004).
One culture assimilator, referred to as a “culture-general assimilator,” was created by Richard Brislin (1993) as used as a situational training tool. The term culture-general indeed refers to the focus on becoming competent in any intercultural setting, not just a specific culture. Brislin validated 100 different “incidents” that make up the training program by distributing the materials to knowledgeable individuals in the field, including scholars, experienced sojourners, and even the editor of the book in which the chapter is found. Each incident offers a scenario that could be experienced in any setting along with a set of behavioral options for how the scenario should be correctly approached, concluded, and analyzed. Specific details regarding location in the world, names of hypothetical individuals, etc. are used only to make the stories more interesting and realistic to the learner. These details have no bearing on the correct response as Brislin (1993) claims that the incidents could take place in any location around the world. Culture assimilators offer trainees the opportunity to learn about cultures. As Fowler noted, “the assimilator itself does not give trainees a chance to practice new behaviors, but it does attribute the meaning behind an action that a person in the other culture would give, thereby sensitizing the trainee to values and assumptions underlying behavior” (2006, p. 407).

The final method for discussion is immersion. This method requires the trainee to be in the exact cross-cultural situation for which they need training, or one that is similar. It can be limited to field trips or can occur once the individual has entered the host culture. Regardless, this type of training can be quite successful because it offers the individual the opportunity to immediately apply what has been learned. One challenge to using immersion as the main tool in cultural learning is that the individual
may feel overwhelmed and under-prepared to deal with the shock of being in a new situation (Fowler & Blohm, 2004). Additionally, immersion prior to an international experience is not a luxury that all organizations can afford when training individuals.

Several implications for the field arise from the previous descriptions of training techniques. First, intercultural communication trainers are charged with the difficult task of not only presenting information that helps learners achieve the basic dimensions of knowledge and cognition, but also of allowing trainees the opportunity to apply that knowledge and related skills in order that they might analyze and evaluate situations for use in future, real-world encounters. This is no small task, but one that can be achieved by using a variety of methods in the training experience. As McCaffery (1993) noted, “training and orientation programs must be skill-based. They must focus on ‘learning how to learn’ rather than on learning a particular fact or set of information” (p. 226). It is in this process of learning how to learn that trainees gain the skill-set they need to take their knowledge and successfully apply it in the field.

Another implication from learning is to focus on the desired outcomes so that teaching and learning can be intentionally geared toward the highest-level outcomes achievable. This means that trainers must not only focus on doling out information and facts on cultures, either in general or specific terms, but also on achieving outcomes such that trainees can actually remember what they have been taught and see how it could apply in new situations. As Brislin (1993) stated:

If the orientation program can be organized around a framework consisting of the feelings, thoughts, and experiences which people will almost surely have, then participants are likely to bring newfound knowledge to their cross-cultural encounters rather than to leave the knowledge at the training program site. (p. 283)
For the field of intercultural communication in general, there are several ideas that have been presented in terms of improving the training experience. First, some sort of follow-up should be added to intercultural communication training experiences (S. Herrera, personal communication, January 22, 2011) such that the trainer and trainee maintain a mutually beneficial relationship—the trainer can learn about challenges the trainee is experiencing in the field that perhaps were not answered during training, and the trainee can ask the trainer questions about what s/he is currently dealing with in order to be more interculturally competent. Also, trainers need to work to manage expectations regarding time requirements for training programs to take place and be effective in the eyes of the corporation as well as the trainee (S. Herrera, personal communication, January 22, 2011; McCaffery, 1993). Learning in this type of setting takes time and experience and cannot be rushed, especially if trainees are to attain higher-levels of knowledge and cognition. Table 1 at the end of this chapter provides a short synthesis of the perspectives presented thus far and represents the connections I seek to explore.

**Research Questions**

Based on the combined work from intercultural communication, ICC, development communication, and intercultural training, several research questions have been created to explore the interconnectedness, or potential lack thereof, of these perspectives in the field of social change work. These questions are aimed at seeking links between the fields previously discussed as currently applied by CDSC practitioners and will guide the work in the remainder of this dissertation. These are the research questions that will guide this study:
RQ1: What role, if any, does ICC play in CDSC development and implementation efforts from the perspective of the practitioner?

RQ2: Do CDSC practitioners display ICC based on the results of a sensitivity survey?

RQ3: What kinds of ICC training are CDSC practitioners receiving before they enter the field?

RQ4: Do CDSC practitioners believe that intercultural competence is important to their work/in their field?

RQ5: How are CDSC practitioners achieving ICC?

Table 2.1. Communication perspectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perspective</th>
<th>Key authors</th>
<th>Main points</th>
<th>Connections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercultural communication competence</td>
<td>Spitzberg; Wiseman; Deardorff;</td>
<td>Appropriateness, effectiveness, knowledge, skills, motivation</td>
<td>The major concept of study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety/uncertainty management (AUM)</td>
<td>Gudykunst</td>
<td>Mindfulness, uncertainty, anxiety, strangers</td>
<td>Offers a perspective on motives for communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication accommodation theory (CAT)</td>
<td>Gallois et al</td>
<td>Convergence/divergence, communication strategies</td>
<td>Provides a basis to explore communication strategies in ICC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity management theory (IMT)</td>
<td>Cupach &amp; Imahori</td>
<td>Self-Concept, facework, threats</td>
<td>Offers a relational component to ICC strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication for development and social change (CDSC)</td>
<td>Waisbord: Melkote &amp; Steeves; Mody;</td>
<td>Major paradigms and historic/current approaches to development work</td>
<td>Provides the field of study for ICC; Connections between IMT and participatory approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercultural training</td>
<td>Fowler &amp; Blohm; Bennett; Martin</td>
<td>Approaches to intercultural training to enhance ICC</td>
<td>Basis for improving ICC in any field</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 3
METHODS

The goal of this study is to obtain an epistemological understanding of ICC and intercultural communication training from the development communication practitioner’s perspective. More specifically, the purpose of the study is to generate a theory that explains the relationships between CDSC practitioners’ and host country nationals’ interactions and how ICC training and experience may or may not play a role in those interactions. To gain this knowledge, a mixed-methods approach to research was employed, starting with in-depth, semi-structured interviews followed by a survey using quantitative measures. This approach offered a quantitative assessment of each individual’s skills and abilities in cross-cultural communication combined with their own perspective on international experiences. The objective of the qualitative section is not to generalize the results to a population, but rather to use the results to explain and analyze the individuals’ development practices.

Qualitative Method

Qualitative methods are particularly useful here because they “start with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (Creswell, 2007, p. 37). Depth-interviews with development communication practitioners provided the chance to investigate cross-cultural experiences at a personal level without the constraints of quantitative measures. The results emerged organically as interview participants shared their unique perspectives, challenges, and thoughts regarding communication strategies across cultures. As a result, the questions changed throughout the process with each interview taking on a
direction of its own, in keeping with Creswell’s (2007) explanation of qualitative research and the semi-structured interview process.

When taking on qualitative research, I think it is important as a scholar to recognize one’s own perspectives, biases, and beliefs and offer some sense of transparency prior to undertaking the study at hand. Personally, I recognize that I value intercultural communication and believe in the importance of training for individuals in this field. While conducting my interviews, I had to remember to refrain from judgment based on what I learned about training practices. Additionally, critical theories of international development offer a somewhat negative portrait of American work in foreign countries. I had to balance this notion with the idea that there is good being done by capable practitioners who sincerely consider the needs and desires of local populations. I recognized my own tendencies to criticize, but tried to remember that there are two (if not more) sides to any situation and all are valid to those who ascribe to them. And finally, my religious beliefs and my recent studies of religious organizations’ work in the field caused me to cast a wary eye on needs-based organizations with religious underpinnings. I recognized these tendencies and will sought to maintain an even position so that I could gather the most representative and balanced information possible.

Sample

A nonprobabalistic, purposive sampling technique was utilized to obtain the sample of development communication practitioners for this study (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). Purposive sampling was necessary because participants must have had experiences abroad, preferably multiple experiences, and experience working across cultures. In addition, participants needed to have taken part in international
social change efforts in one form or another. This provided data from sources with “a high degree of competence in the domain of inquiry” (Guest et al., 2006, p. 74) and ensured some validity in the findings. The sample was drawn from government-based and non-government organizations (NGOs) alike to explore differences or similarities in intercultural approaches.

While sample size is another topic upon which scholars disagree, I conducted 22 interviews in keeping with Creswell’s (2007) perspective, although Guest et al. (2006) found thematic saturation in as few as 12 interviews. The goal here was to provide as much support for the findings as possible and to offer solid examples for the themes present in the data gathered.

**Semi-Structured Depth-Interviews**

A semi-structured depth-interview was conducted with each of the participants. The questions were first rooted in the intercultural theories discussed in this dissertation to provide a basic understanding of how individuals interact across culture. I wanted to explore how development and social change professionals feel, think, react, and behave in intercultural situations based on what we know from AUM and CAT. From these perspectives, I then developed questions incorporating ICC concepts, including IMT. And finally, questions based on our current understanding of intercultural training elicited information from respondents regarding how they acquired their intercultural knowledge and how these training experiences, formal or informal, shaped their approaches to CDSC programs. The question guide was developed in topological order, with a focus on easier, less obtrusive questions in the beginning, and progressing toward more personal questions at the end of the interview once rapport had been established (Leech, 2002). Questions were organized into four main categories:
Training (to determine what types of educational opportunities the participant has experienced), CAT/AUM (to explore accommodative behaviors), IMT (to explore identity and relationship issues), and CDSC (to better understand the approaches within development programming). See Appendix A for the semi-structured topic guide.

**Ethical Issues**

Creswell (2007) noted several ethical issues in conducting qualitative interviews, adapted from Lipson (1994): “informed consent procedures; deception or covert activities; confidentiality towards participants, sponsors and colleagues; benefits of research to participants over risks; and participant requests that go beyond social norms” (p. 141). An IRB-approved informed consent was presented to and verbally agreed upon each participant. I did not employ deceptive practices in gaining access to participants. Participants were reminded several times during interviews and on the consent form that the information was anonymous and confidential and that transcripts would not be provided to the organization. There were no benefits provided to the participants, monetary or otherwise.

**Data Analysis**

A grounded theory approach to analyzing the data is most appropriate because it allows the categorization of information to emerge from the data itself. Additionally, because the analysis of data occurs concurrently with data collection, the researcher is able to tailor the study to the themes that become most relevant during the process and allow the interviewees to provide the direction for the study (Charmaz, 1990; Heath & Cowley, 2004). The challenge, though, is to choose a specific grounded theory approach, and here we find the oft-debated conflict between Straussian and Glaserian approaches, with the addition of Charmaz’s prescription for conducting qualitative
research, which builds upon the previous two perspectives. Strauss and Corbin (1990) acknowledged that there are two important components of grounded theory research derived from pragmatism and symbolic interactionism: 1) that allowance for change be built into the method and 2) to uncover conditions and responses to those conditions as experienced by study participants. Grounded theory approaches allow participants and their unique experiences to shape the results and outcome of a study, and perhaps lead the researcher to unanticipated conclusions (Charmaz, 1990). Grounded theorists are indeed so committed to allowing data to direct the theory that they “begin with general research questions rather than tightly framed pre-conceived hypotheses” (Charmaz, 1990, p. 1162).

Charmaz’s social constructionist perspective most closely relates to the approach in this dissertation because it allows for creation of reality and meaning within each individual. This follows with cultural ideas because each culture is the basis for meaning creation, and communication aids in and is a result of that process. As such, I used Charmaz’s approach to grounded theory to analyze the qualitative data in this dissertation. Charmaz (1990) offered a simple definition of how the data analysis process can be conducted in grounded theory research: “[G]rounded theorists aim to create theoretical categories from the data and then analyze relationships between key categories. In short, the researcher constructs theory from the data” (p. 1162). While individuals provided the information I analyzed, the major focus was to better understand intercultural communication within the context of development and social change work, and theoretically label the interactions in a new and meaningful way.

In keeping with Charmaz’s process for developing grounded theory, I used the
constant comparative method to identify and compare terms as they emerged in the data collection process, then completed initial coding processes, followed by focused coding as data collection continued and I refocused my efforts based on memos and previous interviews. Codes were then raised to concepts and conceptual categories, with specific attention to the actions and processes occurring, not just the labeling of ideas. Memo-writing allowed me to analyze the data by considering connections throughout the data collection process and provided the basis for the emerging theory to be conceptualized, drafted and edited (Charmaz, 1990). In an effort to validate the emerging theory, practitioners who participated in the depth interviews were sent via email a copy of the theory diagrams for discussion and greater elaboration.

**Quantitative Method**

In order to offer a well-rounded perspective on the issues of ICC in development work, I included a quantitative portion to this dissertation. While the qualitative method provided rich data in a relatively new field of study, the quantitative data offered validity and generalizability to the study. I chose a self-administered, online survey research method using Qualtrics in order to capture ICC among development practitioners and measured not only ICC, but also components of intercultural communication that emerged from the qualitative data. The goal sample size was n=300, and I utilized the devdir.org directory to obtain contact information for development practitioners in the United States. A standard email was sent requesting participation, and consent information was provided at the beginning of the survey.
Measures

Intercultural Communication Competence Instrument

Arasaratnam (2009) offers a 15-item measure of intercultural communication competence rooted in communication and indicated by scores related to cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions, with five items representing each dimension. Arasaratnam tested the validity of the ICC against the scales and subscales incorporating the concepts of Attitude towards other cultures (ATOC), Ethnocentrism, Motivation, and Interaction Involvement. The ICC correlated positively with the ATOC ($r = .51, p = .01$), the Motivation component ($r = .50, p = .01$) and Interaction Involvement ($r = .54, p = .01$), and negatively with the Ethnocentrism component ($r = -.62, p = .01$). This self-report instrument asks respondents to rank items on a 7-point Likert-type scale from 1-strongly disagree to 7-strongly agree. Items include “I find it easier to categorize people based on their cultural identity than their personality” and “I usually change the way I communicate depending on whom I am communicating with.” In her 2009 article, Arasaratnam reduced the original ICC instrument from 15 items to 10 items based on low factor analysis results, but I utilized the original 15-item scale as suggested by the author to offer more substantial results for the current study.

The Intercultural Sensitivity Scale

Chen and Starosta’s (2000) Intercultural Sensitivity Scale consists of 24 items measuring five factors of intercultural sensitivity with five-point Likert-type scale responses: interaction engagement (ex. “I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally distinct counterpart and me”), respect for cultural differences (ex. “I respect the values of people from different cultures”), interaction confidence (ex. “I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different
cultures”), interaction enjoyment (ex. “I get upset easily when interacting with people from different cultures”), and interaction attentiveness (ex. “I am sensitive to my culturally-distinct counterpart’s subtle meanings during our interaction”). In their original study, Chen and Starosta also tested the scale against other intercultural effectiveness scales to offer support for validity, in addition to its high internal consistency. The scale requires self-reporting from participants. For the purposes of this study, I included only the Respect for Cultural Differences (Respect) subscale in order to gauge practitioners’ cultural perspectives.

The Multicultural Personali2ty Questionnaire (MPQ) Flexibility Subscale

Developed by Van Oudenhoven and van Der Zee, the MPQ is a 78-item scale designed to measure the multicultural effectiveness of individuals (2001). In their 2001 studies, the authors were able to demonstrate validity based on the convergence of student self-ratings with those of matched ‘others’ selected by the students as well as validity based on intent to go abroad. The scale is composed of five dimension: Cultural Empathy, Openmindedness, Emotional Stability, Social Initiative, and Flexibility. The last dimension, Flexibility, will be used in the current study to offer quantitative support for information provided during the depth interviews, during which practitioners cited flexibility as a characteristic important for successful communication in development settings. Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2001) define flexibility as “a tendency to regard new and unknown situations as a challenge and to adjust one’s behavior to the demands of new and unknown situations” (p. 287). The authors also discovered that the Flexibility dimension of the MPQ was less affected by self-report bias than the other dimensions—a positive characteristic due to the self-report nature of the current study. The instructions ask individuals to rank how items apply to them, from 1-totally not
applicable to 5—completely applicable. The flexibility dimension includes 18 items with statements such as “avoids adventure,” “works according to plan,” and “needs change”.

**Kupka’s Trust Subscale of the Intercultural Communication Motivation Scale (ICMS)**

Kupka (2009) developed the ICMS to measure intercultural motivations in order to provide a resource for Human Resource managers tasked with selecting individuals for foreign assignments. In developing the scale, Kupka et al (2009) administered the test in four separate instances with high reliability scores ranging from $\alpha=.88$ to $.93$. The scale includes a self- and peer-report component, but was also determined to be effective in measuring intercultural motivations based solely on self-report. The Trust component of this scale aims to measure respondent’s affinity for intercultural trust and their own desires to “behave appropriately and effectively in a trustworthy manner” (Kupka et al, 2009, p.723). Developed specifically for use in the ICMS, the four Trust subscale questions incorporate components of trust within relationships.

**Superiority Subscale of the Ethnocentrism Scale**

Bizumic, Duckitt, Popadic, Dru, and Krauss (2009) reported on multiple cross-cultural studies of ethnocentrism and offer a re-conceptualization of the topic that moves away from positive-negative constructs to “ethnic group self-centeredness” (p. 874). In the first study from their article, Bizumic et al identify six subscales within the ethnocentrism scale, with four relating to intergroup ethnocentrism, and two relating to intragroup ethnocentrism: preference, purity, superiority, exploitativeness, group cohesion, and devotion. Their second study further validates the findings from the first, and indicates that ethnocentrism has a hierarchical structure with multiple factors based on intergroup and intragroup formations. The fact that the study samples involved
multiple ethnic groups from multiple countries offers further evidence that the scales are valid. Here I focus on the intergroup ethnocentrism superiority subscale (S1: $\alpha = .81$; S2: $\alpha = .87, .88 & .88$) to measure participant’s feelings regarding their own culture in comparison with foreign cultures. Questions from this 12-item subscale include “Our cultural or ethnic group is NOT more deserving and valuable than others” and “In general, other cultures do not have the inner strength and resilience of our culture.” The purpose of including this subscale was to provide some means of distinguishing between individuals with high and low level scores on the other measurements included in the survey.

**The Organizational Listening Survey (OLS)**

Originally devised for corporate use in measuring management listening skills, the OLS has been revised for other and self-report and use among all organizational members (Cooper developed the OLS for use in organizational (Cooper & Husband, 1993; Cooper, Husband, Seibold & Suchner, 1997; Cooper, 1997; Cooper & Buchanan, 1999). The scale offers scoring for general listening competency, accuracy, and support. For the purposes of this study, I used the shortened 19-item version (Cooper & Buchanan, 1999). In place of the terms “others” or “co-workers” used in previous versions of the OLS, I am using the term “international co-workers” and defining this term in the survey instructions given to participants as “any individuals with whom you engage in cross-cultural communication during your development work.” While the scale is intended for self- and other-reporting comparison and there is no specific benchmark (Cooper, 2013, personal correspondence), the scores could offer interesting results when correlated with other scales from the survey. Scale items include “I react to
details and sometimes miss the point of the message” and “I take time to listen to international co-workers” and are measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale from always to never.

**Sojourner Self-Efficacy Scale (SSEC)**

The SSEC scale was created using a sample of respondents from the Japanese Exchange and Teaching (JET) program who had lived in Japan for at least a year (Peterson, Milstein, Chen & Nakazawa, 2011). The scale aims to measure the self-efficacy, or perceived ability (not intent) of individuals in intercultural and everyday communication. The original scale comprised 42-items with questions such as “How well can you communicate with people who do not share your language?” and “How well can you predict what another person will say in an interaction?” The scale was validated using Chen and Starosta’s (2000) Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS) Interaction Engagement (IE) subscale as well as seven items from the Approach-Avoidance dimension of Burgoon’s (1976) Unwillingness to Communicate Scale (UCS). The Television Affinity Scale (TAS; Rubin & Rubin; 1982) was used to validate the scale as well, and was found to have no relationship to the SSEC. Based on scree plot findings, the authors reduced the SSEC to 34 items with an alpha coefficient of .95. After reviewing their qualitative and quantitative data, the authors further shortened the scale to eight items with an alpha coefficient of .86. Items include “How well can you think possible outcomes through before you speak?” and “How well are you able to adapt to an interaction in which the topic changes from familiar to unfamiliar territory?” with responses recorded on a 7-point Likert scale from “not well at all” to “very well” (Peterson, et al, 2011).
This scale is of interest to the current research because the qualitative data indicated a high individual regard for one’s own communication and interaction skills across cultures. I wanted to offer some quantitative validation of this theme via the 8-item version of the Self-Efficacy Scale based on the idea that an individuals’ confidence in their communication abilities positively affects their intercultural communication skills (Peterson, et al, 2011).

Demographics and Development Questions

These scales were followed by demographic information and information regarding length of time in service, time with the current organization, number of programs implemented, time spent in the field, intercultural interactions per week, number of training experiences, and organization type (e.g., non-government organization). With regards to development work, I asked multiple questions about language skills, funding issues, and opinions about the field as a whole. These items were analyzed with the scales described to identify significant correlations.

Sampling Strategy

In order to gather the sample, I contacted various government and non-government development and aid agencies via email and phone based on a list of organizations from the Directory of Development Organizations (www.devdir.org). The United States portion of the directory is a nearly 400-page listing of development organizations divided into the following categories: “(1) international organizations; (2) government institutions; (3) private sector support organizations (including fairtrade); (4) finance institutions; (5) training and research centres; (6) civil society organizations; (7) development consulting firms (including references to job opportunities and vacancy announcements); (8) information providers (development newsletters/journals); and, (9)
grantmakers” (Directory of Development Organizations, 2011, pg. 58). I focused mainly on category 6 organizations which is consistent with the study of development and social change efforts, and implementing programs abroad, and also entertained several of the category 1 organizations. Of the category 1 and 6 organizations in the listing, I sent emails or made phone calls to 152 organizations for the qualitative portion of the study, and to 326 organizations for the quantitative portion. For each organization contacted, I conducted a quick review of organizational websites to determine main goals and key staff members. The organizations selected needed to have U.S. citizen founders or at least have been founded in the United States to ensure that I accurately captured this unique perspective on development programs. I sent emails to specific staff members of organizations and often relied on published biographies to determine if individuals possessed the experience I was interested in. I also sent emails to generic addresses (i.e. info@organization.org) if no individual information was available. Snowball sampling was also utilized to capitalize on the networks of individuals contacted. The informed consent information was available on the first page of the survey as per IRB protocol. I avoided organizations that strictly offered grants and funding and focused on organizations with employees who were conducting development work in the field.

Data Analysis

What I hoped to learn from the quantitative data is whether or not practitioners display intercultural sensitivity, and at what levels. I also compared the scale scores with the additional pieces of information, such as length of time in service and number of training experiences to see if there were any correlations among the data. In order to capture the most information, I waited to conduct the survey portion of this study until
after the qualitative data had been collected and analyzed. In this way, I could create additional questions for the quantitative survey based on the information gathered during the interviews.

Another note regarding the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods is that I was better able to tailor the quantitative survey to the sample population as a result of the qualitative data. I had initially intended to use Chen and Starosta’s (2000) ISS as the only measure of intercultural sensitivity. After doing the first few interviews it became apparent to me that this was not going to be enough—these practitioners were highly trained, skilled, experienced people and the scale was not going to be ‘sensitive’ enough to measure their beliefs. I incorporated additional measures, with a mind to the length of the survey as well, so that I might have a better chance at capturing significant results. I would not have known to make this change had I gone into the survey without first conducting the interviews.
CHAPTER 4
QUALITATIVE RESULTS

Sample

I conducted 22 depth interviews with development practitioners who responded to the initial email request (see Appendix C) using devdir.org as a resource. Participants ranged in age from 26 years old to 67 years old, with an average age of 45 years. All practitioners claimed ‘American’ as their nationalities except for one who felt herself rather nationality ambiguous due to having lived in various countries, including the United States, and carried a British passport. All but two of the participants were white/Caucasian (the other two were of Filipino decent, and of mixed race, respectively). Participant practitioners had spent an average of 17 years doing development work, ranging from six months to 39 years of experience, and mentioned 28 different countries and regions by name in our interviews, although they undoubtedly had experience in many other regions of the world. The participants currently hold positions as programming developers, project managers, organization and board presidents and founders, missionaries, and in-country directors among others. Participant résumés boast positions with government and non-government organizations, former Peace Corps experiences, and non-profit and for-profit work with a variety of organizational goals, including capacity building, aid and relief efforts, evangelism, and various definitions of development from traditional to participatory leanings. Seven of the participants were male (32%), and 15 of the participants were female (68%). The interviews were conducted via telephone and were audio recorded and transcribed. Interviews lasted between 34 minutes and one hour and seventeen minutes, with an average length of 48 minutes. Participants were emailed a copy of the consent form,
were given consent information verbally at the beginning of each interview, and then gave consent verbally before any questions were asked.

**The Data Analysis Process**

Following Charmaz (2006) guidelines, I started with line-by-line coding of each interview transcript in Microsoft Word using insert comment for the codes. I attempted to use gerund phrases for this coding stage to try and reflect the action and process occurring in each line, where appropriate (Charmaz, 2006). I simultaneously used a separate Word document for writing memos, producing 29 pages of single-spaced memos. I then began drawing focused codes from the initial codes and focused on in vivo coding to stay as close to the data and meaning as possible. I also drew codes from the memos where indicated in my first round of coding. After coding, I then created a third document to collect the individual codes and did some preliminary organization into categories.

I then moved the coded interviews and category/code list into Dedoose for final codes to be applied. In this way I could more easily offer some statistical outputs regarding the sample and offer specific information as to the number of codes found in each interview, and the exact number of times each code had been applied, etc. Dedoose also increased my efficiency because of the excerpting tool, such that all excerpts in which a code had been applied were available at the click of my mouse. I could also better judge the importance of a code in the greater scheme of the dataset. For instance, it seemed as I was conducting the interviews that all of my interviewees had spent time in the Peace Corps. I coded this in Dedoose and determined that only five of the interviewees had actually completed a Peace Corps stint. Likewise, for each code I could go back and review the frequency of the code being applied and how many
individual interviews included those codes to get a better idea of major themes that were true to the data set as a whole, rather than my own perceptions. However, there is one major caveat to just following the numbers in this dataset: the quality of the information coded. For instance, all practitioners were asked specifically to describe the development process, hence the overwhelming tilt of codes in terms of numbers, toward these topics. This does not mean the major findings of this dissertation revolve around the number of times a code was applied. I used qualitative methods to allow key themes to emerge from the data and maintained a focus on qualitative analysis, using the ‘numbers’ to bolster my findings.

In terms of the results, The theory and model I present emerged during the initial coding process after I had reached the point of saturation (about 18 interviews in). I was then able to fill out the deliverables by going back through and completing the focused coding and drawing what would be considered the results of theoretical coding directly from my memos. Memoing was extremely important in my process of getting a firm grasp not only on what the data meant, i.e., what processes or actions were occurring, but also in getting my thoughts put together on an incident-by-incident basis so I could go back into the data in an organized way and verify my interpretations among the interviewees. If I had to choose, I would say memoing was the most important and defining part of my research.

As I was conducting the initial analysis of the data, it seemed that the data yielded more questions sometimes than answers. Fortunately, I could include survey instruments or questions in the survey to tackle some of those questions, but I do believe that some of the questions will require separate studies with development
practitioners, especially those doing government-based development work, in order to answer the large generalizations regarding issues in the field as a whole. Often the interviewees would allude to government organizations and various large non-government organizations and how they were failing at conducting effective development. Certainly I will address this issue in the limitations and areas of future research later in this dissertation, but I would like to mention here also that these additional questions were a big part of my research process and attempting to answer the questions from the qualitative data with the quantitative data was certainly a goal.

As I was analyzing the data, the process very much felt like an exercise in deconstructing and reconstructing themes. I identified the major concepts and created codes, then organized those codes into categories, then the categories into themes. Then, I went back and revised the organization of the categories within the themes, and further deconstructed the categories to make sure I had a solid definition for each based on the codes, and to avoid, where possible, overlap between the categories. I found myself continuously revising the categories to make sure they were the best reflection of the data, but that they also made sense in terms of their organization, until I could say with confidence that my analysis of the processes within development communication were truly grounded in the data. This process yielded 44 total codes across seven categories, and I will discuss each of those codes and categories in the coming sections. The coding process is also exemplified in Appendix D, which includes a chart listing sample excerpts, initial coding, focused coding, and categorization of the data.

First, I would like to take a moment to explain the organization of this dissertation and guide the reader through my thought process in constructing and explaining these
rich datasets. I start with a report of the qualitative results, followed by a report of the quantitative results. Then I will move into a discussion of the quantitative results and research questions. I discuss the quantitative results first because there were several components to the quantitative surveys that, while relevant to this study, concerned more of a comparison between the scales and demographic qualities of the sample. I relegated a discussion of the quantitative results that most related to the qualitative findings to the final discussion section in chapter eight. Following the quantitative results and research questions, I discuss the bulk of this dissertation in that final discussion. This discussion then leads neatly and directly into the theory and model I submit to explain the communication processes described by interviewees and supported through the survey. I conclude the dissertation with implications, areas of future research, and closing statements.

But now, I turn to a report of the results, beginning with the qualitative data. The seven categories within which I organized all of the codes or themes include intercultural communication strategies, the practitioner: best characteristics, the practitioner: best practices, communication challenges, being on the ground, perceptions of the field, and training. The organization of the data was a process in and of itself, and involved the physical manipulation of each code into common categories, which I created by taking each code and asking myself, “what is this an example of?” Then I was able to determine which codes represented communication strategies and followed by the categories that related key characteristics and practices of practitioners. I then had concepts that related to being on the ground and the best-case scenario for doing locally based development work, which yielded the being on the ground code.
Finally, I had codes that spoke to practitioners’ perspectives about the development field as a whole and then codes for the responses to my specific questions about training. I now report each of these categories in turn.

**Intercultural Communication Strategies**

The codes in this category are focused on communication strategies that practitioners employed when working across cultures. This category is composed of eight individual codes: listen/watch/observe, language, showing excitement, apologizing, asking questions, building relationships, openness, and humor. Each code is named and includes a corresponding code occurrence number to show the prevalence of the code within the data set.

**Listen/Watch/Observe (49)**

Listening seems to be an obvious part of the communication process, but based on the emphasis given in these interviews, and the focus on asking questions, there was a sense that information gathering was the most important aspect of initial communications and building relationships between development practitioners and local individuals. The construct was not part of a standard communication exchange—rather it emphasized a one-sided exchange of information. Practitioners referred to this information gathering activity using three different terms: listen, watch, and observe. Practitioners conveyed, especially in the case of initial interactions, that communication should be a listening heavy exchange, wherein the practitioner refrained from making statements unless they were trying to elicit more information. ‘Listen’ was often the first word out of the mouths of practitioners when asked about the communication strategies they use. As Joy stated, “listen more and talk less.” I think Pete emphasized the importance of listening best:
I use my ears. Listen. Listen as much as possible to what they have to say, then minimal input as far as trying to bring points across because if you’re ever going to understand somebody, you gotta hear what they’ve got to say. That’s probably the most important thing at first, just try to get that person to talk and listen to them and understand them from that perspective.

Listening also allowed practitioners to really understand the needs of the locals (Annette, Connie) and gave them a chance to talk—a chance that local individuals may have never been given. As Patty noted: “The first time you turn to somebody and say ‘what do you think,’ yes, there may be a slight bit of shock on their faces, but then they’re willing to tell you what they think and how they wanna go and that sort of stuff.”

In terms of observing, Chris stated that practitioners should “observe and absorb [in] a lot of different ways before doing anything or saying anything,” and other practitioners further defined ‘different ways’ as inclusive of the spoken words, but also the contexts in which those words were spoken, whether at the market or in meetings. Ava stated, “You have to see how people interact. You have to see how people talk. You have to see how the man talks to the woman. You have to see how the woman lies to the man. You have to see everything.” This also included nonverbal communication and how that became a part of the conversation. Nonverbals also indicated whether or not the local person was following the practitioner’s lead in the communication process.

In terms of watching, practitioners discussed “stepping back” (Carson) and taking yourself and your agenda out of the equation. This required practitioners to truly ‘see’ the processes at work in a culture to gain an accurate perspective.

Language (40)

Practitioners talked about language in several different ways, mostly based on their own mastery of other languages, or lack thereof. Individuals who discussed
language recognized the challenges of not knowing the language, and referred to it as a “barrier.” Those who did speak the local language saw it as a benefit because “it buys you access. It shows respect, and so it buys you a level of intimacy” (Walter). And as Jossa noted, “knowing the language helps [you] understand the people tremendously,” linking language with the local culture. Overall, there was high regard for having a grasp on a few “basic pleasantries,” as Chris noted, because it “makes a really nice impression...I consider it criminal not to learn even four or five words of the language. It makes a big difference.”

**Showing Excitement (10)**

Showing excitement was a communication strategy that many practitioners say they employed in the very beginning of relationships, or when they first met individuals from another culture. According to the interviewees, this tactic was used as a way to display interest in the program, and in the local people. The best way to describe how practitioners showed excitement was nonverbal communication and “just having a smile on my face” (Pamela). Practitioners also talked about this idea in the context of showing appreciation, giving positive feedback (Melissa), and starting conversations (Pamela, Rachel).

**Apologizing (5)**

The potential for misunderstanding is high in intercultural exchanges, and so I asked practitioners specifically how they dealt with misunderstandings. Several of them mentioned simply apologizing as a tactic they use in exchanges to deal with misunderstandings. Chris, Esther, Rachel, and Jossa all talked about the fact that practitioners are going to make mistakes in the field, but that simply saying you are
sorry can “fix a lot” (Chris) and “that’s more precious than anything to most people in the world” (Jossa).

**Asking Questions (36)**

Asking questions was a major theme in these interviews, not just for the number of code applications, but because it was mentioned by 15 of the 22 interviewees as a way in which they dealt with a variety of cultural communication issues. Some used it as a way to introduce themselves and get to know another person, as a general communication tool. Others, however, talked about it not just in the sense of communication, but from the perspective of the need to gather information about the locals and their community so that they could be more effective in development efforts.

As Chris stated:

> Ask a lot of questions, and I mean that in every sense, not necessarily literally by saying—but asking a bunch of yes, no, open-ended questions and what not, but observe and absorb a lot of different ways before doing anything or saying anything.

Practitioners suggested the use of asking questions as a strategy to learn more about the needs, desires, cultural mores, etc., surrounding a given program. Rachel served as a trainer for individuals going into the field and shared this suggestion:

> I always tell my teams that are going out, you’re there for four weeks, the first week you should be listening and asking questions. You shouldn’t be making statements. Basically each statement should have a question mark at the end. I think that’s really important.

And George noted:

> I think it comes back to being able to demonstrate through the questions you ask and the approaches you make that you want to understand the local reality and you’re not coming in with a preconceived cookbook solution, but you’re there. You want to find out the situation on the ground...
And lastly, practitioners used questioning to deal with the issue of appeasement, which is a code I will discuss in a coming section.

**Building Relationships (68)**

Building relationships was one of the more complex items to code because it really involved so many of the other skills and characteristics covered by other codes. However, I felt it very important to understand how practitioners viewed the necessity of relationships in conducting their work and how they were specifically using communication to do so.

When asked about the relationships they had built, practitioners gave a variety of answers, from not really having any international friendships (Pete), to simply making casual friendships based on opportunity and proximity (Jonathan, Melissa), to having best friends in other countries (Jeff). Jeff talked about “going native” and having his local friends “just forget that you’re a foreigner sometimes.” In terms of building relationships through communication, practitioners used a variety of strategies from capitalizing on the local individual’s desire to learn English (Jeff), to bringing up the upcoming election (Barbara), to seeking connections and commonalities (Ellen). As Ellen shared:

> I actually grew up in rural poverty myself, so I always—kind of never felt quite in anyway in the club. The fact that I could meet someone who was from so far away from me, and that we could become friends or just work together—it was exciting for me.

Practitioners connected building relationships to some of the other codes including the concept of time and how friendships develop slowly “step-by-step-by-step” (Esther), and how building relationships was a catalyst for doing development work grounded in the needs of the local populations. And local populations responded to that tactic. As Annette conveyed:
A personal relationship has begun, or at least a professional relationship has begun between the partner and volunteer. Sometimes we’ll hear that the volunteer has gone out again and again on their own dime and we just sort of started the relationship; we never dreamed it would take on grander proportions, but it does. Just that sort of mindset, which is kind of nice.

On the other side of relationships, having a lack in that area can affect practitioners’ ability to do their jobs. Patty related challenges with using translators whom she had only just met:

These were translators that we had to pick up on the ground at that moment. We didn’t have the chance to develop a good working relationship. He was giving me what he thought I wanted versus what we needed to make an accurate assessment, but those are all pitfalls that you have to work with...

According to the practitioners in this study, building relationships was an important component of conducting development work, especially when working directly with local populations and seeking their support for programming and initiatives.

**Openness (20)**

For this concept, I combined the ideas of practitioners being open and receptive to local individuals and cultures while communicating with willingness to be open and a desire to be honest in their own responses. This required coming into the intercultural setting by “participating in the culture, with an open mind and an open heart” (Jonathan) and being willing to share about oneself in the process. Joy talked about openness in the context of managing local expectations, “I usually try to be fairly open with them in terms of why I’m there—what I can and can’t offer” to avoid misunderstandings. And Ellen used open discourse and honesty to deal with stereotypes: “I’m very honest with people about how I imagine I might be perceived. That allows them the space to also say, ‘Yeah, you’re right on’.” Openness required individuals to be open and honest in
their communication, but also open-minded in learning about and possibly adapting to local cultural ways.

**Humor (7)**

Several practitioners mentioned using humor in their attempts to deal with difficult situations or new communication environments. Rachel summed this approach up best:

Being a little self-deprecating often helps, especially I think for Americans, because people do think of us as being so American. That kind of roll-with-the-punches a little bit, and saying oh my gosh, I—you know what I did this morning? I dunno, I put ice cream on my toast—you know, whatever that might be, which I’ve actually done, by the way.

Essentially, humor was a strategy that practitioners used to diffuse situations, put locals at ease, and say something about their own identity—a concept I will explore in another code. With all of these communication strategies in mind, I turn to other key components of the communication interaction, which revolved around the practitioners themselves.

**The Practitioner: Best Characteristics and Best Practices**

This category was one of the more difficult to organize because there were so many ways to consider the concepts that were piling up from the focused coding process. I organized and then reorganized these codes into until I arrived at the best way to convey what the practitioners intended. Here I discuss the practitioner characteristics identified by interviewees, and also some best practices for practitioners that relate to communication, but maybe fall outside the realm of the ideas we might traditionally hold for the interaction process.

**Best Characteristics**

The following are characteristics of development practitioners’ skills and abilities in the communication process as conferred in the interviews. There is certainly room for
overlap, as with any of the other concepts in this analysis, but these are the categories that I believe best fit the data and context.

**Being a people person (15)**

This concept refers to using a wide range of interpersonal skills and the idea that perhaps some practitioners are naturally better at communicating across cultures than others. Jonathan and Barbara talked about this feature of individuals in their interpersonal interactions and the idea that practitioners can come into any situation and make individuals from different cultures feel comfortable and jump right into relationship-building. As Annette related:

> I feel very much at ease with other people. I don’t know if it’s a byproduct of having traveled a lot or just speaking other languages. I think people feel sort of at ease with me and telling me what their situation is. Again, there’s not really any pretext.

Being a people person could be evidence of an “innate skill set” (Barbara) and as Ava conveyed:

> I think I’m equally comfortable sitting with the vice president of the water ministry as I am with an incredibly poor woman who doesn’t have any education, who’s explaining her problems. I don’t know how you teach somebody that, and I feel very lucky that I have somehow attained that skill.

Whether or not people skills in this sense are teachable, they appear to be a consideration for excellent practitioner characteristics.

**Being committed (9)**

Being committed was a term that practitioners used to refer to a general willingness to really learn and understand what a culture is about. This required committing to the country, to the job, and to the people in order to effect change. Joy, in making an assessment of past programs, stated, “I think the ones that worked best have
been when our entire on-the-ground team have been people that have lived in that culture and are committed to that culture for a long period of time.” And George talked about committing oneself to the job:

I think it’s that inner commitment. You gotta have that passion and belief in what you’re doing, to get up everyday and go into some very challenging places and confront poverty and conflict. It really comes from that inner self, that commitment, that passion for the work. If you don’t have that, you’re probably in the wrong job.

According to the interviewees, commitment included commitment to the people you are looking to help within a specific culture, and commitment to conducting development work on a personal level.

**Being resourceful (12)**

Participants referred to resourcefulness within the context of implementing development programs including the skills required for looking in-country to find solutions among the people and assets available, and then teaching local nationals to do the same. Amelia talked about being resourceful as “back[ing] up and say[ing] okay, what do you have, you know, to put more of a positive spin on it so we could build from there, rather than from a place of what they don’t have.” She went on to explain that development solutions are easier to support “if you based it on tools that are already at your disposal.” Jossa referred to “teaching them those things that are naturally there in their own world...rather than causing...dependencies on the outside world” within the context of medicinal herbs as well as teaching locals to crochet items made out of plastic bags found littering the streets, and then selling those items.

Annette and Connie talked about resourcefulness in terms of local “experts” and drawing on the knowledge resources already present in a country or region rather than bringing individuals in from abroad. And Jonathan considered resourcefulness from the
perspective of being responsible with what little resources he had in his smaller NGO compared to experiences he had in the past with larger, much more heavily funded government organizations. In various examples, practitioners showed how they need to be resourceful not only with the materials they have been given through their organization from the United States, be they medical implements or funds, but also being resourceful in the communities when looking for solutions to problems. In turn, they taught locals to have the same perspective on the richness of what they had available.

**Being an example (4)**

The idea of being an example stemmed from practitioners’ attempts not only to tell locals about ways they can make changes to improve their lives, but also showing them through their own efforts. Jossa tried to implement hydro-gardening in her region and showed a rather reluctant local population (who initially would rather cut down lemon trees that are being ravaged by thieves than to have everyone plant lemon trees of their own) how to do the same. She had her own garden and also took locals to see examples of other initiatives and how they could benefit through those same practices. And Connie stated, “I don’t expect anything from my staff that I wouldn’t expect from myself,” which was a demonstration of solid management techniques as well as being a good example for employees and the standard of work expected. She continued, saying that “all those people saw me get dirty...I would work until late, and we would save a lot of lives, and they would see the benefit to their community, and to their people, and they’d work alongside me.” These examples displayed a component of encouragement and positivity in trying to set an example for betterment.
Empathy (8)

Empathy is the ability to relate to and understand what another person is going through, and share in that experience. Practitioners talked about being empathetic as a characteristic of themselves. It aided in their approach to local individuals because they were looking for understanding and ways to relate to one another, and also recognizing “that this [the development process] is difficult” (Ava). Esther suggested that there was an emotional component to development that no one talked about when it comes to empathizing with others, particularly when practitioners witnessed situations that were horrible. True empathy may come at an emotional cost to the practitioner, and they showed a willingness and capability for recognizing that challenge.

Humility (18)

Practitioners talked about humility in two different ways: being humble about what you do and don’t know when entering a new country or culture or project, and being humble in terms of the credit given for program successes. This also fed into giving locals credit and ownership of their programs, but conveyed the desirability of practitioners who were humble in how they presented themselves to other people within foreign cultures. As Annette stated, “I think being in sort of a non-profit sector you’re humble and you want to listen to the groups that you’re working with and understand their needs.” Ava gave the best example of practitioners who lack humility in development situations:

I think this—and I’ve read everything, and I’ve gone to school, and my education system is superior to your education. It’s taught me not to memorize, but it’s taught me to interactively process information and utilize task lessons and information and make a decision. It’s taught me to think. Fine, that’s all true. Memorization, not thinking. I agree with all of that. I think it’s very easy for new people to walk into a situation and, because of what I just said, to act very arrogant. It’s not like arrogance with a negative
connotation. It’s arrogance in terms of, I have x, y, z, and you don’t, so I know the answer.

Humility in this context meant a willingness to show that practitioners do not have all of the answers, but that they were willing to learn if the locals would be willing to teach them.

Best Practices

Managing expectations (32)

Practitioners discussed managing expectations of the local populations in terms of what they could and could not offer, especially with regard to funding and the capabilities of practitioners in utilizing those funds for projects. Another way interviewees talked about managing expectations was in terms of their own expectations prior to arriving in country. Several talked about but emphasized the importance of realizing that the reality of the situation will not meet with whatever preconceived expectations they had formed. As Jeff noted:

I try to warn people that no matter how much you know about it and understand it and prepare yourself, it’s going to be really, really difficult, and it won’t meet expectations. You won’t wind up doing the job that you thought you would do or that you prepared to do.

And Connie extended this notion in that “the people who tend to adjust the best are the people who go with no expectations.” Managing expectations was discussed largely in terms of dealing with misunderstandings and was used as a tool to avoid misunderstandings altogether, especially those based on the assumptions local populations may have regarding development organizations and the assumptions practitioners make regarding their potential experiences.
Facilitating/Motivating (9)

Interviewees expressed their desires to shift from the traditional role of development practitioners, as American representatives charged with coming in and taking over, and trying to replace that idea with the role of facilitator and motivator for sustainable development programs. As George concisely stated: “You’re there to really help empower, help facilitate and not dictate.” Programming, in the opinion of several interviewees, should act as a catalyst for individuals, communities, and nations to continue to develop on their own.

Flexibility (18)

Flexibility was discussed in two separate but related ways: practitioner flexibility and programming flexibility. In order to be flexible, practitioners needed to be open to changing their own ideas and conceptions about their role, how things are going to operate in-country, the cultures, their intentions, etc. On a program level, flexibility is viewed as a challenge, particularly when donor needs came into play or environments on the ground changed. Walter outlined this issue:

...be flexible in your programs because the conception design level may have misinterpreted conditions, or conditions may have changed. If you do have a little bit of flexibility in [a] program, you can respond to that difference and improve the probability of a successful project. Rigidity—that causes a project to fail.

If a program was designed with some flexibility, then when donor needs clashed with local situations or environmental conditions changed, practitioners had some leeway in how they could proceed. However, when program designs were limited by specific parameters, particularly caused by the RFP process, any changes or conflicts put additional pressures on development teams.
Participating in culture (24)

For this concept, I included any information regarding practitioners’ attempts to recognize and then become active participants in areas of intercultural communication considered important by local people. Several practitioners discussed the differences between the American tendency to get right down to business and the more social practices that occur before that step in much of the developing world. While inclusive of using correct ways of greeting, this construct also goes into the more social aspects of culture, whether it be taking a meal with locals, observing tea or coffee rituals, having casual conversations rather than formal meetings, or discussing family. Chris made an active effort to participate in the culture as much as possible:

For the majority of cultures, I would try to build in some very low-key, non-pressure time for us to be chatting. This is not universal but for the most part, I think people are a little freaked out by the American speeds and the lack of tea breaks and all that. Just finding some time where that person can experience the conversation in a less stressful way than tends to happen with Americans.

And Walter expressed some of the things he tried to do before getting started:

One of the biggest things, it's never left me, is the ability to be a little bit less American in approaches, in social, to take your time to do the greetings, to go through—if it’s a tea ceremony in China or if it’s a coffee ceremony in Ethiopia or smoking kretek cigarettes in Indonesia, there’s some cultural greetings and formalities that you really should go through initially before you ask anything technical or try to do anything. You should first say hello appropriately.

Practitioners saw value in recognizing cultural practices and doing their best to respect those and participate with local populations to gain better insight into their lives while also gaining their respect in return. Now I turn from the tools practitioners used to connect with local individuals to the challenges practitioners discussed as being most prevalent to their work in the field.
Communication Challenges

Among my discussions with interviewees about misunderstandings, dealing with stereotypes, and overcoming communication obstacles in general, several key themes emerged regarding the basic challenges practitioners experienced in conducting development. Intercultural communication has its own unique set of challenges, but challenges are situated not only in the IC context, but also within the context of creating social change among local people. The examples in this section are quite poignant and point to the need for specific understanding of cultures and how we view the communication situation and role identities.

Power (14)

Power was a challenge for development practitioners because they had to deal with perceptions of their role when they entered the development setting. There was a natural American impulse to go in and take over a situation and implement solutions to fix things. This idea was also an expectation on the part of local populations, and thus resetting that expectation became a struggle in some cases, or establishing the status and power roles of the key players in a project. At the same time, for Chris and Jeff, there was a status involved for the local individual based on their association with the powerful American expat. But Melissa offered the most concise explanation of how she tried to deal with power:

I try to make the other person feel as comfortable as possible because I feel like, particularly when you’re functioning in a—if you’re in an African country especially, a post-colonial country, I think that the Westerners coming in, a lot of people have internalized this idea that you must know better or are rebelling against that idea. I feel like there are naturally some power dynamics happening, so I try to make the other person as comfortable as possible and try to let them know, like I said, that I feel like I am here just to talk to you and just to learn from you and just to communicate as two
individuals. I think that understanding local customs and just acting culturally appropriately is a big strategy of mine.

Several practitioners also talked about power roles within cultures, especially in Africa, and how histories of oppression from outside parties influenced hierarchical views on power, and empowerment—though the term empowerment was only used a handful of times within the interviews. In the case of American country directors coming into a culture, Patty noted that, “in many cases, I came into the country as the new boss. There is also a different expectation of how you’re gonna treat the boss versus how you’re gonna treat somebody that is on your same level,” in addition to the cultural differences. Power constructs also related to gender roles and stereotypes, which are discussed in coming sections.

**Gender (24)**

Female interviewees were the main discussants of this topic (20 of the 24 codes) and related some of the challenges to being a woman in the developing world, where gender roles are different from United States cultural conceptions. Rachel suggested “being a woman is maybe sometimes helpful, and that you get like a little bit of a pass” because men are less likely to see women as a threat. Connie expressed that after years of having been in-country and working with the people, her gender role had blurred such that she had “earned a level of respect that [men] don’t look at me as a female anymore. They look at me as an equal.” But Ava and Pamela talked about the challenge of being a woman in an unaccustomed role and cultural status, and reconciling the desire to stand up for herself as an American woman, or “putting your head down” (Ava). Ava related that “it’s incredibly sexist also. Figuring out what that means and when to hold you head down and when to fight for what you, as an
independent, proud, I guess female, what that means for you, is very difficult.” In addition to noting the challenges of male to female relations, practitioners suggested that women working with women could be more productive and culturally appropriate in development efforts because of the reduced stigma regarding suitable gender relations.

**Appeasement (28)**

None of the practitioners in this study used the term “appeasement” to explain what was occurring, but this is the best term for the ideas they expressed. Appeasement in this sense refers to the practice of local populations such that “they will tell you what they believe that you want to hear” (Ava). Local people would do this for various reasons, including the desire to meet their basic needs through keeping donors happy so “the money keeps coming” (Ava), but also out of a desire to be polite or save face in intercultural interactions. Local people would agree to come to meetings, with no intention of actually showing up, simply to save the host from embarrassment. This created problems for practitioners “because Americans like to speak directly and cut to the chase and ask questions and get answers whereas [another culture] is very polite and a little more formal” (Walter). Interviewees suggested paying close attention to body language and a general sense of discordance to assess whether or not the local individual is sincere in his or her responses, or if appeasement is occurring. Patty noted that locals would “answer you in a way that gives you the idea that I’m telling you ‘no’ without actually me having to tell you. You’re gonna have to be astute enough to figure it out.” When “being astute” was not enough, asking questions in a variety of ways and ensuring mutual understanding was another strategy identified to deal with this issue.

Jeff discussed his struggles with a religious-based development program in dealing with what he terms “rice Christians,” who were local individuals who would
participate in programming as long as there was an incentive (food, products, etc.), “but once some of the benefits are cut back or it’s time to turn a program over to them, [they] are not interested.” This speaks not only to appeasement in going along with programs for the free benefits, but also the negative impact of creating situations in which locals are not buying into the programming for whatever reason, becoming dependent on program offerings, and then being left empty-handed when the program is over.

**Stereotypes (52)**

Stereotyping discussions were based on a specific question I asked individuals regarding whether they had ever felt stereotyped interculturally and how they dealt with those situations. The overwhelming consensus was that practitioners were perceived by locals as coming in as the “rich, white American” who was going to take over and implement the solutions they thought best. Practitioners related stories of being accosted in bars over their nationality, having to reset stereotypes with local staff members, and having to reset stereotypes of local individuals outside of their organizations among others. Paula and Connie talked about being stereotyped as the “crazy gringa” in the Latin American communities where they served.

But, as Carson suggested, these stereotypes did not create themselves. He suggested “not getting flustered” but asking oneself “Why do they have that perception? It’s probably from somewhere.” Other practitioners decided to ignore the stereotyping, and most would rely on the fact that stereotypes could be dispelled once the local individual got to truly know them, a process that also speaks to building relationships among the people over time. Stereotypes and the specific ways in which practitioners handled these difficult situations form a major portion of the discussion section, and so I will defer to that chapter for additional elaboration on this topic.
Using Translators (13)

The major challenge with using a translator in conducting development work was simply that practitioners could never be certain that their message was being received as they intended, or that they were receiving the intended message of the sender as opposed to one filtered by the translator. Practitioners suggested overcoming this obstacle by learning the language or by using a translator with whom they had already established a relationship. Jonathan and Paula even suggested that once a relationship was established, translators could serve as cultural guides and establish cultural access.

Being on the Ground

The title of this category came from the in vivo code “on the ground,” which appeared 43 times in the interviews and was used by half of the practitioners. “Being on the ground” implied closeness to the local populations such that practitioners could best understand the needs of communities. The codes in this category reflect the various manifestations of being close and the implications for doing development work that includes local perspectives.

Partnerships (31)

Practitioners referred to the partnerships they built on the ground in developing countries with international NGOs and with U.S. NGOs based around the world. Partnerships could limit the abilities of practitioners to do the work they intended, but also open up additional resources and opportunities for coordination. Especially in the case of smaller NGOs, relationships with “partner agencies” (Pamela) enhanced their projects because these agencies may “have a local, sustainable, long-term presence in those areas” (Pamela).
Partnerships also refers to the relationships practitioners and their organizations established with community leaders and community organizations in an effort to increase participation, and may even be the first step in the program design process. As Joy noted, “we may be partnering with a local organization to do some things. You’d be talking to them and, ideally, sitting around and even developing the whole project strategy with them and talking about, how should we do this?” And Ellen stressed that partnerships should be focused on “an exchange of ideas.” Lastly, Ava suggested that partnerships require that “together you guys, I guess, realize the goal and develop the plan, and now you’re, together, gonna move towards it.” In this sense partnerships were not limited to information gathering and program design, but existed through the entire development process.

Ownership/Local Staff (129)

Ownership of projects and utilizing local staff accounted for the second largest code in this study, and this code was applied in all 22 interviews. I initially had these two items separate, but it became apparent that this resulted in double coding the data—typically where one was discussed, the other would soon follow. So as not to over-code, I combined these two areas in the data. In this theme, practitioners discussed buy-in of local individuals and maintaining local staff in their in-country offices in order to sustain projects after the American organization had left the area.

The idea of ownership suggests that needs are discussed with locals and that solutions to problems are created collaboratively such that locals “own” the programs designed to meet their needs. Jonathan noted how critical this concept was in current development efforts and stated that it “doesn’t matter how technologically efficient, cheap, brilliant, the program, if it doesn’t have local buy-in—local direct involvement—
it’s not going to work.” And as Pamela contended, projects have to be “something that they can develop and take on their own, and the volunteers are just there to kind of help along the way.” Ownership of programming also encouraged sustainability and discouraged forms of dependent development because locals were being equipped with the tools they needed to continue with programs for as long as they were relevant to the community.

Having national staff was seen as a given in current development practices encouraging ownership. Local staff provided context and insight for the program and were often charged with implementation. They served the organization by providing “that local infrastructure to guide you through whatever challenges may be out there” (George). Carson suggested that national staff should also be focused on “making command decisions” more so than their expat counterparts, though he did not see this as a development practice currently in place. With local ownership and staff in programming, the American practitioner should be able to eventually “walk away and say ‘I’m done’ (Jossa) based on the idea that “you want the community you’re serving to own it and you want to be able to turn it over to them and walk away” (Connie), because ownership provides “a situation in which I am no longer necessary” (Ava). Practitioners pointed to this situation as the ultimate goal of their programming efforts, and two of the interviewees shared that they had actually successfully turned over programs to locals.

**Building Capacity (14)**

Capacity building was originally coded with the ‘Ownership/Local Staff’ code, and I later removed it as its own code because of the use of such a specific term as a sort of buzzword in development. Practitioners talked about building capacity of local populations by equipping them with skills, knowledge, and tools to develop communities
on their own. There was also a component of knowledge trickling through the community because of capacity building in one area. Amelia discussed efforts to build capacity in a country with higher education deficiencies. Individuals were brought in to a U.S. university to obtain a master’s degree and then returned to their home country to teach in a university there and share knowledge. Walter talked about building capacity of local staff members so that they could implement programs on their own—showing the connection between this code and the ownership code. And Melissa summarized the shift from dependent development to capacity building in her own organization—“we’re trying to show that we’re not that sort of NGO. We don’t give out items. We try and build capacity.”

**Cultural Awareness (132)**

Cultural awareness accounts for the most often coded theme in this study and was found in 21 of the 22 interviews. According to the practitioners, cultural awareness was key to conducting development work that was effective and sustainable. Based on the various definitions and examples provided during the interviews, cultural awareness is the ability to understand another culture and recognize that there may be other, more implicit, communication processes at work during exchanges.

Cultural awareness requires one to put aside assumptions about the other culture and to show respect for cultural differences. This can mean knowing which hand to offer when going through introductions (Jonathan), and it can also mean adapting the way they dress, like wearing skirts and head coverings for women (Paula, Ava). Ava talked about wearing head coverings while working in Israel:

*My translator said, “Don’t cover yourself. You’re American. You don’t have to.” The conflict of wanting to, you’re a guest in somebody’s else’s world and somebody else’s culture, and you may be there for research or you*
may be there for help, but you’re a guest. You want to respect that…I think the more you respect the culture, the farther you’re brought in.

These outward signs of respect can be supported by the attitude of the practitioner in their approaches to cultural others. As Chris related:

Just knowing that there was so much I didn’t know I think gave me a leg up because people, local people, Kosovars, saw me as a person who wasn’t making assumptions, who wasn’t under the illusion that everybody does everything in the same way everywhere in the world, and that I could do in Kosovo what I had done in other places. They saw a person who was asking questions, who knew that things were different, who was interested and willing to learn about the place before doing anything drastic that would just lead to unsatisfying results.

As Chris suggested, there were several ways practitioners could behave that showed cultural awareness and a desire to understand. When practitioners interacted in a way that utilized their intercultural skills, they made the cultural other feel more comfortable, relaxed, and willing to share.

To promote cultural awareness, practitioners used a variety of strategies such as relying on in-country colleagues and cultural bridges (see code below) to discover the dos and don’ts of a given culture, doing organization-based training or orientations, doing the self-directed training practices discussed in the training category, and using the learn/watch/observe, participating in culture, and asking questions constructs. These overlaps in codes will be explicated later in this chapter, but suffice it to say that practitioners were attentive to the need to be culturally aware to achieve successful development.

Identity Framing (28)

Several practitioners mentioned having some difficulty in defining their own identity. As Amelia stated:
I don’t necessarily feel—I know that my birth certificate says U.S. citizen, my passport says U.S. citizen, but I am definitely an internationalist. I see myself as a member of the world community and I’m definitely trying to raise my children that way.

The identity framing concept also included the ideas of being adopted by the local culture, and what was referred to as blending in, both of which further complicated practitioners’ views of themselves in the intercultural setting.

Several practitioners mentioned feeling as though they had been adopted by local villages and communities, especially practitioners with experiences in long-term, imbedded service organizations. This gave practitioners an identity, a tribe, last name, and tongue that they could benefit from when conducting their work, even many years later. But these connections they can also cause confusion for the practitioner who feels the pull of two separate worlds. Jeff talked about having “another life” in Chile that he had left behind and the cognitive struggle with balancing two cultures to which he belonged.

And finally, “blending in” was another tactic practitioners used to advance their cultural understanding. As Pete noted, “People do things on a daily basis that are culturally different than what we do here. Of course, the main thing is to try to learn about it and accept it and blend in as much as possible.” And Ava stated, “you have to teach people how to watch when they look the way we look and they become invisible enough to see reality.” Becoming invisible to the locals, blending in with the culture, overcoming physical stereotypes of what American practitioners are and have—these are examples of the tactics practitioners used to gain access to local ideals and acceptance from natives on the ground.
Defining Needs (100)

This code refers to the conceptualization of programming efforts based on where and/or by whom program ideas are generated, and how and/or by whom needs are defined. While these can be two separate pieces to the program design puzzle, they are linked by the fact that programs get their start either as an idea for something new to implement by development practitioners or as a solution to a need as defined by a stakeholder. Let me clarify that not all idea generation can be defined as ‘on the ground’ or contrived from locally identified needs, but the majority of practitioners discussed getting local needs and local buy-in as the optimal condition for programming. Thus, I include this concept and discussion in the ‘on the ground’ category. This information was elicited by questions about practitioner’s programming planning processes and sometimes it was a result of their critique of other program strategies. Components of this theme are most easily differentiated by their origination.

In terms of idea generation, several practitioners mentioned ideas coming from individuals already in the field working on other projects who then recognized a problem and brought that issue back to the U.S. organization. Melissa talked about this process:

Those programs we’re working on at the moment, the ideas have almost all come from people working in Malawi. Some of them have come specifically from our Malawian staff, and some have come from the American staff that works over there at times of the year. It’s an idea—for instance, the [specific programs] were an idea that came from one of our field staff who is now our [program] mentor. He works exclusively on that program. It’s been developed into a job for him.

Ideas also came from individuals in the local community who sought out program staff with an idea for programming (Connie, Melissa), or they “may come from a previous program where the evaluation said you should do this or this” (Pete). Needs were also assessed by organizations in terms of what was seen as an obvious need on the
ground, like energy consumption in Haiti (Barbara) or as a part of the development portfolio of the organization (Melissa) or as a response to solicitations from funding organizations (Chris).

Aside from ideas for program creation, practitioners also talked about ‘seed planting’ (Ava) suggestions in the minds of local individuals and then letting them come to a solution on their own. Ava related this lengthy, but interesting story:

Always thinking about, I wanna have a small—and it’s a pain in the ass, because instead of going and telling the guy, “hey, you should grow tomatoes,” you go and you talk to them and you’re like, “what’s your favorite fruit? Tomatoes. It’s too bad you couldn’t eat them in February. I wonder if people would buy them in January? I probably would. I wonder how you do that? I don’t know, maybe drip irrigation?” That’s like a five-day conversation. It would’ve been a lot easier to just walk up to him and be like, “do a drip irrigation project.” When you do it in a manner so that it’s not your idea, right? It’s your idea, but it’s not your idea. You’ve done the research and you see that it’s probably going to work in this geographic, meteorological whatever. You’ve done the background and you know that it’s probably a good idea. The concept comes out of that area, because you’re a little strategic and you’ve put in some hints, I think that that’s a critical component of projects: that they come from within the community.

As Ava noted, it is critical for ideas to come from communities when doing work that is truly on the ground development. This also requires some need definition from the community, though to ensure community buy-in.

But localizing ideas was not always easy to accomplish given current program funding structures. Practitioners were charged with the difficult job of balancing the ideas and needs of the local community, with those of donors and their organizations. They also had to deal with traditional structures of need definition within their own organizations. Idea conceptualization and funding will be discussed again with the ‘other’ development and funding codes.
Overall, practitioners were aware of the need to be on the ground in terms of knowing what local populations needed and how they defined those needs based on cultural and local environmental dictates. I think George most concisely defined what it means to conceptualize development: “It’s not implanting or imposing the U.S. conditions to the developing world. It’s finding the right solutions that work in that context.” And Esther, who was very passionate about doing locally identified programming solutions and managed to mention this topic 17 times in her interview, stated:

If you’re culturally sensitive, especially to the needs of the people you’re serving...If you know what is important to them and their lives and their values and their hopes and their dreams you’re not going to—you’re going to know them, you’re going to care about what they value and you’re going to do the right thing.

This quote exemplified the need to connect on-the-ground development with cultural sensitivity to what the local populations really needed.

Community Presence (29)

Being in the communities, either as a long-term or short-term resident, was a critical component to physically being on the ground with local people and meeting their needs. Many of the practitioners I talked to had lived with host families (Pamela, Ava, Pete, Walter, Melissa) or lived in communities overseas for extended periods of time (Jeff, Jossa, Esther, Faye, Connie, Carson, Jonathan). Jossa related this concept to being on the ground:

I think you have to live with the people a little bit. In order to understand you need to be on the ground as close as you can get to them for at least a short period of time.

And Walter relayed the importance he placed on overseas experience:
I think it’s most effective when you live someplace, and live there means more than a year. You move there. You live there. You learn the language. You learn the culture. That’s optimum. That’s why it kind of—what I advise people in this career in international development, I tell them to do both, to go back and forth, to live someplace and then come back to HQ or headquarters or do the site from the U.S., and then go someplace else and live there for a couple of years and work the project. You learn cultures better living in them—more profoundly, more thoroughly.

But community presence was not limited to living overseas. Community presence was also about building relationships within the community such that there was a connection between the development process and the local people, and to promote understanding of the local culture (Ava). Those connections not only gave insight into the culture, but also served as a support system (Ava) and as an access point to local experts and resources (Rachel).

**Cultural Bridge (56)**

The title of this code went through a variety of iterations, including key informant, community agent, leader contact, cultural guide and local partner, but I finally settled on the in vivo code ‘cultural bridge’ that Chris used in his interview. The cultural bridge concept fits in nicely with the idea of making connections in the field discussed above, and gives an impression of making links, and crossing over challenges in pursuit of greater understanding. Cultural guides served as that connection and granted practitioners access to the community and the culture. Guides could be translators, local government or religious leaders, local NGO members, expatriate colleagues in-country, or colleagues with cultural expertise located in the United States. In all of the cultural bridge stories mentioned by interviewees, there was a shared language between them.
In regard to colleagues as cultural guides, several practitioners mentioned using these in-country or U.S.-based resources prior to going abroad, especially in situations where time was a factor—either short visits to a country, or limited time to prepare for the visit. Chris outlined his approach to using cultural guides in such instances:

If I were going to, let's say, Pakistan to join a training program or even to design a program that somebody else was gonna be running at some point, I would look for Pakistani alumni of my master's program, perhaps, or similar programs, or I would ask around for people who might have Pakistanis in their network who spent time in the U.S. and they're familiar with those issues who can speak openly and comfortably about differences between the way Pakistanis and Americans see things. That's one way I might approach it.

This example also relates to the resourcefulness of practitioners and the importance of relationships and connections as catalysts to their increased intercultural knowledge.

Another key component to the cultural bridge notion is trust. Practitioners conveyed that in order to benefit from a cultural bridge, there must be a level of trust established such that cultural guides were able to be honest with practitioners and coach them through communication experiences—especially in the case of misunderstandings. Esther recalled a time when she relied on her cultural bridge to alleviate a misunderstanding with a community member:

I pointed out a mistake he had made. I thought it was funny. To him it was not funny at all. My colleague came running after me, thank goodness. He said, "[Esther], I know you didn't mean it, but they are very offended back there. This is what you did and what you need to do." I went back and apologized...the people forgave me, but I was good enough to have people—I mean, I was lucky enough to have people who would say, "You offended them," or, "You hurt them. You didn't mean to. We know that, but you need to make it right." If nobody had told me that, I would've—I was better for having been told that, you know?

And Jossa talked about a cultural bridge not only in the sense of individuals who can teach her something about the culture and guide her, but also in the sense of early
adopters to whom she could teach new methods and then see a ripple effect of knowledge-sharing in that area. Cultural bridges were the people who, when in the right positions, could promulgate capacity building in their communities.

Perceptions of the Field

‘Other’ Development (78)

Practitioners often made references in the interviews to how things were done in or by other development organizations. These ‘other’ organizations included government organizations and the larger non-government organizations. Practitioners mentioned the major organizations in regard to NGOs with large budgets and reach. While some practitioners discussed the need to partner with these organizations to share resources, their discussions were most often couched in disdain for “other” development practices, and some indication that these organizations were conducting more dependent-development forms of programming:

I think there are organizations that really just kind of hand out money or hand out kind of construction-based projects that aren’t necessarily sustainable and don’t always do follow-up, and there’s kind of a new—well I’d say a pretty new idea now in development of recognizing failure, and how to learn from failure and learn from challenges to be more effective (Pamela).

As Pamela noted, some of the major concepts in this category were related to funding, program design and idea generation. Many other development organizations have large funding pools, conduct idea generation and need definition at higher levels (e.g. with foreign governments or within their own organizations based on their experiences in the field) rather than being on the ground, and focus on construction and economic-based development. Esther shared a story about working with local individuals to determine their true needs. The community school had been given computers by an
organization who came in, set-up the computers, and left—leaving the people at a loss
later when the computers went into disrepair. She state that this scenario “went down so
many times in schools, because once the free stuff was gone and the free people who
came in to repair everything, everything just fell apart.” So her organization began to
focus on training the local people not only to use the computers, but to be able to fix
them—a need that the local people brought to her.

Another major issue practitioners suggested with ‘other’ development, which was
also a theme in Esther’s story above, was the problem of follow-up with and
assessment of programs. Lack of follow-up or assessment in programming left local
communities feeling abandoned by development organizations. Connie shared a story
from a friend’s experience with what she called “band-aid brigades’:

People came, walked for miles. They came for hours to come to see this
team. Well, at 4 p.m. the team was tired and there were too many more
people to see so they basically said, “We gotta move on. We have some
other place to go.” My friend then was hitchhiking her way out and they
saw a woman along the road in a pickup truck. She got out of the pickup
truck and was going to allow this woman to get in because the woman was
holding a baby. The woman handed my friend [Amy] the baby and got into
the pickup truck. [Amy] got in still holding the baby. Finally the woman turns
to [Amy] and says, "You were part of that medical team." She goes, "Yes I
was. I’ve been interpreting for them.” She goes, "I waited in line all day and
my baby died in my arms.” The team will never know that. Nobody ever
knows that because there was absolutely no accountability in the way in
which to conduct themselves.

While no organization can fully understand their own impact, or lack thereof, what
Connie was trying to relate was a need to hold organizations accountable when they fail
to help those in need. And Ellen talked about the sense of abandonment felt by
communities when charter schools failed:

Schools can come and go, and the communities are still there. Some of
those charter schools, they’re there for a year or two and they might have
done some good, but then they’re gone. I’ve just seen whole communities
A lack of follow-up or an opportunity for assessment is a major issue in the field. According to the practitioners in this study, the results of ‘other’ development effect how they are perceived in the global community—and rightfully so. The only problem with these stories is that they were almost always about ‘other’ (hence the title) organizations and how they had failed. There was comparatively little discussion of these mistakes from a personal perspective of how the practitioners or their own programs had failed.

But as a concession to critiques of the field, practitioners did suggest that there are well-intentioned organizations and practitioners in the field who are trying to help, but come up with questionable results. As Pamela mentioned in the first quote from this category, there is a perceived shift in how practitioners are operating and a recognition of failures, and the need to conduct development to avoid dependency, empower locals to be able to help themselves, and for practitioners to continue “going towards the concept of not having a job” (Ava).

Assessment (36)

When discussing assessment, practitioners suggested that much of the measurement and assessment of programs should occur on the ground, with input from local populations and those that programs intend to serve. There is an overarching theme throughout the interviews suggesting that, as noted in the literature and in the “Other” development category, assessment is lacking and most often that there are no best practices available for how to tackle that challenge. Melissa mentioned that the challenge of developing impact measures was now a major focus of her position in the organization she worked for. I think she spoke for many practitioners when she stated:
...and then the monitoring and evaluation piece, looking at how effective—what does success look like, and how can we measure it, and what does community impact look like? How can we measure it, so we can really improve our projects and also get additional funding. A lot of funders are looking for data, which we don’t have.

Assessment plays a role in how practitioners can improve their programming, but it is also a major part of the deliverables donors are looking for. Ironically, it seems donors want the data, but they do not want to fund the assessment. Funding is a key part of the complex development puzzle and is discussed in the next section.

**Funding (93)**

Funding is a challenge for many non-profits and NGOs because they have to not only do what they can with the resources they have available, but they also are charged with managing a balancing act, as Patty noted:

> I think that there is always an adjustment between what we and the beneficiaries determine as the need, and what somebody with the money determines is the need.

And Rachel indicated yet another challenge with funding sources as related to assessment, alluded to in the previous section:

> The thing is on the flip side the monitoring evaluation. Everybody knows it’s important, and that understanding the real impact and importance of that but nobody really wants to pay for that. That’s, of course, always the challenge.

And lastly, the RFP process poses its own unique set of issues for practitioners—but it is a necessary evil in terms of obtaining funding for programs. A major complaint about this process was the time constraints, which I will discuss next.

**Time (60)**

The concept of time was mentioned in a variety of instances as practitioners tried to express the challenges of conducting development. Time was considered a “luxury”
(Joy) that they often did not have in terms of program design and implementation. For many, the average program length had a baseline of 3-5 years start to finish. The RFP process was another portion of the design process that related to a lack of time, as Joy noted:

When it does come out, particularly if it’s a larger, multimillion dollar, multiyear, on the ground project, you need to find staff members for it. You need to gather a lot of information. I guess what I’m trying to get at is—it’s a very time intensive and overly rushed process.

And as Rachel suggested:

Nothing happens in three to five years. The first year you’re just figuring out if this is gonna even work. The way that you approach the current program funding I think is—the RFP process and the RFA process is really challenging.

Practitioners felt pressed for time and restricted by the constraints of deadlines when designing, obtaining funding for, and implementing their programs.

However, when practitioners discussed the communication strategies they used to work in another culture, there was a focus on time as an absolute necessity. Practitioners talked about needing time to build relationships, to learn and understand a culture, to participate in the social customs, and to live in a country as a part of intercultural communication training. Jossa posited “you have to live with the people a little bit. In order to understand you need to be on the ground as close as you can get to them for at least a short period of time.” Essentially practitioners recognized that they needed time to do their work and design culturally effective programs, but that they did not have enough of it to learn about the cultures and people targeted by their initiatives.

Environmental/cultural hindrances (31)

Environmental/cultural hindrances refers to those processes and events that occurred in the development setting over which practitioners had no control and that
caused them great difficulty in accomplishing development tasks. Environmental conditions change, as Walter expressed:

Some programs fail because you cannot control the environment, and it might be conceived of and designed in year one, and it’s not being implemented, for example, until two years later because of the slow procurement system. Three years later, macro conditions may have shifted.

Government officials turning over, partner organizations changing, new policies being established, resources being limited or non-existent, or religious groups agreeing to participate and later refusing to because of another organization’s involvement were all discussed as impediments to practitioners and their work, and are all things that have nothing to do with the development organization. Faye shared her experience working in eastern Europe:

They change their ministry personnel constantly. They change the people who are running the hospitals constantly so you’ll have an agreement with somebody, a memorandum of understanding with a ministry—and then there’s huge turnover and so you have to start over from scratch.

And Esther related the struggles of working in war-torn regions:

They were usually people starting from zero, especially in war zones like Northern Uganda. They were so far behind...somebody had to go back to where they were, meet them where they were, which was at zero. If they didn’t, when all the recovery would come in, everybody else would come in and benefit but the people who were the victims, who had nothing, wouldn’t get the jobs.

The complexity of the political, economic, social, and cultural environments was most often related as impediments to successful implementation of development programming. The latter challenge, the cultural environment, is discussed next.

In terms of cultural hindrances, practitioners related the time-consuming process of getting to the root of cultural barriers to making social change and addressing those barriers—essentially changing the way local individuals and communities perceive their
abilities and resources. Esther mentioned the need to build the self-esteem of the local communities, encouraging the people in making positive changes and “going together” as a community unit on that journey. Jossa struggled to gain buy-in for a local fundraising and gardening programs because of how locals perceived the resources necessary and the outputs of those programs. And Connie struggled with local ethical views and hiring or firing practices for her organization that do not equate to those she would typically use. All of these issues taken together add to the balance that is required in conducting development work—knowing what you have and what you don’t have and moving forward in an environment that is sometimes less than conducive to or welcoming of change.

Training

The first question I asked practitioners regarding intercultural training was simply if they had been through any formal preparation. Interviewees answered that question as either not having had any training, having had some formal training, having spent a great deal of time abroad in lieu of training, or having had academic training. Even for those with no formal training, most were able to offer a great deal of advice regarding what kinds of training they wish they had received. Those who did go through some sort of formal training were able to relate some of the most helpful activities or opportunities they experienced in that process. I captured information regarding training in the following ways: Training vs. Experience, Academic Training, Self-Training, and Training Recommendations.

Training vs. Experience (30)

One of several pieces of advice that the practitioners had regarding training was the concept of training versus experience. After discussing the things they do to
prepare to enter a new culture, the things they should do, what they would do if they had the money for training, etc., practitioners mentioned one caveat: all the training in the world cannot measure up to actual experience in the field. Pamela stated that “you can do training and there’s a lot of things you can talk about, but some of it is just part of—you have to experience it. There’s no way to show someone 100 percent what it’s going to be like.” And Walter added “live there, work there for a year, two years, and it will be as valuable as a master’s degree in and of itself, just that experience.” And several of the practitioners I spoke with had done just that via the Peace Corps (Ava, Walter, Patty, Pete, Connie). Practitioners’ discussions of their experiences with Peace Corps training and then living overseas were some of the most detailed descriptions of training regarding language, culture, and everyday life in developing countries. Aside from Peace Corps service, several practitioners talked about receiving their intercultural training through living abroad during their formative years. These living-learning experiences gave them access to languages and cultures earlier in their lives, and they expressed a belief that those experiences rendered further intercultural training unnecessary (Jossa, Faye, Barbara). And Patty offered a final thought on training versus experience: “You can pile all the knowledge you want to into somebody’s head, but it’s not gonna really make sense or have a good impact until you actually see it in practice.”

**Academic Training (22)**

Academic training refers to degrees that practitioners discussed when asked about their intercultural communication training. Several practitioners held degrees in international relations, international development, or MBAs with an international focus among others and viewed them as a “nice head start” (George). The degrees
mentioned often had a component of intercultural communication, though one practitioner with a degree in international development lamented the focus on theory as opposed to learning more applied ways of conducting development work and making “actual interpersonal connections” (Melissa). However, the interviewees clearly drew from their academic experiences and networks when conducting development work, and saw value in higher education for improving their abilities and career opportunities.

**Self-Training (21)**

Practitioners discussed self-training as a strategy to learn more about local cultures. Self-training refers to practitioner attempts to do research before entering the field. Self-training was accomplished by reading books on local cultures, learning about the history, doing Internet research, and talking with individuals who are natives of or had travelled to the intended culture. Learning about the history was a common theme because it helped practitioners “in understanding how people think, what motivates them, why they are the way they are” (Carson). Additionally, practitioners stressed the importance of “take[ing] time to research what the cultural differences might be of the area that you’re going to, so you’re aware of them” (Paula) in order to avoid issues. Self-training techniques were strategies practitioners could utilize on their own time as informal training.

**Recommendations (32)**

Practitioners had a variety of recommendations for intercultural communication training in the context of development work. I will discuss some of these ideas again in a future chapter, but here offer some of the key suggestions from the interviewees. Immersion was a major recommendation, especially in terms of learning cultural mores. Practitioners also talked about simulation training and active learning strategies that
they felt were most helpful in learning about other cultures, building cultural awareness, and becoming more comfortable communicating with a cultural other. Several practitioners discussed the idea of relying on colleagues, from the cultural bridge theme, as being instrumental to pre-departure preparations. Having someone to discuss the culture with, either an expat of that area or another practitioner or non-practitioner who had lived in the area, was seen as a critical step, especially for those living in culturally diverse locales like Washington, D.C. Reading about the culture and area was also suggested as a recommended training technique. Overall, practitioners discussed the importance of having training and the need for more instruction before going overseas.

**Code Co-occurrence**

A final way of considering the qualitative data from this dissertation is through the co-occurrence of codes within the interviews. Table 2 depicts those codes with the most frequent co-occurrences (highlighted) to show the contexts within which practitioners couched several of the topics. See table 2 at the end of this chapter.

There were several major co-occurrences of note. Cultural awareness co-occurred more frequently with other codes than any of the other codes in the qualitative study (across all codes in this dissertation including those not appearing in the chart, 154 times), and most frequently co-occurred with learning the local language, asking questions, building relationships, and listen/watch/observe. This suggests connections between these themes in terms of not only how cultural awareness is achieved or how practitioners build cultural understanding, but conversely with how cultural awareness may influence how practitioners approach these interaction strategies. Time was also a common theme in practitioners’ discussion of cultural awareness. The cultural
awareness-time dichotomy suggests that building an understanding of other cultures requires a time commitment, which Chris notes many practitioners fail to do:

I’ve seen so many Americans who don’t get that for far too long. When they arrive in a place for the first time, they want to—maybe there are good reasons for it. Maybe they only have a couple of weeks to get their work done or to get their role done and that’s all they have time for. They don’t have time for four-hour coffee breaks and discussions over tea and whatnot. If it’s gonna be for a longer time, I think it’s really important to build in—to communicate in the way that the people communicate best in that culture, which is often not sitting over a mahogany table and pleasant lighting.

Additionally, cultural awareness was a component in the discussions of learning the local language, asking questions to better understand the culture, and building relationships based on those understandings.

From a programming standpoint, cultural awareness co-occurred with local ownership of programming. In this sense, development practitioners conveyed the idea that cultural awareness can facilitate inclusion of local populations in program development. The goal of promoting ownership is essentially to work oneself out of a job, and leave the local nationals to the task of fulfilling their own development needs. The co-occurrence suggests that one is interwoven with the other.

The Ownership code co-occurred most frequently with Idea Generation, which relates the idea that practitioners are aware of the need to include local individuals in need definition. We know from participatory practices that involving local populations in development is important for the success of the program, but this code co-occurrence suggests not only involvement in implementation, but also in the initial conceptualization of development programs. Local ownership of programming was also the context within which practitioners discussed funding of programs. This was mainly couched in such a way as to suggest that funding sources need to operate under the assumption that local
individuals and practitioners have to be able to decide how funds should be allocated in order to take ownership of the programs. If the funding is allotted for building a church, but the local people really need a school, local individuals will not buy into the program. Again, this relates back to idea generation as well, and the need for development practitioners to keep their ears to the ground when determining the needs of a local community. Essentially, the data suggests that if local individuals/development practitioners on the ground have control of fund allocation and need definition, they will be better equipped to promote local ownership of development programming.

Funding itself was another interesting co-occurring theme, specifically because it was discussed in so many different contexts. Practitioners discussed the challenges of getting enough funding to have proper training. They also talked about funding in terms of how ‘other’ programs use, and sometimes waste, their funds. Additionally, as Walter noted, the time differential between program conception and actual access to funds can cause program failure. Practitioners also indicated that funding agencies and donor organizations play a role in idea generation and need definition, specifically if they have parameters and restrictions on how those funds can be used. Funding and idea generation were also a key point in Esther’s interview, when she talked about counseling other U.S. organizations:

You know, people would tell us, “We don’t want to do this, we want to do that.” I’d say, “Do you have anybody on the ground, with the people?” They’d say, “No, we can’t afford that.” I’d say, “Then you can’t afford a program.” You can’t afford the program. If you don’t ask somebody that’s going to give you honest feedback on the ground, then you’re fooling yourselves.

And lastly, funding was a consideration in ownership of programs in terms of having the funds to provide for local staff in-country.
The final major grouping of co-occurring themes centered around the idea of building relationships. Practitioners discussed the need to create relationships with local individuals to improve the effectiveness of programs and their eventual sustainability with as little input as possible from the outside. Practitioners noted that building relationships was an integral part of participating in the culture such that participation yielded stronger and deeper relationships, but also that those same relationships gave practitioners opportunities to have meals and learn local customs. This, of course, led to greater cultural awareness, which was also a key co-occurring code with building relationships. But, as practitioners so often described, “it’s not about the meal, [being invited] is like a consistent barometer. If somebody likes you, they want to spend time with you. So really it’s about building rapport” (Jonathan).

In summary, the code-occurrence chart clearly shows the inextricable relationships among many of the concepts practitioners discussed. While initial and focused coding practices in the qualitative process have aided in deconstructing the data and looking at it piece by piece, a co-occurrence examination allows for reconstructing of this information into systems of relationships that are indeed grounded in the data.

Summary of Qualitative Results

The categories in the qualitative results reflect those topics most often discussed by practitioners, namely the ways in which they communicate across cultures, what they believe to be best practices and characteristics for practitioners, the challenges they face, what it means to be on the ground, how they perceive the field and their thoughts on the intercultural communication training process. The code co-occurrences further augment the relationships between the individual codes and reveal the contexts within
which practitioners were apt to discuss the topics. These results will be considered
further in the final discussion chapter.

**Thoughts on the Qualitative Results**

The results from this portion of the dissertation were plentiful and offer some
excellent insight into how interviewees perceive their own communication strategies and
needs in development communication. They also shed some light on the process of
conducting development and all the complexities involved when interacting across
cultures. The interviewees were very receptive to my questions, and were able to offer
honest and sincere answers without feeling the need to filter their responses for the
sake of what is socially acceptable or to save face for themselves or their organizations.
There are some interesting suggestions about the field that the data indicated which I
further explored in the quantitative section of this dissertation. I will make some
inferences about those suggestions in the discussion section, and also provide some
ideas for future research noted in the final chapter of this dissertation. For now, I turn to
the quantitative results.
Figure 4-1. Qualitative code co-occurrence chart
CHAPTER 5
QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

Sample Collection

A total of approximately 2,250 survey request emails were sent to development practitioners drawn from the same devdir.org database used for the qualitative data, and with the addition of the charitynavigator.org (International) database. Of those request emails, 370 surveys were completed (N = 370), for a response rate of roughly 16%. This rate is slightly better than the usual 10% expected rate because the emails were addressed specifically to the person using either their first or last name, and because the emails were sent from my university email address, so credibility was established. I also encouraged the 22 interview participants to circulate the survey among their peers (snowball sampling), and did the same for survey contacts if they approached me to do so. The emails contained a link to the survey, which was supported by Qualtrics online survey software (qualtrics.com). The data were collected in approximately one month’s time, but emails were sent out gradually during that period.

Survey Respondents

Survey respondents (N = 370) were development practitioners from U.S. organizations who are conducting or have conducted development work abroad, and who have some level of experience with intercultural communication. I discarded 24 responses so that the sample would include only individuals with U.S. citizenship. Though I value the responses of all individuals working in development organizations, the same limitation applies here as to the qualitative work: the intercultural communication theories and development paradigms I included in the literature review
are based on U.S. communication styles. Therefore, the final sample size for this study is 346 participants.

There were no incentives offered for completing the survey. Respondents were advised that all responses were anonymous, and there was no specific identifying information requested. The race/ethnicity of respondents was 90% Caucasian (n = 312), 2% African American (n = 6), 2% Hispanic (n = 7), 1% Asian/Pacific Islander (n = 4), and 5% other (n = 17) and they ranged in age from 21 years to 72 years old (n = 342, M = 44.20). For gender, 302 of the participants surveyed provided a response resulting in 43% male (n = 131) and 57% female (n = 171). Approximately 68% of respondents (n = 234) had obtained a master’s degree or higher. Practitioners had visited an average of approximately 13 different countries in the capacity of development and 67% (n = 231) answered ‘yes’ to having lived abroad while doing such work. Respondents had worked in the field of development for an average of 13 years, with a minimum experience of less than a year and maximum experience of 48 years in the field. The practitioners surveyed worked for a variety of organizations with 49% (n = 169) working in non-government organizations (NGOs), 23% (n = 80) working for government organizations, 14% (n = 47) working for religious-based organizations, 6% (n = 21) working for other non-profits (not listed as NGOs), 5% (n = 16) working for other organizations (university-affiliated organizations, etc.), 3% (n = 10) working in for-profit organizations and less than 1% (n = 3) in international government organizations.

**Scale Results**

The internal reliability of the scales used in this dissertation were submitted to a reliability test for Cronbach’s Alpha as follows: Self-Efficacy in Communication Scale (SECS) $\alpha = .834$; Flexibility Subscale of MPQ $\alpha = .823$; Organizational Listening Survey
OLS $\alpha = .819$; Trust Subscale $\alpha = .721$; ICC $\alpha = .76$; Chen and Starosta’s Respect Subscale $\alpha = .588$; and the Superiority Subscale $\alpha = .86$. The Respect subscale alpha level was below acceptable ranges for this dissertation, but I included it in the set of correlations among all of the scales to show that it does correlate in expected ways with the data.

Most of the scales showed significant associations, which adds validity to the measures. The ICC showed significant, moderate correlations with each of the scales in expected ways. The correlation with the ICC was moderate and positive with the SECS ($r = .237, p = .000$), the Flexibility subscale ($r = .372, p = .000$), the OLS ($r = .253, p = .000$), the Trust subscale ($r = .231, p = .000$), and the Respect subscale ($r = .267, p = .000$). And the correlation between with ICC and Superiority subscale was negative and moderate ($r = -.294, p = .000$). SECS also showed a moderate to strong correlation with the Flexibility scale ($r = .291, p = .000$), the OLS ($r = .456, p = .000$), the Trust scale ($r = .237, p = .000$), and the Respect subscale ($r = .196, p = .000$). The Superiority subscale showed significant strong to moderate negative correlations with the Flexibility subscale ($r = -.20, p = .000$), and the Respect subscale ($r = -.448, p = .000$). The Flexibility scale correlated weakly to moderately and positively with the OLS ($r = .187, p = .000$), the Trust subscale ($r = .140, p = .009$), and the Respect subscale ($r = .203, p = .000$). The OLS showed a moderate, positive correlation with the Trust subscale ($r = .259, p = .000$) and the Respect subscale ($r = .263, p = .000$). And finally, the Trust subscale correlated somewhat weakly with the Respect subscale ($r = .195, p = .000$).

Table 3 at the end of this chapter shows the correlations ($r$) among these scales and their corresponding $p$-values.
While the correlations were significant, the moderate correlation coefficients in several of these relationships suggested the need for additional statistical consideration. As such, a regression analysis was conducted in further “defining the pattern of the existing relationship[s]” (Taylor, 1990) among ICC (dependent variable) and the various scales (independent variables). Table 4 shows the results of the regression analysis.

<table>
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<th>Table 5-1. Regression analysis</th>
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<tr>
<td>ICC regression analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>B                Std. error</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flexibility .389</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust .116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superiority .099</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-efficacy .046</td>
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<tr>
<td>OLS .146</td>
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<td>Respect .099</td>
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The independent variables statistically significantly predicted ICC, \( F(6, 339) = 17.86, p = .000, r^2 = .240 \). Flexibility, Trust, Superiority, and the OLS added significantly to the prediction, \( p < .05 \), but Respect (consistent with the correlation) and Self-Efficacy were not statistically significant different to 0.

In terms of correlations among individual practitioners’ characteristics and the scales listed above, there were several significant associations. First, practitioners were asked to report how many languages they spoke within three categories: fluently, proficiently (conversational), and basically (greetings, pleasantries). Interestingly, there was no correlation between fluency in a language other than English and the scales. However, there was a significant weak positive relationship between the number of languages spoken (basic) and the Flexibility subscale (\( r = .153, p = .005 \)) as well as with the ICC (\( r = .163, p = .003 \)). There was also a significant weak positive relationship between the number of languages spoken with proficient skills and the ICC (\( r = .198, p \))
= .000) as well as a weak, negative relationship with the Superiority subscale \( (r = -0.116, p = 0.032) \).

The results also revealed several correlations between development practitioners’ age, years in development, and countries visited with the scales. The number of years practitioners had been working in the development field correlated moderately and positively with the Self-Efficacy scale \( (r = 0.216, p = 0.000) \), weakly and positively with the OLS \( (r = 0.133, p = 0.014) \), and weakly and positively with the Trust subscale \( (r = 0.145, p = 0.007) \). The number of countries in which practitioners had conducted development work correlated moderately and positively with the Self-efficacy scale \( (r = 0.239, p = 0.000) \), somewhat weakly and positively with the Flexibility scale \( (r = 0.196, p = 0.000) \), and weakly but positively with the OLS \( (r = 0.120, p = 0.026) \). And finally, practitioners’ age correlated weakly but positively with the OLS \( (r = 0.112, p = 0.038) \) the Trust subscale \( (r = 0.140, p = 0.010) \), and the Self-efficacy scale \( (r = 0.172, p = 0.001) \).

There were no significant correlations between age, countries, and years in development and the remaining scale scores.

**Scale Scores and Differences Among Groups**

There were significant relationships between several of the scale scores and demographic information collected from respondents at the end of the survey. Using independent samples t-tests in SPSS for analysis, I examined the data to see if there were differences among the various groupings of the respondents (Peace Corps involvement, organization membership, gender, etc.). There were several significant differences among males and females and their self-report scale scores with ICC \( (t = 1.99, df = 312, p = 0.047) \), Superiority \( (t = -2.71, df = 312, p = 0.007) \) and OLS \( (t = 2.04, df = 312, p = 0.042) \). Female respondents reported higher levels of ICC \( (M = 5.27, SD = \)
.67) than their male counterparts ($M = 5.11, SD = .67$). Females also indicated lower levels of superiority ($M = -2.65, SD = 1.02$) than males ($M = -2.29, SD = 1.31$) and females ranked themselves as better listeners on the OLS ($M = 5.79, SD = .49$) than males ($M = 5.67, SD = .55$).

In addition to gender differences among groups, the data showed that individuals who were members of Government Organizations had lower self-report ICC scores ($t = 2.39, df = 361, p = .017, M = 5.06, SD = .83$) than non-government employed practitioners ($M = 5.26, SD = .61$). Also, individuals who had served in the Peace Corps ($t = -1.99, df = 342, p = .048$) reported higher scores on the Flexibility scale ($M = 3.67, SD = .41$) than those who did not indicate having served ($M = 3.57, SD = .46$). Individuals with Peace Corps experience also scored themselves lower in terms of Superiority ($M = -2.78, SD = 1.06, t = 2.44, df = 342, p = .015$) than those without Peace Corps experience ($M = -2.40, SD = 1.18$). Similarly, practitioners who had lived abroad scored higher on the Flexibility scale ($t = 2.80, df = 361, p = .005, M = 3.64, SD = .46$) than their counterparts who have not lived overseas ($M = 3.50, SD = .45$). In terms of intercultural communication training, practitioners who indicated that they had received some sort of formal training scored higher on Self-efficacy ($M = 5.48, SD = .76$) than those who stated they had not received training ($M = 5.31, SD = .67$) for intercultural communication; $t = 2.07, df = 344, p = .039$. There were no significant differences in mean scores among religious and non-religious based organizations.

**Perceptions of the Field**

In the final section of survey questions (prior to the demographic questions), participants were asked to rank their agreement with a series of general statements regarding the field of development. They were asked how they felt about mistakes they
had made personally, mistakes their organization had made, and mistakes made in the field in general. About one-fourth of respondents strongly agreed that they personally (25%) and the organizations they have worked for (26%) had made mistakes in intercultural development. In response to the same question regarding the field in general, nearly double the respondents strongly agreed that the field of development as a whole had made mistakes (50%). When asked to indicate their agreement with the statement, “Development practitioners recognize when they make intercultural development mistakes,” only 3% selected strongly agree while a total of 38% chose disagree or strongly disagree. Half of the respondents strongly agreed that development practitioners should have a basic knowledge of the local language (50%) while only 18% felt that local language fluency was absolutely necessary. The next series of statements were regarding practitioners’ opinions of funding sources. In response to the statement “Funding sources (individual donors, government proposals, etc.) influence the design of development,” approximately 93% of practitioners selected agree or strongly agree. The two questions that followed sought to gauge the opinions of practitioners in terms of whether that influence was positive or negative. While approximately 43% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that, “Funding sources have a positive impact on international development work,” only 28% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that, “Funding sources have a negative impact on international development work.” And finally, with regard to training, practitioners were asked to rate their agreement with the statement, “Intercultural communication training is important for development practitioners,” to which 93% answered with either agree or strongly agree. A portion of these results will be discussed in the next chapter, but I
reserve a discussion of several key results for the final discussion section so that the numbers can be compared within the context of the qualitative results, where applicable. I now offer a discussion and explanation of the first group of quantitative results.

Table 5-2. Correlations among scales

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. SECS</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Flexibility</td>
<td>.291**</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. OLS</td>
<td>.456**</td>
<td>.187**</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Trust</td>
<td>.237**</td>
<td>.140**</td>
<td>.259**</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. ICC</td>
<td>.237**</td>
<td>.372**</td>
<td>.253**</td>
<td>.231**</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Respect</td>
<td>.196**</td>
<td>.203**</td>
<td>.263**</td>
<td>.195**</td>
<td>.267**</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Superiority</td>
<td>-.085</td>
<td>-.200**</td>
<td>-.104</td>
<td>-.102</td>
<td>-.294**</td>
<td>-.448**</td>
<td>.000</td>
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*correlation significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed); **correlation significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)
CHAPTER 6
DISCUSSION OF QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

There were several components to the quantitative results that were not major factors in discussing the qualitative results, and so I address those here. First and foremost, the purpose of the quantitative scales and resulting data was to offer support for the themes present throughout the qualitative interviews. These scales were not the original scales chosen for this dissertation proposal—they were researched and chosen after the qualitative data had been collected and data analysis had begun. As such, I draw attention to the connections (or lack thereof) between the qualitative and quantitative data in another section of this discussion, which segues more clearly into the model and theory constructs. However, there were some interesting points indicated by the quantitative data that were not present or discussed explicitly in the qualitative interviews, and I will discuss those here before moving on.

The fact that there were significant correlations among the Flexibility, SECS, OLS, Trust, ICC, Respect, and Superiority scales suggests that there is a relationship among these concepts as conveyed in the qualitative results—and most importantly, ICC correlates significantly with each of the scale constructs, supporting the ways in which practitioners think about and achieve ICC. The main findings were that being flexible when working across cultures can have a positive effect on practitioners’ cultural sensitivities. Similarly, personal perceptions of intercultural self-efficacy, self-reported listening skills, and perceptions of trust in intercultural relationships increase together with intercultural competence. And finally, Superiority scores are interpreted in this data as negatively correlating with several of the scales, suggesting that the less
practitioners feel superior to the cultural other, the higher their levels of ICC, Flexibility, and Respect.

Trust is a necessity in building communication relationships that result in accurate and sincere assessments regarding what local populations really need, or how they can work together to implement programs. As individuals work together over time and anticipate future involvement (Jarvenpaa & Leidner, 1999; Powell, 1990) they build increasing trust with one another. This trust is founded in a belief by local individuals that the development practitioner will integrate cultural behaviors into their interactions, will be honest, and will not take advantage of local individuals and situations (Jarvenpaa & Leidner, 1999). And not taking advantage of local colleagues invokes an implied sense of respect as related to trust, which is supported by the positive correlation of the Trust and Respect constructs. The fact that increasing levels of intercultural trust correlate with increasing levels of ICC may suggest that trust aids in developing greater cultural sensitivities, and that cultural sensitivity may help practitioners build trust with local populations. While there is not a causal relationship signified by correlations, there is still a relationship between the constructs and that relationship validates the need for trust in culturally competent development work.

The regression analysis suggests that though the correlations are weak, they are still significant, with the exception of Respect and Self-Efficacy. The lack of significance in the regression analysis for Self-Efficacy could be explained by the fact that an individual’s belief about his or her abilities may not relate to the actual outcome of his or her intercultural competence. Additionally, the regression analysis reported an $r^2$ of .240, which indicates that there is a significant degree of variance in ICC that was not
accounted for by the OLS, Trust, Respect, Self-Efficacy, and Superiority scales. This leaves ample space for additional research as to what other factors affect ICC from a statistical standpoint. Moreover, the fact that these scales were selected because they were such strong components in the practitioners’ interviews could indicate a failure of recognition for other factors that are important to the development of ICC, or that were simply not captured in the qualitative data.

Another perspective for understanding the scale results was through the between group t-tests analysis. In terms of gender, the results indicate that women self-reported higher listening and competence scores, and lower superiority scores than their male counterparts. Nieto and Booth (2010) also reported significant gender differences, and found that females scored higher on Chen and Starosta’s ISS in their study of ESL students and teachers, but offered no explanation for the phenomenon. And in Neulip, Chaudoir, and McCroskey’s (2001) study of college students, males scored higher on a measure of ethnocentrism, which the authors suggested is a result of socialization processes. Incidentally, the measure used in Neulip et al’s study was used to validate Arasaratnam’s ICC (2009), so it can be inferred that perhaps similar socialization forces are responsible for the findings in this study. We could potentially infer the same for the superiority scores, but the listening scores as varying by gender in intercultural communication have received no attention in the literature. Regardless of the suggested causes, gender differences in listening, intercultural competence, and ethnocentrism warrant additional research consideration.

And one last result of the quantitative data that was not revealed in the qualitative research was the difference between government-employed and NGO-employed
practitioners’ scores on the ICC such that NGO practitioners scored higher on the ICC measure than their government employed counterparts. This was an interesting difference, especially considering the fact that interviewed practitioners suggested government organizations have more funding than NGOs to dedicate to training, and the fact that the Peace Corps with its three-month intensive training opportunity, seems to set a gold-standard in the industry for training opportunities and bolstering practitioner resumes. One possible explanation for this difference is the idea that perhaps practitioners in NGOs have more opportunities to work in communities and villages than government practitioners, who may have to work at higher levels of society and government structures when conducting development work.

These are only a few of the quantitative results of interest to this study, but their significance signals the need for more research in this area of development communication. Now I offer some responses to the research questions based on the results of the quantitative and qualitative studies, and then move into the final discussion chapter of this dissertation.
CHAPTER 7
RESPONSES TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In keeping with grounded theory research practices, the qualitative data collected and analyzed for this dissertation reflect the experiences of the participants. As such, the research questions and literature review, while providing a basis and initial direction for the study undertaken, may not be relevant to the themes and categories that emerge from the data in the end. As Charmaz (2006) noted:

Of course anyone who writes a research proposal seeks data to address his or her research questions—but this sampling is of an initial type. Initial sampling provides points of departure, not of theoretical elaboration and refinement. We cannot assume to know our categories in advance, much less have them contained in our beginning research questions. Grounded theory logic presupposes that we will construct categories through the comparative method of analyzing data (p. 100).

As such, potential exists for a lack of data to offer educated, well-supported answers to the original research questions presented in the dissertation proposal.

In the case of the research questions posed for this dissertation, the fact is that there are cursory answers to the questions but the data go much deeper and provide a different kind of answer to the questions—mainly in that the data suggest dynamic processes and changing perspectives on the field of development and how intercultural communication may or may not play a role in those situations. Practitioners expressed not only answers to the semi-structured interview guide, but also offered insight in terms of how they perceived intercultural communication and interactions with international populations. While these research questions served as a guide in developing this study, the crux of the results and discussion lies in the interview data with the survey data playing an important, but secondary supporting role in explaining communication processes.
With these ideas in mind, I address the original research questions, and suggest some revisions not only for my own benefit, but as further evidence of the qualitative research process; to wit, answering a proposed research question is not the only goal.

**RQ1: What Role, If Any, Does ICC Play in CDSC Development and Implementation Efforts from the Perspective of the Practitioner?**

I rely on the qualitative results to answer this question. First, let me address an issue of terminology. In the literature review I chose to use the term ‘competence’ in discussing the phenomena of interest. However, after having to explain this term several times in the first few interviews, it became apparent that ‘sensitivity’ is a more accurate term used in the field of development. As such, I will switch to the use of intercultural sensitivity rather than intercultural competence, but remind the reader that these terms are often used interchangeably in the field.

In terms of the role of intercultural sensitivity in CDSC, there are components of sensitivity throughout my discussions with practitioners. They are aware of the need to be sensitive to local cultural practices when developing programs, and particularly when conceptualizing programming such that it incorporates if not meets locally identified needs. I think the communication challenges expressed in the qualitative results section point to an awareness of differences in communicating across cultures, and the ability of practitioners to seek out and play on commonalities at the same time. Practitioners have developed their own personal set of strategies to deal with these issues, thus demonstrating their active involvement in the process of being culturally sensitive. In summary, ICC and sensitivity play a catalytic role in development communication and aid the practitioner in making connections among local nationals. One model for this catalytic process will be presented in the Discussion section.
RQ2: Do CDSC Practitioners Display ICC Based on the Results of a Sensitivity Survey?

For this research question, the quantitative results offer the best proof of sensitivity. While there is no numerical definition of competence using the ICC scale, when compared to previous research with Arasaratnam’s scale, the practitioners in this study scored higher than other populations, with an overall mean score of $M = 5.20$, $SD = .66$. Arasaratnam and Banerjee’s (2011) study of college students ($n = 231$) yielded a mean score of $M = 4.49$, $SD = .95$, their previous study of college students using the 12-item version of the ICC scale ($n = 400$) yielded a mean score of $M = 4.82$, $SD = .76$ (2010), and the study which produced the initial version of the ICC ($n = 302$) yielded a mean score of $M = 4.79$, $SD = .88$ (Arasaratnam, 2009). This suggests, with limits, that development practitioners have higher ICC than certain student groups which seems to be a logical conclusion. More research is needed to make generalizeable comparisons among various groups.

Aside from comparisons, practitioners scored quite high on the 7-point scale, suggesting that they self-report satisfactory intercultural competence. Obviously the challenge with this analysis is that the data are self-reported, which is a major limitation of analyzing the qualitative and quantitative data from a perspective focused purely on the presence or absence of the phenomenon. As previously stated, I think the data go beyond simply assessing the absence or presence of ICC among practitioners—they offer a better understanding of how practitioners approach ICC, but at the same time indicate practitioner awareness of, and tendencies to behave in culturally sensitive ways when conducting development work.
RQ3: What Kinds of ICC Training Are CDSC Practitioners Receiving Before They Enter the Field?

When asked in the survey instrument (n = 346), 64% of practitioners indicated that they had received some sort of intercultural communication training. Of those practitioners, 68% had spent 9+ hours in training, 11% had 6-8 hours of training, 13% had 3-5 hours of training, and 8% had 2 hours of training or less during their careers as practitioners. During the depth-interviews I asked practitioners to talk at length about their training experiences, what they liked, what they disliked, what they would do for training if time and money were no issue. The practitioners who had served in the Peace Corps discussed at length the value of living with host families and immersion training. One practitioner mentioned simulation training set-ups where actors were brought in to make the situations seem real (Jonathan). Another practitioner discussed games her own organization has created that required trainee involvement and included components of active participation. And several practitioners talked about receiving training in lecture-type settings with guest speakers and local culture nationals.

This certainly shows evidence of a variety of training methods, but of most interest to this research question was practitioners’ responses to questions about what kind of training would be best for their work. I coded this section as “training recommendations” and while I do not consider it to be a major theme in the research, I do think it helps to answer this research question and will have implications for the field. Of the responses to this question there were two major themes. The number one answer for preferred training was learning cultural basics such as the dos and don’ts of a particular culture. Included in this discussion was some training on the history, politics and environment of the international location, and learning the basic tools practitioners
need to interact across cultures. Beyond these more fundamental types of training, practitioners recommended interacting in some way with a national of the country. Whether via Skype with an overseas office, physically travelling there, or meeting someone in the U.S. who is from that culture, practitioners suggested that obtaining information from a local culture person would be incredibly valuable and informative. And finally, one practitioner suggested that simulation training would be valuable for practitioners, and another practitioner thought there would be benefits from doing training to raise awareness of one’s own assumptions about cultures in general. There are several implications and solutions revealed during these discussions, and those will be presented in the Implications section.

**RQ4: Do CDSC Practitioners Believe That Intercultural Competence Is Important to Their Work/In Their Field?**

Qualitatively speaking, the answer to this question is yes and no. Practitioners saw value in obtaining intercultural communication experiences, showed a desire to learn and conveyed an array of different communication strategies for conducting culturally competent work. However, the major restrictions of time and money often prevent practitioners from getting the resources they need prior to arriving in country. Additionally, 12 of the 22 practitioners interviewed and about one-third of survey respondents indicated that they had not received any formal intercultural communication training to build that competence. At the same time 93% indicated that intercultural communication training is important. So, practitioners see value in intercultural competence but lack the tools and resources to initiate proper training to increase competence levels.
RQ5: How Are CDSC Practitioners Achieving ICC?

The overwhelming answer to this question based on the qualitative and quantitative data is that practitioners are achieving ICC through experience in other cultures. Several practitioners discussed having a 'leg up' when getting a job in development due to their Peace Corps experience, with one practitioner relating that she was told later that if she could handle her Peace Corps assignment, she could handle anything the organization could throw at her. And another practitioner suggested that Peace Corps experience was as valuable as a degree in higher education in terms of experience and learning applicable skills. Quantitatively, practitioners with Peace Corps experience scored better on the Flexibility scale, suggesting that their experiences abroad have aided them in learning to be more flexible in intercultural situations. Living overseas, either in the context of development work or as a Peace Corps volunteer, seems to positively affect concepts relating to an individual’s ability to interact effectively across cultures.

But not all practitioners have the opportunity to work for the Peace Corps or similar organizations, or have the opportunity/time/money to commit to full immersion intercultural experiences. The alternative, intercultural communication training, is another important way that practitioners can gain ICC. Practitioners see value in intercultural communication training as a means for achieving intercultural sensitivity, as suggested by 93% of the survey respondents, but again, one-third of respondents have never had any sort of formal intercultural communication training, and more than half of the interviewees reported the same. Essentially, the ICC practitioners are able to gain comes from on-the-job training and experiences. Practitioners use their colleagues and peers as key informants for gaining cultural sensitivity, rely on their higher education
degrees in areas like international development and international relations, and practice self-education methods through reading and online searchers.

These research questions can only elicit cursory, superficial responses to what is a more complex and complicated situation. In retrospect, there are several research questions that I could have posed to allow for results to emerge from the data organically and encourage more depth of discovery. For instance, asking “how do practitioners think about intercultural communication?” would have led to a more critical collection of data as I would have been focusing on this process during the interviews. Also, creating a research question that focused on communication strategies in attaining ICC or conveying ICC to local country individuals would have encouraged a more elaborate investigation.

But even with these regrets for what the research questions could have been, having perfectly planned questions and a literature review that is a perfect match to the results section is not my intention in using grounded theory. Having a foundation in solid prior research and some sort of educated guess as to where things may head is certainly necessary, from my perspective—though I know even some grounded theorists would disagree—but the real purpose is allowing the interviewees to create the data, and then trying to analyze and organize that data into a theory with depth and explanatory power. With this in mind, I move on to the final discussion section and try my hand at reconstructing the evidence to explain intercultural communication from the development practitioners’ perspective.
CHAPTER 8
FINAL DISCUSSION: COMBINING QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

In this section I situate the results from the qualitative and quantitative research within the field of intercultural and development communication. I have chosen to discuss what I consider the main findings from this rich dataset, and focus mainly on communication strategies, perspectives of development practitioners, and other factors that I believe can add knowledge to the field based on solid evidence. Those pieces of the results section that I do not discuss here were either less prevalent in the results as a whole, or less relevant to the specific goals that emerged during the data analysis process. I close the chapter with a new grounded theory of intercultural development communication and a new model of development communication based on the findings from the sum of the qualitative and quantitative results.

Participating

The practitioners interviewed mentioned a variety of different ways that they engaged socially with local populations to promote cultural awareness and build relationships. First and foremost, there was a need to let go of the U.S. cultural desire to get right down to business. Practitioners revised their expectations of time management and engaged in various local customs in a more relaxed way than traditional U.S. business practices. Getting to know the local individual in a personal way was as much a catalyst for conducting the development work as professional communications. Interacting over meals and in casual settings required a different set of social skills than practitioners might use in a U.S. setting. The term “participating” was an in vivo code from a practitioner, but I think it is important to note that participating and participatory communication are two related but unique concepts. The distinction
lies in the fact that participating requires the practitioner to become involved in the life and customs of the local individual, whereas participatory communication styles typically refer to the local individual being engaged by the practitioner from a systemic, community level (Waisbord, 2008). Participating is an active term that reflects the dynamic involvement of international practitioners in the local setting.

Several of the practitioners noted that individuals have to have people skills of some sort when participating in the local setting to be most effective. Barbara even talked about seeing those skills in others and wondering how she could be comfortable in any cultural situation with being social and participating in a culturally sensitive way. I liken this set of “people skills” to what has been noted in the literature as the cultural IQ, called CQ, or cultural intelligence (Earley & Peterson, 2004; Wildman, Xavier, Tindall, & Salas, 2004) Thomas and Inkson (2004) defined CQ as a “multifaceted competency consisting of cultural knowledge, the practice of mindfulness, and the repertoire of behavioral skills” (p. 182-183). And Thomas (2006) also suggested that knowledge through cultural understanding, mindfulness through cultural awareness, and behavior through culturally appropriate actions define CQ. We can see connections between these definitions and the reports of practitioners regarding how they prepare before entering a new culture and how they use a cultural guide to bridge the gap between what they know and do not know—thus increasing their cultural knowledge.

Practitioners also discussed the idea that they constantly remain aware of themselves, their own cultural views and assumptions, and the intercultural situation. And finally, there is a ‘repertoire of behavioral skills’ that practitioners draw from—humility, openness, humor, asking questions, listening, watching, observing, etc. These
behavioral skills give practitioners the tools they need to participate in and become a part of the culture—not just nascent observers. The question then becomes how to teach these skills—how do you increase CQ? I discuss ideas regarding training and experience in a coming section, and offer some implications for the field regarding CQ and training in a later chapter.

Language

Practitioners in the qualitative interviews approached learning a language not only for the ability to communicate, but to increase their cultural understanding of how local people think and behave. The quantitative results showed positive correlations between basic and proficient language knowledge and the ICC scale, suggesting that language and competence are related. Language is a long-recognized component of culture, and vice versa, in the communication literature. The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis is one of the best-known assertions regarding language and culture and suggests that “the real world is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group” (Sapir, 1951), and Kay and Kempton (1984) summarized the hypothesis as claiming that “an intellectual system embodied in each language shapes the thought of its speakers in quite a general way” (p. 66). There is a dynamic link between culture and language such that culture is created by language, and language is changed and sustained by culture. And as Molinsky, Krabbenhoft, Ambady, and Choi (2005) indicated, “Becoming an accurate diagnostician of cultural differences in interpersonal communication requires competence in the verbal language of the new culture” (p. 380). Practitioners recognize the importance of knowing the local language because it gives them access to the local culture, but also to a better understanding of the way individuals within that culture think and operate. However, it is worth noting that language fluency did not
correlate with ICC in this dataset. This finding begs the question of whether basic or proficient knowledge of language are sufficient to gaining access to cultural mores in the development setting and opens more questions for future exploration.

‘Other’ Development

In talking about best practices and approaches to development as well as their experiences with misunderstandings across cultures in the context of development, practitioners related a laundry list of areas in which aid workers regularly fail. Interviewed practitioners, after giving a caveat about making generalizations, stated that “other” development practitioners and organizations come in with a prescribed program with no local input and based on donor goals, implement the program, then leave without conducting any follow-up. Then once the programs, projects, or technologies fail, the locals are left feeling abandoned and worse off than before.

While these are certainly generalizations about development practices, as noted by the practitioners themselves, there was an interesting component to their assessment that was missing: their own involvement, or the involvement of their organizations, in poor programming. This begs the question of whether practitioners see their own faults with regard to development. In an attempt to offer some sort of answer to that question, I asked survey respondents to rate their agreement with questions about making mistakes. They were asked how they felt about mistakes they have made personally, mistakes their organization has made, and mistakes made in the field in general. About one-fourth of respondents strongly agreed that they personally (24.6%) and the organizations they have worked for (26%) have made mistakes in intercultural development. In response to the same question regarding the field in general, nearly double the respondents strongly agreed that the field of development as a whole has
made mistakes (50%). And interestingly enough, nearly 38% agreed that practitioners failed to recognize their own mistakes.

The idea of development practitioners personally recognizing failure has gained no attention in the literature, though several entities have raised awareness of the issue of responsibility in international development for the field as a whole. The Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) call for mutual accountability among international organizations, such that participatory methods are used in program implementation and joint evaluation and partner country accountability for aid programs (2008). A working paper from the UK’s Institute of Development Studies brings attention to the NGO focus on “upward” (toward donors) and “downward” (toward beneficiaries) forms of mutual accountability while official aid organizations focus on “multiple sets of dyadic relations with recipient and donor governments accountable to their respective legislatures and citizens as well as to each other” (Eyben, 2008, p.13), both of which were reflected in practitioners’ discussions of assessment. The bottom line is that official aid organizations have been intentionally discussing for the past ten years or more the need to be held accountable for programs, the need to accept responsibility for and conduct assessments of those programs. But the results of this dissertation suggest that while practitioners would agree, there is still work to be done in terms of individual and organizational acceptance and creation of assessments to match.

**Being on the Ground**

From this discussion of what ‘other’ organizations do, I move to the idealized notions of what development could or should be as indicated by the interviewees. Essentially, the themes present in the results for the “being on the ground” category
suggest that practitioners should be looking to build capacity in development by giving ownership of ideas and implementation to local individuals. This can be accomplished largely through greater cultural understanding and having an ability to “blend in” with the local culture and obtain a clear view of needs on the ground. On the ground development infers that practitioners are present participants in local culture; that they can make a commitment of time and resources not only to identifying local needs, but also to assessing the long-term effectiveness of programming from the local perspective. As Carson indicated, “people think you’re going to come in and change the world and everything’s going to be great because development is really about people and relationships and that takes time, having that long vision instead of the short-sighted vision.”

On the ground development also assumes that ideas are generated in the field, not in an American conference room. Building relationships based on trust and truth is a necessary part of this process, as well as practitioner and program flexibility and openness. And practitioners should harness resourcefulness to include local experts and capacities in creating sustainable development initiatives. In addition to the human resources necessary, financial resource control must be somehow adjusted in such a way that practitioners on the ground, in concert with local populations, can appropriate funds as they deem necessary.

Many of these concepts are not new to the field. Participatory communication approaches require community-level involvement in program implementation. Grassroots programming identifies the importance of local input in idea generation. Empowerment practices highlight the need for local control of solutions. And each
approach requires that development practitioners act as catalysts (Brown & Ashman, 1996; Melkote & Steeves, 2001; Waisbord, 2000). But the results of this dissertation go beyond the overarching paradigms to suggest that practitioners must incorporate intercultural sensitivity and awareness on a personal level as they attempt to accomplish development on the ground—and communication plays a critical role in establishing the relationships necessary to facilitate development that gets to the root of local needs that empower local individuals to participate in social change. But in order to achieve ideal on the ground development, practitioners need communication tools to aid them in effective intercultural interactions. I discuss the benefits of training and experience in attaining such tools in the next section.

Training Versus Experience

According to the qualitative data, the impression in the field is that experience is better than training—that a culture cannot be fully understood until an individual has physically interacted in the intercultural setting. However, there was no quantitative correlation between the number of countries practitioners had visited while doing development or the number of years they had spent in conducting development work—arguably two indicators of a person’s ‘experience’ in the development field—and the ICC scale. This would suggest that perhaps it’s not just about experience. Conversely, there was no significant correlation between the number of hours of intercultural communication training and ICC, so it cannot be deduced from this data that either training or experience is related to ICC scores.

One explanation of this seemingly conflicting scenario (i.e., the idea that neither training nor experience correlate with ICC) is based on the types of training and experiences that practitioners have had. For instance, if a practitioner has spent one
year in the field, but that year consisted of several separate weeks or months combined, was there a depth to the experiences and relationships that would yield increased ICC while overseas? Other researchers have noted positive relationships between overseas visits on intercultural communication competence, particularly in the case of study abroad (Perry & Southwell, 2011), but length of stay is also an important consideration, with longer, more immersion-based experiences yielding higher intercultural sensitivity (Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004; Williams, 2005). Practitioners discussed the value of living overseas and being immersed in the local culture, especially in the case of practitioners with Peace Corps experience. As noted in the results, individuals with Peace Corps experience scored better on the Flexibility and Superiority measures, and individuals with some level of training reported higher levels of self-efficacy. Additionally, when discussing their training preferences, practitioners related that the activity-based and simulation experiences were most meaningful. This data makes a case for the need not only to focus on immersion (where time and funds allow) but also to focus on the kinds of experiences practitioners are receiving regarding immersion and training techniques.

**Building Relationships**

“It’s building a relationship over that year of step-by-step-by-step so that by the time we left a year later, they really were looking towards their neighbors and their friends. You need that support. They need that local support. God knows, in Africa that’s a good thing.”

This quote from Esther offers a synopsis of what it means to build relationships between development practitioners and local individuals. It is a step-by-step process that occurs over time but is not limited to relationships between practitioners and locals. If the practitioner is truly interested in building local capacity, he or she must serve as a
catalyst between local individuals and their neighbors or other local experts, such that relationships are forged between them. Relationships and the communication required to sustain them are an integral component to effective development (Brown & Ashman, 1996; Taylor, 2000; Taylor & Doerfel, 2003). But the time required to establish these relationships is not often factored into the RFP process. This was a major complaint of the practitioners interviewed—that they need more time to establish relationships with local stakeholders and organizations to gain a clear understanding of the resources and issues unique to the development setting. Relationships with locals can inform development practices, but the time must be allocated to do so.

Aside from time to create the relationships, the major components to international development relationship building are trust and truth. Developing trust as a component to relationship building among organizations has been discussed repeatedly in the literature (Bachmann, 2001; Zhang & Huxham, 2009) and can be defined as an input from individuals or an output of a developed relationship (Parker & Selsky, 2004). When practitioners enter the development setting, they are often focusing on gathering information through listening, watching, observing, and asking questions of local staff and expatriate colleagues. Once an initial understanding of the setting and relationship has been established, practitioners begin to work toward establishing trust between themselves and cultural others. Once trust is established, practitioners can deal with the issue of appeasement and begin to seek the truth and reality of local situations. Further connections between relationship building and trust relate to the cultural guides practitioners enlist as aids in the intercultural communication setting. Cultural bridges will be discussed in the next section.
Cultural Bridges

Cultural bridges, also referred to as cultural guides, can be expats or local individuals who assist practitioners in learning about and successfully interacting in a local culture. Cultural guides can be the link between training and experience and can assist practitioners by giving them access to opportunities for participation in local customs. Wildman et al (2004) note that using “overlaps (that is, on-the-job training) can also be considered a form of experiential training. Trainees...work closely with an experienced expatriate in-country who fills the trainee in on both work practices and adjusting to the culture” (p. 265).

Cultural bridges are also considered integral in facilitating communication among local groups with similar interests and goals—they can enable local connections among development practitioners and their organizations to benefit all interested parties (Brown & Ashman, 1996). But as discussed in the previous section, there has to be a component of trust in the relationship between cultural bridges, especially those serving as translators, and the development practitioner—and conversely, the practitioner must be willing to trust the local individual. Trusting another individual can become an issue of risk. As Zhang and Huxham (2009) suggest, “trust can exist between partners in collaboration if they either have confidence about each other’s future behavior or are willing to accept the risk of possible opportunistic actions by a partner in the future” (p. 189). But even with the risks involved, practitioners must rely on cultural bridges. They rely on in-country staff to learn the culture. They rely on in-country key community leaders to assess the feasibility of a program. They rely on key contacts to make connections with local organizations and stakeholders. Practitioners seek out cultural bridges both before and after arriving in country to ensure that they are effectively
communicating and to ensure that programs they seek to implement have the potential to succeed. Zhang and Huxham (2009) also explored trust and identity, suggesting that the two are linked, and that identity construction in particular affects trust building. Identity and stereotypes as presented by the practitioners will be discussed in the next section.

Identity and Stereotypes

The idea of identity framing came during discussion with practitioners of their nationality. This question was not intended to do anything but get practitioners thinking about their own nationality so I could follow-up with a question about stereotypes. Interestingly enough, defining their own nationality was difficult for some practitioners, and in further discussions it seemed that a lot of their strategies in dealing with stereotypes focused on separating themselves from their identity as Americans, and separating themselves from the U.S. government and its international policies. Other practitioners really just had a difficult time deciding to which country they really belong. All but one were born in the United States, but several had lived abroad for extended periods and consider themselves citizens of the world.

Practitioners discussed the concepts of American identity and dealing with stereotypes when asked if they had ever felt stereotyped. These concepts related with IMT theory postulates, from which the stereotype question in the semi-structured interview was derived. As with IMT, practitioners discussed the face threats they experienced in the form of stereotypes by local individuals—namely that they were often perceived as “rich white people” with “nice cars” who were going to come in and essentially take over, implement their ideas of development programming, and abandon the locals in the end. These are difficult assumptions to overcome.
Practitioners in this research also related that they dealt with money-related stereotypes by communicating in open and upfront manners regarding what resources they did and did not have access to. Managing expectations was a major strategy in the effort to change perceptions and is also a key component to displaying effective intercultural communication competence. Spitzberg (2000) indicates that competent intercultural communication requires communicators to have an accurate assessment of the cultural other’s expectations and to communicate appropriately.

Another major issue within development communication challenges that also relates to stereotypes is the idea of gender roles and definitions. Several female interviewees mentioned how they struggled with gender reconciliation between American definitions of gender and those in the local cultures they experienced. Essentially practitioners had two choices: put your head down and ignore perceived unequal treatment or attempt to change gender definitions one encounter at a time.

The idea of personal and perceived identities was also prevalent in the stereotype discussion, as Jonathan pointed out: “What they’re just trying to do is trying to give us sort of an identity within their structure and how their social dynamics play out.” Identity was a fundamental component of practitioners’ discussion regarding “being less American.” In this sense, individuals needed to distance their own identities from those of the stereotypical American individual. This required practitioners to discard their conceptions of time, truth, and social interaction in order to adapt to the local culture, change perceptions of locals, and then have an opportunity to participate in the culture as a result. This would require a necessary shift away from ethnocentric beliefs toward acceptance of local practices.
Practitioners suggested that having a full understanding of underlying communication and cultural mores could lead to deeper relationships with locals and the possibility of even being adopted, causing yet another level of separation from stereotypes. This was most prevalent in the case of Peace Corps practitioners operating in remote villages and individuals who had spent extensive time (i.e. more than 10 years) living abroad. The challenge of being adopted is that identities have changed, and practitioners begin to live in two separate worlds—in either case, there is a world and identity of current experience and a world and identity left behind.

The fact is that there is little to no research available regarding how development practitioners specifically deal with the stereotypes and perceptions of local individuals regarding their own identities, capabilities, goals, and associations with the American culture and its government and policy practices. I seek to address that lack of understanding in the following chapter.
CHAPTER 9
CULTURAL SEPARATION THEORY

Based on this discussion of interviewee perspectives and key definitions of identity and stereotypes from the extant literature, I offer a theory to help explain the experience of practitioners in this unique situation. I offer this theory as a distinction from previous research because it offers specifics regarding a development communication process in the context of practitioner identities—to my knowledge, there is not a theory that addresses this issue. There are, however, a multitude of identity theories in intercultural communication that deal with the various ways in which intercultural communicators manage identities.

While there are aspects of this theory that reflect current knowledge, it is not my goal with this supposition to extend other identity and stereotyping theories already in the field. This theory emerged from my dataset in the form of practitioner discussions about their nationality and how that nationality is and is not challenged by individuals overseas. With this theory, I attempt to explain what it means to practitioners to “be less American” or lose their “American-ness” when conducting development work. I submit that the details and propositions offered here extend understanding in the field and offer a new perspective on managing identity and stereotypes, albeit in a very parsimonious way. More research is certainly called for to further flesh out the details of any cognitive or behavioral processes present from this dataset, but I offer here a sort of mini-theory to guide future research. Figure 1 depicts the major components of Cultural Separation Theory and is located at the end of this chapter.
Time

In cultural separation theory, time is considered in two different ways. First, time is considered from the perspective of time in country. Short-term assignments may only last a few weeks and will yield different results on the continuum, such that practitioners do not reach the higher levels of cultural understanding and separation. Long-term assignments require a commitment from the practitioner in terms of time and also represent the time it takes to build substantial relationships and allow for acceptance of the practitioner by the local culture. Similar to a hierarchy, this cannot happen in initial interactions, but takes time to complete.

But the time construct is also considered from the cultural perspective already acknowledged in the literature—that different cultures consider time in different ways. In this regard, separation from the U.S. culture suggests that individuals will begin to function on the time tables of the local culture. Gathering information may take more time in the local culture than it would in the U.S. culture, where direct questions garner direct answers. Practitioners have to take the time to deal with issues of appeasement, and it may take longer to get to the heart of the issue via questioning. They also have to build in time to take part in the culture and participate as a function of getting work done as opposed to the U.S. cultural focus on “time as money” or what U.S. development practitioners might consider a waste of time. “Hanging out” outside of the office setting as a means of gaining cultural understanding is necessary in many of the cultures within which development happens, and it requires time.

Managing First Impressions

Impression management occurs during initial interactions among development practitioners and local staff or local nationals. In these first interactions, practitioners
maintain a positive countenance and show enthusiasm for learning about the cultural other and the unique circumstances of that particular development program. They may employ the use of locally appropriate greetings that include the native language. The major goal is to try to set a tone for future communications and pave the way for positive interactions. Practitioners want to impress upon locals that they are willing to learn and be a facilitator for the process. This necessarily calls upon skills in managing expectations as practitioners attempt to set a tone for their abilities and resources in the development setting.

**Gathering Information**

In the second phase of the Cultural Separation Process, practitioners begin to take in their surroundings. They may sit through meetings but refrain from making statements. Questioning is the key mode of verbal communication, but practitioners are also closely assessing the situation through observation. In this phase the major goal is to gather information about the host culture and the inner workings of the development enterprise into which they are entering. Increased cultural awareness is the main result.

Once practitioners have gained a solid conception of their surroundings and how to properly communicate within the culture, they begin to deal with their own personal cognitive processes as well as their outward behavioral processes. Cognitively, practitioners are faced with making a decision about the extent to which they want to change local perceptions about their cultural position or to “put their heads down” and play into local stereotypes. Simultaneously, practitioners are dealing with outward behavioral perceptions and the process of building intercultural relationships.
**Building Relationships**

The strength of the relationships practitioners form is a result of how they choose to grapple with their own cultural identity and the extent to which they separate from their own culture, such that higher levels of separation result in stronger, deeper intercultural relationships. This is different from intercultural integration because the focus is more on having local individuals get to know the development practitioners and then readjust their own perceptions about who the practitioner is—in essence, building relationships is the main catalyst for breaking down stereotypes. Practitioners are trying to earn and give trust, seek truth, and make connections. They have begun to understand the social atmosphere and begin participating at various levels in the process of relating to cultural others through their own customs and practices.

**Cultural Separation**

This cognitive and behavioral process reflects the degree to which practitioners seek to distance themselves from the U.S. culture as perceived by local individuals. They can choose to maintain their cultural mores as reflected in outward behavior, which can include more overt demonstrations of U.S. cultural beliefs and behaviors, or they can choose to put their head down and disregard local perceptions so as not to upset the delicate balance of two cultures in conflict. For practitioners who choose separation, there is a greater sense of taking part in the local culture and the ability to access a higher level of intercultural understanding. Additionally, practitioners can more effectively communicate across cultures and display intercultural communication competence due to a shift from "American-ness" to a more worldly point of view.
Becoming Invisible

Becoming invisible is the outcome of practitioners’ decisions about cultural separation. If a practitioner has decided to adapt to local customs, their own cultural practices should become invisible to the local people such that locals are often able to forget the practitioner’s true nation of origin. Indicators of this phase include increased language proficiency and increased ease of behaving appropriately within the intercultural context. Interpersonal relationships are moving away from initial contact and becoming more meaningful.

Assuming Local Persona

Assuming a local persona is the highest intercultural level that practitioners were able to attain and was the result of having spent a great deal of time immersed in the culture. Practitioners who take on a local persona indicate a loss of home country identity to the extent that they are now living and operating in two separate worlds. In the intercultural world, they may have attained a local family structure of individuals who count them as relatives, regardless of their appearance or previously existing stereotypes. Practitioners assume a local persona that may result in a new definition of self—a new family name, language, home village, etc. But at the same time, practitioners are grappling with a life at home that is continuing without them. Assuming a local persona in the culture requires the greatest time commitment of any level of cultural separation theory and may result in some loss to the former identity. Individuals may deal with increased levels of reverse culture shock upon re-entry to their native cultures due to a second loss of identity—the one that they built based on relationships and familial connections in the foreign culture.
Propositions

The major propositions regarding Cultural Separation theory are as follows:

1. As time spent in the culture increases, depth of relationships increases.
   As previously mentioned, time is a critical component to building relationships and building cultural knowledge. The quality of the time spent is also a consideration in that practitioners who are actively engaging in building relationships will see greater outputs in terms of the quality of the relationship.

2. As time spent in the culture increases, the potential for becoming culturally invisible increases.
   As with the first proposition, practitioners can become culturally invisible to local individuals or separate from their native culture over a period of time. Again, this requires that the practitioner is actively engaged in building relationships during the process.

3. Practitioners make a cognitive decision about promulgating or changing stereotypes.
   Proposition three indicates that practitioners must make a choice. They can choose to hold on to American cultural values, or relax their hold and begin to adapt to and consider local ways of being. This choice will dictate their ability to become invisible culturally, and take part in the local culture.

4. Practitioner goals and motivations dictate their level of cultural separation, invisibility and opportunities for a local persona.
   A necessary caveat to cultural separation theory is the impact of practitioners’ goals and motivations in communicating with local individuals. If the major goal is simply to collect information or assess a program, there may be little motivation to move to the local
persona stage of the theory. Likewise if a person seeks full inculcation with the local culture, this may be his or her main goal.

The major limitation to this theory is its application—this theory relates the experiences for development practitioners in attempting to communicate across cultures. I did conduct member checks with several of the qualitative interviewees, as well as with a handful of survey respondents to add credibility to this theory, and received feedback that helped refine the propositions. However, additional research is required to determine the applicability of this model to other practitioners, as well as within the context of different intercultural and international experiences. Another key limitation is the fact that this theory relates ideas from the perspective of the practitioner only. As such, we cannot say with any confidence that local individuals feel they have truly taken practitioners into their families as one of their own. Practitioners operating in the local culture may hold a perspective on their integration with the local culture that does not reflect the reality of the relationships and intercultural existence. More research is needed to discover the depth of relationships and the profundity of cultural separation in the relational context. Additionally, researchers should explore the issues that assuming a cultural persona can create among and within development organizations and communities. For instance, if practitioners assume a persona within a specific local family, what are the ramifications of that relationship in the greater community relational system? How is that relationship perceived both within the development organization and practitioners on the ground, and within the local community? These are important questions regarding cultural separation theory that warrant further investigation.
Relating Cultural Separation Theory to the Field

Another important component of doing grounded theory research is to situate the proposed theory within the context of what we already know about development communication and intercultural communication theories. Here I make the connection between CST and the identity theories I described in chapter two. First, I think there is an interesting connection between what are termed development models of intercultural communication competence because they suggest that competence develops over time. Time is certainly a component of CST, but I think the key difference between these theories and CST is that the development practitioners are not starting from zero in the intercultural setting. The development models may start with a denial phase (Bennett, 1986) or initial phases involving culture shock (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009), but these were not concepts practitioners discussed. Development practitioners operate at higher intercultural levels than initial entrants into a new culture. They have researched, prepared for, and committed to intercultural work, so in many ways they have skipped the first phase of many development models of intercultural communication competence.

When considering other models of intercultural communication, there are undeniable links between models that convey a shift from ethnocentric perspectives to ethnorelative perspectives (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009) as evidenced in the fact that CST rests on a practitioners’ desire to distance themselves from their own culture and adopt a new, more worldly identity. Additionally, while I chose to use the Imahori and Lanigan’s relational model as the major causal path model from my review of the literature, when I later chose the competence measure for the quantitative work, it was another causal path model, Arasaratnam’s ICC, that I chose. Her model, the Model of
Intercultural Communication Competence (Arasaratnam, 2008; Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009) includes five interrelated variables that lead to ICC: cultural empathy, interaction involvement, experience, global attitude, and motivation. As mentioned, practitioners experiencing CST are moving toward global attitudes and are motivated to do so by the goals they hold for communication interactions, with experiences in the other culture increasing over time.

And finally, I draw a connection between IMT and CST in that the stereotyping question I asked of interviewees was based on IMT and how practitioners are perceived in intercultural interactions. The IMT component of facework is relative to CST because practitioners, in separating from their own cultural behaviors, are managing a face for local individuals that is more appropriate to the context (Imahori & Cupach, 2005). CST also offers some allusion to coping mechanisms in the “becoming invisible” phase, though these mechanisms were not a major focus of this theory. As practitioners move into the deeper levels of CST, they display more appropriate communication and a greater level of communication accommodation, and a higher level of intercultural communication competence.
Figure 9-1. Cultural separation theory

- Managing First Impressions
  - e.g. local greetings
- Gathering Information
  - e.g. listening
- Building Relationships
  - e.g. earning trust
- Separating from U.S. Culture
  - e.g. 'being less American'
- Becoming Invisible
  - e.g. 'putting your head down'
- Assuming local persona
  - e.g. local family connections
CHAPTER 10
A MODEL FOR CONSTRUCTING EFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION

In addition to creating a theory of intercultural development communication, I wanted to create a tool that condensed my findings in such a way as to be a tangible tool for practitioners to reference, perhaps in early training or prior to entering a new culture. This tool is a diagram of the communication process and highlights some of the best practices and characteristics that practitioners referred to during the interviews, as well as those most supported through the quantitative data. One caveat to this model is that there are many, many other characteristics and skills that have been identified in the literature as relating to intercultural communication competence (see, for example, Spitzberg, 2000). The goal of this model is to offer those skills and characteristics suggested by practitioners as most prevalent in and relevant to the development context. This is an inherently culture-general model and should be used as such, though based on practitioner input, a general model is necessary due to the wide range of cultures practitioners enter.

The model I have developed consists of four foundations, each with a communication objective as the main goal or outcome. The model is presented as a linear process, but obviously communication is a dynamic situation during which any of the phases may be present. As such, challenges and tools from any phase may be extend into others. Again, the linear presentation is simply a logical organization of the communication process.

One might ask, why the construction focus? The reference to construction, while certainly conjuring images of skyscrapers and bridges, was something I noticed during the qualitative interviews. Practitioners used terms like “building relationships,” “building
capacity,” and using items from their communication “toolbox” to conduct development. The term “development” itself elicits thoughts of new homes and structures in my mind. As such, I am focusing on the way practitioners may phrase these thoughts so that the model will resonate with them; hence the focus on constructing development communication.

As with building any structure, effective development communication requires a firm foundation and toolbox of strategies for interacting across cultures. Much like the roadblocks that can halt construction work, cultural communication challenges and misunderstandings can put a damper on the development process and waste time, money, resources, and opportunities. Practitioners must be equipped with proper strategies for dealing with such challenges. Grounded in the data from this dissertation, the following construction-themed model seeks to explain in a visual way the communication processes described and also to offer an analytical blueprint for practitioners; to provide something that is useful to their work in the field, a tool for improvement.

The setting within which this model is appropriate assumes that practitioners will have had little to no experience with entering a new(er) culture. As such, they must rely on the tools in their communication toolbox to construct a mutually beneficial communication environment between themselves and the cultural other. The model incorporates several of the ideas from the qualitative results and those used in the theoretical model, but I put this model forth as a potential training tool for practitioners who may not have had the intercultural experience the field so highly values. Figure 2
Phase 1: Pre-Departure Preparation

In Phase 1 practitioners are learning about the local culture from afar by using the self-training and formal training techniques referred to in the results section. Specifically, they are engaging material on the history, economics, politics, and customs of the new culture. In addition, practitioners are developing basic or proficient language skills to show local nationals they respect local values. Roadblocks in Phase 1 include incorrect assumptions about the culture, and incorrect expectations about what the practitioner will experience. Assumptions can also relate to feelings of native cultural superiority held by practitioners. Managing expectations and assumptions are important for pre-departure consideration because having accurate expectations positively relates to an individual’s ability to adjust to the host culture (Caligiuri, Phillips, Lazarova, Tarique & Burgi, 2001).

Phase 2: Arrival In-Country

Once the practitioner arrives in country, they begin work on the cultural foundation for effective communication. The major objective here is simply to learn about the culture, which practitioners can achieve by gathering information. They do so through observation and watching locals interact to gain a better understanding of how they should interact as well. Asking questions is another way of gaining access to cultural mores and values. Practitioners use this communication strategy to gather information about the local culture in order to adapt their communication styles to be more effective, simply because “when facing the unknown or the uncertain, we often look to others for information and guidance (Baldwin & Moses, 1996, p. 1915).
Practitioners recognize their information and knowledge deficiencies and then ask questions of local individuals and colleagues in order to fill those knowledge gaps. Asking questions also displays communication involvement and shows the cultural other a desire to learn more about the local customs. Challenges in this phase include appeasement practices of local individuals, if any, and time constraints, depending on the length and purpose of the stay. This is, however, a crucial step in building cultural awareness and sensitivity to communication processes.

**Phase 3: Participation**

Using the information gathered in Phase 2, practitioners should now attempt to apply what they have learned to their own intercultural interactions. Practitioners should be participating through basic discourse but also focusing on the social components of a culture and how those play a role in everyday communication. Some basic strategies include having a meal with in-country colleagues, asking them about their families and sharing about yours, trying to put aside tendencies to get right down to business and avoiding direct communication where possible. This requires constant monitoring of one’s American-ness as discussed in previous sections. Being aware of one’s own cultural predilections will assist in communication with cultural others.

I call this phase the relational foundation because practitioners are planting the seeds of potential relationships with local individuals. This is a process that, like the next phase, occurs over time and may require the use of a variety of communication tools. Humor is one tactic that can be used to begin breaking the ice and overcoming stereotypes. Practitioners need to show local individuals that they are interested in the local culture and learning about local needs. They need to show a desire to become involved in the process to the extent that locals seek their involvement when issues
arise. Practitioners must also recognize that this process takes time and that cultural norms vary for allowing outside participation in in-group customs. For instance, it may take months to be invited to a meal with a local family. Being aware of these issues and starting to participate in the culture will set a solid foundation for Phase 4.

**Phase 4: Integration**

The major objective of the development foundation is to achieve relationships with local individuals. Practitioners now know about the culture, have been interacting within it over a period of time, and have laid an interpersonal foundation with local contacts. Now they can begin the process of building relationships through openness, willingness, humility, and most importantly, commitment. Practitioners must convey trust and seek truth of local individuals, but above all they have to display a commitment to the local people—a drive to do the work that needs to be done on the ground. As with the previous two phases, this phase requires time, language comprehension, and an understanding of local, culture-based relationship norms.

Fortunately for practitioners at any phase in this process, they are not alone. Practitioners can and should use the multi-purpose tool: the cultural bridge. A cultural bridge can be engaged both at home and abroad as a link to the new culture. Using the insight and intercultural communication guidance of this expert will be invaluable to practitioners. While they will not be able to avoid every roadblock to this process, the cultural bridge can aid in pointing out issues and suggesting resolutions in ways that are culturally appropriate and meaningful.

The major output of the Constructing Development Communication process is that practitioners own their intercultural communication opportunities. Practitioners prepare themselves in multiple ways prior to entering a scenario, and then take the time
to observe local interactions before attempting to participate in customs. Participation that is well-received and culturally respectful will set the stage for future interaction and the opportunity to build beneficial relationships. The desired outcome is intercultural communication that is appropriate and serves as a catalyst for effective development and social change efforts.

**Making Connections**

There are several connections between the findings, discussions, theory, and model of this dissertation and the literature review found in the second chapter. First, the idea of time was presented as a consideration from Hofstede (1993) and Gudykunst (2003) regarding long-term and short-term orientations and the ways individuals view time. The data in this dissertation show how practitioners have to reconsider their own conceptions of time and what they do and do not have time for when conducting development work. Here we see the links to long-term and short-term orientations in that practitioners from a short-term oriented culture (U.S.) may be performing in a long-term oriented culture. We are given the best definition of the U.S. perspective on time from Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2010, n.p.):

The United States scores 29 on this dimension and is a short-term oriented culture. As a result, it is a culture focused on traditions and fulfilling social obligations. Given this perspective, American businesses measure their performance on a short-term basis, with profit and loss statements being issued on a quarterly basis. This also drives individuals to strive for quick results within the workplace. There is also a need to have the "absolute truth" in all matters.

Here again we see the distinct connections between Hofstede's cultural dimensions and the ways in which development practitioners approach their work. Fortunately, I think we have a best case scenario in that practitioners are not frustrated by this difference—rather they are aware of their own cultural mores and have established tactics for
effectively working through differences. However, funding sources and the system of development as a whole may not have addressed the issue of time.

I also draw a connection between the propositions of CAT and the themes that emerged from the qualitative data. Gallois' (1995) CAT suggested that individuals attend to the nonverbal postures of the other interactant as a measure of speech convergence or divergence. This was a component of practitioners’ discussion of appeasement and assessing the understanding of the cultural other in the communication episode. The CAT also includes the preconceived notions individuals may bring to the interaction, which were present in the interviews, particularly the extent to which practitioners valued prior knowledge of the culture from an historical point of view.

When considering the results of this dissertation within the context of AUM theory, I can see a connection between the mindfulness construct and practitioners’ discussions of cultural awareness. This is particularly true for practitioners who were aware not only of the cultural other’s communication preferences, but also of their own assumptions and cultural schema and how that can affect their intercultural competence. And competence is best shown, as AUM suggests, when misunderstandings are at a minimum.

One interesting concept that was absent from the interviews was the idea of intercultural communication anxiety and the need to reduce uncertainty in the development setting. Several practitioners did talk about gathering information during initial interactions, but this was never couched in such a way as to suggest that practitioners were attempting to reduce negative emotions regarding the intercultural
situation. I think this reflects the fact that practitioners are not only participating in intercultural communication because it is their job, but they are participating in intercultural communication because they want to. Practitioners are motivated to learn about new cultures and have a desire to do so through communication channels. As such, anxiety and uncertainty reduction are not as consequential as they might be in a multinational corporation situation, for example. Again, practitioners seem to be operating from a higher level than the general population of intercultural communicators and have higher levels of competence as well.
Figure 10-1. Constructing effective development communication
CHAPTER 11
CONCLUSIONS

Implications for the Field

There are several implications that I derived from the data gathered in this dissertation. Firstly, practitioners and academics need to form a consortium for knowledge sharing. Cultural bridges, both in the U.S. and abroad, have been an integral part of this dissertation, and as such draw attention to the need for interpersonal assistance from other more experienced practitioners. A consortium or association could serve as a catalyst for development practitioners to make connections. This entity could support online sharing sessions using technology to facilitate knowledge transfer. There are several online associations dedicated to connecting development organizations, but none that I could locate with a specific focus on interpersonal access to intercultural communication knowledge in the context of development work.

Secondly, we need to help practitioners make connections with local country nationals, either via their own in-country office or through individuals living in the U.S. who are natives of the culture in question. Practitioners talked about the value of having a cultural guide in country, and I think this idea could also be used in training practices. Again, having resources for making connections with individuals who could share cultures as recommended above would be a good way of operationalizing this suggestion.

Next, we could ask the question, what does this research mean for the intercultural communication training and consultancy community? What have we learned that can improve the types of training we use, or the kinds of information we provide? First of all, cultural awareness is key—both awareness of one’s own cultural
assumptions and awareness of potential cultural differences abroad. Second, we have to teach people how to listen, watch, and observe in the development setting before inserting themselves into the process. Thirdly, we have to show people strategies for participating in culturally acceptable ways to facilitate relationship building. Fourthly, development is not only conducted by development practitioners, but also by individuals with expertise who go abroad to share knowledge about what they do. This is a critical component to sharing the resources we have, but these individuals need some sort of training before they are sent to consult with local communities. We cannot expect someone with the desired technical training to have natural intercultural communication abilities as well. They need tools to be effective. We need to build the capacity of development practitioners as we look to develop the capacity of others.

And finally, the field of development must reconsider its perspective on time. We need more than 3-5 years or less to affect social change. We need more time to build substantial relationships and get to the root of locally defined issues. Practitioners need more time on the ground to acculturate to local customs and gain the language knowledge that results in cultural knowledge or CQ. Practitioners in the U.S. need more time to complete the RFP process and less of a time lag between award of funds and actual disbursement. Our culturally sustained perspective on time must shift if we are to look to long-term assessments and program success.

My Thoughts on Development and Social Change Efforts

The evidence presented in this dissertation suggests that development practitioners display more intercultural competence than the average person, but that they work in some of the most difficult, conflict-riddled, culturally challenging places in the world. They have the nearly impossible job of balancing the needs of U.S. donors,
organizations, and tax payers each and every time they enter the field. The pressure is tremendous, and the stakes are sometimes life and death for local people. Chris’s quote always comes to mind when I am considering the position of development practitioners:

“A lot of time, I find myself trying to figure out how to do a good job and how to get good results that I can be proud of in spite of the system or in spite of the way people have asked us to do things. There’s a lot of that, although we don’t put that in our reports.”

Here we see a practitioner struggling with how to be personally satisfied with his work while meeting the needs of often-conflicting parties, all of which have an interest in the outcome of his work. The fact that practitioners are balancing those needs in the development arena should more often make it into the reports. I certainly have a newfound respect for the work development practitioners do as a result of the findings in this dissertation.

I also recognize that practitioners are signaling the need for change in the field. They recognize the need to be on the ground with local populations to effect change that is sustainable and to build capacity, but they have the desire to go beyond the buzz words or what is “hot” right now among those funding development work. With that said, I did note one interesting connection between two completely separate practitioners. Melissa had shared a story about building latrines in a Central American country and how that had been the main goal of one of her programs. This struck me as interesting, because in a previous interview, Connie had mentioned her experiences with a local villager who was using latrines another organization had built as chicken coops. When Connie asked him why, he simply stated it was unsanitary to void in the same place every day, and that they really needed chicken coops, not the latrines the outside organization had decided the village needed.
So even with the acknowledgements of practitioners in terms of being on the ground, there are still issues in the development field. The fact remains that if we are going to make substantive changes to the way development work is conducted, we have to address, both in the academic arena and in application, the issue of assessment such that we receive necessary feedback. Practitioners need evaluation tools that are not only tested and accepted for their effectiveness (either qualitative or quantitative), but they also need tools they can actually use. Functionality of assessment and operationalization are two key issues that practitioners struggle with. We also have to address the issue of funding to include recognizing donor and grant organizations’ roles in the process. And in addition, we have to look at the long-term implications of programming and how to assess what changes, if any, our programs have made over time. It seems this is yet another intersection with funding issues because few organizations are willing to expend the funds to conduct the research necessary to make educated assessments of long-term results. If I were to summarize what I believe to be the current needs of the development field, I would say essentially practitioners need more time and less focus on deadlines, increased funding, intercultural training, and a focus on local involvement on the ground to create optimal programs.

**My Thoughts on Mixed Methods**

This exercise in conducting mixed methods research has given me some insight into the data collection and analysis process. First, I think qualitative interviewing skills are key to getting a depth of data that reflects the processes and actions present in the field of interest. For me, this came as a result of letting the practitioner guide the interview to an extent, but also through encouraging them to tell me stories of their
experiences. This was particularly relevant to communication because it allowed the practitioner to express their communication experiences through narratives. Secondly, I found that using a platform for analyzing the qualitative data provided rigor in presenting the results. While I did quantify the number of code occurrences, I think it is important to also state that the qualitative interpretation stands on its own and is not a product of the numbers. However, the platform allowed me to think and rethink the data in an organized way, with quick and easy access to the data itself. Thirdly, the qualitative data lead me to the scales and questions formulated for the quantitative sections. As such I could use these empirical findings to support or call into question the qualitative results, creating a more complete picture of the communication processes. However, I also contend that the quantitative data can stand on its own and offer some relevant insight and generalizability to this dissertation. Drawing from each of these data analysis methods has strengthened the results and rigor of this work as a whole.

**Limitations**

Several of the limitations to this study revolve around the specific focus on the international development community. While the sample sizes were sufficient for this research and the quantitative data could be used in generalizations, sweeping statements should be reserved to the international development context. The theory and model offered should also be limited in application to the development and social change context.

Another limit to this study is the fact that the sample size may not be reflective of the U.S. practitioner population as a whole. I contacted a small cross-section of development practitioners, so a larger sample could certainly improve the validity of the results. The data are also severely skewed to present a Caucasian perspective on
development. More research is required to explore the application of the emergent concepts and themes with a more diverse population of practitioners.

But the major limitation of this study is the fact that communication, a two-sided process, was considered from only one perspective. In addition to a loss of data from the other partner in communication exchanges, practitioners completed self-reports of their intercultural competence, listening skills, and self-efficacy as well as their levels of respect, superiority, and trust. There is always some question as to the ability of individuals to assess their own communication characteristics. Several of the scales have options for secondary input in defining individual communication skills that would improve the objectivity of these scales.

A final limitation of the study relates to the qualitative nature of the main research method. While I related my own perspectives on the field before starting the research, I must still recognize that I have my own biases and interpretations of the data. While I did work with practitioners after the data was collected and requested additional input on the model and theory, the coding process is still uniquely my interpretation of reality. As such, there may be a limitation to the applicability of the qualitative results to the field as a whole.

**Areas of Future Research**

This dissertation will hopefully inspire more research in the area of development communication and intercultural communication, but I have taken note of several components that warrant further investigation. First, an admitted limitation of this study is the one-sided perspective on intercultural development communication. We need to contact in-country staff members, and to the extent possible, the beneficiaries and in-country partners who are the targets of development work. These individuals can tell us
whether or not self-deprecating humor or smiling are effective from their perspective. Do they really feel respected when someone knows their language? To what extent does the discussion of honesty and truth-telling resonate with their own approaches to communicating with development practitioners? It would be interesting to determine the level of sincerity they perceive of practitioners who attempt to get to know them on a personal level or show interest in their families and communities. We need to conduct depth interviews with individuals on the receiving end of this communication to offer a more complete picture of the interaction.

Another area for future research is the inner workings of the larger NGOs and government organizations that seem to have so much access and relatively little local community or individual connections, according to the interviewees of this study. With a mind to the narrow scope of this work, we need to collect more qualitative data regarding government employed practitioners as well as employees from larger non-profits. We cannot stand on generalizations or stereotypes of what we think large organizations do or do not accomplish. They play an important role in the funding and success of their own as well as many other types of organizations’ programming. Specifically, it would be interesting to better understand their evaluation procedures and how they define success in development. Also, we need to better understand the funding process, particularly as it relates to assessment and admitting (or denying) failure to determine if there are any conflicts of interest. This could be accomplished by reviewing internal reports from development programs and would also have implications for NGOs and their abilities to provide accurate data, which has continued to be problematic. This data would also be of interest for funding agencies.
A third potential area of research is not so much related to the communication function of practitioners, but rather to the practical application of research topics and findings. Several of the practitioners mentioned needing to develop more and better ways of assessing the effectiveness of their programs. This is a monumental challenge for small and large organizations alike and deserves more attention from the field. The fact that we lack tools for assessing programs is not a new concept to academia, but I think the fact that practitioners are still grappling with it points to the continued need and importance of academics continuing to research and provide best practices for measurement in development.

Another obvious area of future research regarding this dissertation is further measurement and validation of the model and theory offered here. This could be accomplished by additional interviews with practitioners as an extended sort of discriminant sampling, as well as through supplementary studies on the applicability of these concepts in international settings. For instance, one could consider whether practitioners from other countries utilize similar techniques in communicating across cultures. Also, participant observation would be an interesting way to collect data to study these concepts and see them in action. We need further evidence for how practitioners handle initial communication interactions, particularly where stereotypes are involved. This theory could also be extended to other international groups, such as immigrants and diasporas, to determine the applicability of the theories in other areas, and as they compare with ideas of acculturation and adaptation.

And specifically regarding the results of this dissertation, each aspect of the results section could be considered as a qualitative study in and of itself. For instance,
it would be interesting to research the concept of trust in international development and to see how practitioners are achieving trust. Also, we could examine the concept of the cultural bridge and best strategies for engaging a local national to take on this critical role. Lastly, one could consider cultural awareness and develop a theory or model for how practitioners are attaining cultural awareness abroad.

And lastly, while conducting research for the topic of development and communication, I came across a number of government, international organization, and consortium publications outlining best practices and goals for development. A content analysis of these publications would provide valuable insight into the current direction of international development and allow researchers to identify additional topics to explore with regard to the effectiveness of organizations in achieving those goals. Along those same lines, it would be interesting to conduct a content analysis of U.S. development organization websites to explore the ways in which these organizations frame their goals and measure success.

**Conclusion**

One of the major takeaway points of this dissertation is that there is a plethora of ways to conduct development or approach development communication—either for practitioners who move from country to country and have to tailor their programs to meet cultural needs, or for the field as a whole, where participatory approaches or traditional forms of development may hold equal weight based on complex international environments. Sometimes we have to use the traditional approach to stop immediate human rights violations. Often, we need to really understand a community and a people before we can make effective changes. In the end, there is a time and place for everything, but regardless of the type or approach, we have to consider the culture and
how to be most effective. I believe part of that effectiveness will require an interdisciplinary approach to conducting development work that includes concepts from economics, political science, communication, anthropology, international development and others to create a holistic approach to doing competent work.

When reflecting on the failures of development and the instances of social change that are simply an imposition of outside views and values, it is easy to become discouraged. But I believe the practitioners interviewed and surveyed offer a more hopeful view of what development could and should be. They acknowledge the need for intercultural competence in doing effective development work, which can be achieved through training in the field but also through harnessing the skills and experiences of other practitioners to offer some clues as to what works best. This dissertation offers a model of intercultural communication in development that provides some insight into the tools and strategies practitioners currently use that will direct new practitioners and spur additional discussion of this topic.

This dissertation is one step in the direction of answering Jan Servaes’ call for better understanding of intercultural communication in the context of development and social change. The results of this study offer evidence of the ways in which intercultural communication tools are being utilized in international development efforts, but also suggest that practitioners recognize the need for intercultural communication competencies in their work and in the training they receive. In order to move forward, development organizations need to recognize intercultural communication competence as an issue in international development as well, and begin to address the needs of practitioners so that we can achieve ‘effective’ development.
APPENDIX A
SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTION GUIDE

Explanation: Basic understanding of your intercultural experiences, specifically with as many examples as you can muster. This is your own personal experience, confidential, anonymous.

Intro Questions

How long have you worked for this organization? How long in development/aid work? Where have you been (get an idea of cross-cultural experience)? What programs have you worked with? Where?

Training

Now that we are thinking about some of your experiences, did you ever receive training for how to enter a culture? Did you go through any programming prior to leaving for an international project?

What kinds of training activities did you participate in? (Lecture, simulation games, assimilators, immersion, etc.) If yes, can you give me an example of an experience in training?

If no, is there something you wished you had known/been trained in prior to arrival in the host country?

How do you think your training influenced your experience in the host culture(s)? Can you give an example?

Is there anything about your training experience that you would change? If so, what?

CAT, AUM

When you first meet someone from another culture, what are some of the strategies you use to connect in your first few conversations? Can you give me an example of a time when you met someone for the first time and how that interaction proceeded?

Thinking about your intercultural experiences, are you mindful of cultural differences? Do you recognize communication misunderstandings? How so? (Mindfulness)

What kind of cultural research do you conduct before entering a new culture? Do you ever consider identities or self-concepts of the individuals within that culture (need to explain identities)? (AUM & IMT)

How do you establish common ground in intercultural situations?

Identity Management Theory
What cultural, ethnic, gender, national cultures do you identify with? (this will get the respondent thinking about their own group identifications and cultures so they can answer questions about their experiences when cultures conflict)

Have you ever felt “stereotyped” in a communication interaction (that someone was making assumptions about who you are based on your ethnicity, cultural, national, gender, identities, etc.)? Follow-up: What happened in that situation? Be specific, explain the situation.

Can you tell me about a time when you experienced a misunderstanding with someone from another culture? Follow-up questions: What did you do to clear up the misunderstanding? How did you feel about your communication skills in that situation? What did you think about the other person’s communication skills?

**IMT Coping Strategies**
Have you ever felt stereotyped in an intercultural exchange? How did you deal with that? In your experiences, how do you handle cultural differences? Do you compliment others? Make jokes? etc.

**CDSC Approaches (based on the paradigms of CDSC previously mentioned, what aspects of any, if at all, are being used in current projects?)**

Can you walk me through the steps of program development through implementation, and please use any project that you have worked on, or are working on?

- What is the process like?
- What is your contribution to the process?

(Refer to any examples of projects already mentioned by participant) In these experiences, what approach do you generally take to implement the program design? (want to know if participatory approaches, social marketing, etc. are being used in each instance, and if so, how) Follow-ups:

- Who initiates project development?
- How do you decide on what communication styles will be used (media channels, etc)?
APPENDIX B
INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY SCALE (CHEN & STAROSTA, 2000).

Below is a series of statements concerning intercultural communication. There are no right or wrong answers. Please work quickly and record your first impression by indicating the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement. Thank you for your cooperation.

5=strongly agree
4=agree
3=uncertain
2=disagree
1=strongly disagree

1. I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.
2. I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded.
3. I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different cultures.
4. I find it very hard to talk in front of people from different cultures.
5. I always know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures.
6. I can be as sociable as I want to be when interacting with people from different cultures.
7. I don’t like to be with people from different cultures.
8. I respect the values of people from different cultures.
9. I get upset easily when interacting with people from different cultures.
10. I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures.
11. I tend to wait before forming an impression of culturally-distinct counterparts.
12. I often get discouraged when I am with people from different cultures.
13. I am open-minded to people from different cultures.
14. I am very observant when interacting with people from different cultures.
15. I often feel useless when interacting with people from different cultures.
16. I respect the ways people from different cultures behave.
17. I try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from different cultures.
18. I would not accept the opinions of people from different cultures.
19. I am sensitive to my culturally-distinct counterpart’s subtle meanings during our interaction.
20. I think my culture is better than other cultures.
21. I often give positive responses to my culturally different counterpart during our interaction.
22. I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally-distinct persons.
23. I often show my culturally-distinct counterpart my understanding through verbal or nonverbal cues.
24. I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally distinct counterpart and me.
APPENDIX C
PARTICIPATION REQUEST EMAIL

Dear (salutation and last name):

I am a Ph.D. candidate and researcher from the Department of Mass Communication at the University of Florida seeking individuals to interview for my Doctoral Dissertation. I am interested in learning about development and/or social change programs and experiences abroad from the American field workers who have researched, planned, or implemented such programs.

I will follow up with you within the week via phone, but please respond to this email if you would be interested in a 30-45 minute interview to share your experiences/career and further research in the field. All interviews will be anonymous and confidential per standard IRB protocol.

Additionally, if there are other individuals within your organization that you feel may fit the profile for my research, I would greatly appreciate any connections you could help me make. I thank you in advance for your assistance.

Kind Regards,

Jennifer Braddock, Ph.D. ABD
Department of Mass Communication
University of Florida
### APPENDIX D
EXCERPT AND CODE APPLICATION TABLE

**Table D-1. Excerpt and code application table**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excerpt</th>
<th>Sample initial codes</th>
<th>Focused codes</th>
<th>Theme (#apps)</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Start with being a good listener and an awareness of the other party and their cultural mores and tendencies and values, and then you try and condense your message and involve them in the dialogue about the topic rather than just talking at them. Then you listen for confirmation of portions as you go, so you don’t necessarily go on the long stream if you’ve lost them. You’ve gotta know that they’re coming with you. Walter</td>
<td>Being good listener; being ware of other party culture; condensing message; involving them in dialogue; not talking at them; listening for confirmation; going on long stream; losing listener’ knowing they’re coming with you</td>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>Listen/watch/observe (49)</td>
<td>Intercultural communication strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It makes a really nice impression if you can learn how to say some of the basic pleasantries. Chris</td>
<td>Making a nice impression; learning how to say basic pleasantries</td>
<td>Language (40)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obviously that’s the most important thing is to have a—as much as possible to have a smile on your face… Rachel</td>
<td>Having a smile on your face</td>
<td>Enthusiasm</td>
<td>Showing excitement (10)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oh, that happens all the time. Just say you’re sorry. I just say I’m sorry. Oh, you were right. Jossa</td>
<td>Happening all the time; saying you’re sorry; saying I’m sorry; you were right</td>
<td>Smiling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Saying sorry</td>
<td>Apologizing (5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Forgiveness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Excerpt</td>
<td>Sample initial codes</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>I think that really asking lots of questions helps. I think that you have to be obviously be mindful of the sorts of questions. Certain questions are not always appropriate in every culture. Melissa Trying to establish more of a personal connection at first with people, and getting to know people...over the first period of time that you're there is really just establishing relationships, showing interest in what they do in the community around you, and having them show you and really showing a strong desire to learn about their community and how things work, kind of a big piece of that. Pamela</td>
<td>Asking lots of questions; being mindful of question appropriateness in culture</td>
<td>Asking questions (36)</td>
<td>Intercultural communication strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not so much about myself, but, you know, I think one thing I learned on this project was the critical importance of being very flexible, being very open to modifying your approach, being very open to revisiting things if they really didn't come across the first time. Amelia</td>
<td>Learning from project; being flexible important; being open; modifying approach; being open; revisiting misunderstandings</td>
<td>Being honest</td>
<td>Openness (20)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well, there are many times when you will say something and your intention is not—it maybe, for me, I can be self-deprecating and kind of be funny or laugh, just laugh. Ellen</td>
<td>Saying something unintentional; being self-deprecating; being funny; laughing</td>
<td>Self-deprecation</td>
<td>Humor (7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excerpt</td>
<td>Sample initial codes</td>
<td>Focused codes</td>
<td>Theme (#apps)</td>
<td>Category</td>
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<td>When you’re dealing with a region of 30-something countries, it’s difficult to say that there’s a specific way that you can train people. People are either “people” people [laughter] or they’re not, or they’re sympathetic to the way people look at life differently. Barbara I mean, we’re an organization that’s trying to facilitate change, so there’s gotta be that commitment to, one, to help empower people overseas to create and expand their opportunities. George That was encouraging because they actually started using their imagination on things that they could do and how they can make things. They’re starting to see that they’re surrounded—they’re not poor. They’re having the mentality of we have resources here; we just need to maximize those resources and know what they’re good for. That’s kinda what I’ve been preaching for the last three years. Jossa</td>
<td>Dealing with 30+ countries; not specific way to train people; being people-people or not; being sympathetic to differing views</td>
<td>Trying to facilitate change; having commitment; helping empower people overseas; creating and expanding opportunities</td>
<td>Being people person (15)</td>
<td>The practitioner; best characteristics</td>
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<td>I don’t expect anything from my staff that I wouldn’t expect from myself. I would never expect my staff to work as hard as I do as the founder. I do expect them to be respectful, to be ethical, no payment under the table of nobody. Connie You have to have that commitment and that empathy. George</td>
<td>Expecting more of herself than staff; not expecting staff to work as hard as founder; expecting respect, ethics, no illegal payments</td>
<td>Being an example (4)</td>
<td>The practitioner: best characteristics (cont.)</td>
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<td>I would tell them to listen, to be humble in what they have to offer and what they do and don’t know. Joy A lot of times, I think, when you’re coming in as an American representing a U.S. organization and oftentimes with funding from foundations or governments, you’re seen as you have a lot of money to offer, and that’s not necessarily the case. Trying to manage expectations so that we’re not raising expectations and then disappointing them. Joy whenever possible, we don’t walk in with a solution. We walk in with a set of resources and the ability to facilitate a discussion and ultimately, people are—we want people to be asking us and giving us ideas about how we can be most useful. Chris</td>
<td>Telling them to listen; being humble in offerings and knowledge</td>
<td>Taking back seat</td>
<td>Being humble (18)</td>
<td>Facilitating/motivating (9)</td>
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<td>Facilitating/motivating (9)</td>
<td>Melting/Motivating (9)</td>
<td>The practitioner: best practices</td>
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<td>You wanna make the case that that you have a strategy, you have a plan, you're the right organization to do this, but also leave yourself the wiggle room to have some leeway for there to be some changes within reason, so that you're doing the formative assessment, and you're making some changes after that. Joy Just spending time, hanging out. One of the things westerners do is they get themselves in their little boxes; their houses and they stay in there all day and they don't just hang out. Africans typically like you to spend time; just spend time with them. You don't have to be doing anything. It doesn't have to be conversation. Jossa One is just a relationship between power: Do you challenge power? Are people committed to a newer focus on individual rights or group rights or things like that, as well as the issues with gender and ethnicity and all of that? Joy</td>
<td>Making the case for strategy; having a plan; right organization; leaving wiggle room; having leeway for change; making changes after assessment</td>
<td>Spinning time; hanging out; westerners getting into their boxes; staying inside, not hanging out; Africans liking to spend time; not doing anything; not having to have conversation</td>
<td>Flexibility (18)</td>
<td>Participating in culture (24) The practitioner: best practices (cont.)</td>
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<td>I mean I think that—just people are more open to women in general usually than they are to men, just as a baseline for the human nature. I think you do sometimes get—it plays sort of both ways, right? Sometimes people don't talk you seriously because you're a woman, or at least initially don't, but also sometimes they are maybe a little more open to you than they would be to a man initially. Rachel whereas, people I worked with in Central America, it's people are less willing to have confrontations. They're scared of it, and they're more willing to say oh, for example, like if you ask—invite someone somewhere to a meeting, they may just say, “Yes. Yes, of course I'll be there,” rather than telling you the truth, that they don't want to come or they can't come. They'd rather just say yes, so they don't have to deal with the repercussions of that, and so I think in that situation, I kind of tried to adapt to that communication style. Pamela</td>
<td>People more open to women; playing both ways; not being taken seriously; being more open to women than men initially</td>
<td>Gender (24)</td>
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<td>Less willing to have confrontations; being scared of it; more willing to say yes than no; not telling the truth about coming; not having to deal with repercussions; adapting to that communication style</td>
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<td>Appearasement (28)</td>
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<td>I guess by staying a long time, and then they observe that we're not as rich as the people that work at the embassy or that work for [a] multinational. They notice your car is not great. They get to know you enough. They know you have trouble making ends meet at the end of the month or the way you mix with them. Jeff With a translator, you don't get the nuance. You never know how good the translator is. It varies quite a bit. You definitely lose a lot. Joy To include participation with the community and to start there. For example, there's a project in north Haiti that's been going on 7 months and there hasn't been any construction, it's all been mobilization and community meetings and baseline assessments and that's important. You have to do location work with community partners and other NGOs that can help us in one area where we don't have the expertise. Carson Well, we have national staff in Honduras that helps, along with our missionaries, to decide what villages we will send our teams to.</td>
<td>Staying a long time; them observing poorness; noticing car not great; getting to know you; knowing financial struggles; knowing way you mix with them</td>
<td>Using translator; not getting nuance; not knowing how good translator is; varying; losing a lot</td>
<td>Stereotyping (52)</td>
<td>Communication challenges (cont.)</td>
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<td>Including participation with community; starting there; project in North Haiti, no construction 7 months; mobilizing, meetings, assessments; working with community partners and NGOs; filling expertise gaps</td>
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<td>Ownership/Local staff (129)</td>
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<td>Having national staff; helping along with missionaries; deciding what villages; sending teams</td>
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<td>Ownership/Local staff (129)</td>
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<td>I think it’s a good idea to have a couple of backup plans, depending upon—it looks like this project’s gonna have more of a government capacity building type of a something. Okay, this donor really likes this. It looks like we’re gonna be mostly working with rural leaders. Okay, this donor likes that. Pamela I think culturally it kind of, you just, once you recognize what the culture is, you can play into that. In Cape Verde, everybody has a lot of they call it pecanas, which is girlfriends. When I call someone from Cape Verde, they say, “How many pecanas do you have now?” I would never call an American, my brother, I would never call him and say, “How many girlfriends do you have right now?” SMWT</td>
<td>Having back-up plans; capacity building; donor preferences; working with rural leaders</td>
<td>Building capacity (14)</td>
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<td>Yeah. I mean, well, they say to me that I am an adopted Honduran now, [Spanish] is what they say to me. No, I was born and raised in very rural, Anglo-Saxon, Mennonite, conservative community. I mean that defines who I am, yeah. Connie</td>
<td>Being adopted Honduran; people calling her a Spanish term; born and raised in rural, conservative community; defining who she is</td>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>Identity framing (38)</td>
<td>Blending in</td>
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<td>It really runs the gamut of organizational development and again, the person in-country is the one that defines what it is that they need. (Annette)</td>
<td>Running the gamut for organizational development (in programming); in-country person defining needs</td>
<td>Defining needs (100)</td>
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<td>Assumption local persona</td>
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<td>How do you do it? I think you just have to go and you have to be in the community, and you have to have both experts from your team, but also local experts that you have brought on board specifically to work on the project. I think that’s really critical. Well one of the—the biggest buy-in is you're looking, first of all, for the most—you need to find a person that is well-known in the community. Like I have a lady that works in my—that works for me on an everyday basis. She is coming to all the classes but she's also working every day. She is implementing permaculture every day, every day. She knows what needs to be done. I think there are organizations that really just kind of hand out money or hand out kind of construction-based projects that aren't necessarily sustainable and don't always do follow-up, and there's kind of a new—well I'd say it's pretty new idea now in development of recognizing failure, and how to learn from failure, and learn from challenges to be more effective, The way that you approach the current [system for] program funding I think is—the RFP process and the RFA process is really challenging.</td>
<td>Going and being in the community; having experts from your team; having local experts for project</td>
<td>Looking for buy-ins; finding well-known person in community; having a lady work for her daily; coming to all the classes; working every day; implementing permaculture; knowing what needs to be done</td>
<td>Community presence (29)</td>
<td>Cultural bridge (44)</td>
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<td>Organizations doing hand-outs, construction-based; projects not sustainable; no follow-up; new idea of recognizing failure; learning from failure; learning from challenges; being more effective</td>
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<td>‘Other’ development (78)</td>
<td>Perceptions of the field</td>
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<td>Funding, RFP process challenge</td>
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<td>Funding (93)</td>
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<td>Then the next thing that you have to have is you have to have some system of accountability. It doesn't work to do something and then not have any follow-up and not know what your impact is. It doesn't do any good. When they arrive in a place for the first time, they want to—maybe there are good reasons for it. Maybe they only have a couple of weeks to get their work done or to get their role done and that's all they have time for. They don't have time for four-hour coffee breaks and discussions over tea and whatnot. If it's gonna be for a longer time, I think it's really important to build in—to communicate in the way that people communicate… Chris but recognizing that there's often some capacity gaps that need to be filled, and those often have to be filled by people with additional experience whether they're Americans or Europeans, or from elsewhere in the region. That often is the case.</td>
<td>Having some system of accountability; not working to do something without follow-up; not knowing your impact</td>
<td>Lack of time for program design/RFP</td>
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<td>Arriving for the first time; only having a few weeks to work; not having time; Have longer time—communicate like locals</td>
<td>Needing time to learn culture</td>
<td>Time (60)</td>
<td>Perceptions of the field (cont.)</td>
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<td>Recognizing capacity gaps; needing to be filled; bringing in expats with additional experience; common issue</td>
<td>Political</td>
<td>Cultural</td>
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| then you just get there, and it’s sink or swim. But you have three months, and then you go through the—it’s sort of dependent upon where you’re placed, and within the country, places that are different. I was in a very rural village. Nobody spoke English. You either learn or you leave | Getting there; sinking or swimming; depending on where placed; placed being different; being in a rural village; no one spoke English; learning or leaving | Training vs. experience (31)  
Academic training (22)  
Self-training (21) | Training types | Training recommendations (32) |
LIST OF REFERENCES


Jennifer Braddock received her Bachelor of Arts in Spanish and Communication Studies, Magna Cum Laude from Western Kentucky University in 2004. After receiving her degree and moving to Savannah, GA, Jennifer began working at Page International, Inc. in the position of Pricing Specialist, quickly moving to Pricing Manager for the international logistics firm. After two years with Page, Jennifer realized that she belonged in higher education, and moved into a position with Armstrong Atlantic State University, also in Savannah, as the Assistant Director and Business Manager for Housing and Residence Life. While in this position, Jennifer began a master’s degree program at Georgia Southern University, and left AASU in January of 2008 to become a graduate assistant in the Department of Education at GSU. Jennifer obtained her Master of Education in higher education administration in 2009, and started the Ph.D. program at the University of Florida in the spring semester of 2010. Jennifer held positions teaching Public Speaking, Interpersonal Communication, and Business Writing while completing her studies. Jennifer and Corey are the parents to four beautiful children: Aiden, Riley, Connor, and Mason. After graduating Jennifer will conduct research and teach in the communication field.