Multicultural Training Elements

IDS 6503: International Trends in Instructional Technology

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Introduction

"Multicultural Training" represents a topic of interest that may be growing due to increasing trends of globalization. This topic forces a conceptual shift from providing employees with diversity training to providing multicultural training. This, in turn, incorporates instructional objectives of greater complexity as a reflection of the myriad issues and challenges of a multicultural workplace. This shift is not specific to the United States, but it is mirrored in the policies, research, and business practices of countries around the world. According to Foster (2000), only organizations that truly are committed to learning quickly and effectively cross-cultural will succeed in the turbulent and tough international business environment. There may be a gap between the international business project needs and the current available approaches to cross-cultural training (Kealey et. al., 2005). The questions many business leaders ask include:

- With so many programs available, how does one decide which program is best for the company?
- Which program will provide the most information to employees?
- Which program will allow employees to step away with more than a pamphlet of statistics and perspective trends?
- Which program will provide a sense of what to do after the session has concluded?

To find answers to these and other questions, the informed manager of a multicultural workplace should review the design details of the multicultural training program. In this short paper, the authors present the results of a review on four multicultural training programs, one of which is an in-depth analysis, with the aim of answering some of the above questions. The paper presents a brief description of each reviewed program, a table to compare and contrast the similarities and uniqueness of the different programs, a table to present the results of an in-depth analysis of one training program, and a short narrative to interpret the results in each table.

Comparison

Below is a brief description of each of the programs reviewed by the authors. Following the brief descriptions is a concise narrative of the similarities and differences between the programs. Table 1 provides a more detailed notation of these similarities and differences.

Europe at Work

The European Intercultural Workplace (EIW) is an international project with sustained support from 10 European countries. The goal of the project is to investigate the challenges that arise in a workplace environment that is increasingly intercultural. The project's aim is to conduct research on issues of the intercultural workplace and to provide information and training solutions to managers, employees, and customers from host and immigrant cultures, whether the sector is public, private, or education. The training program produced as a result of the research through the project incorporates multiple instructional strategies, with a high degree of rigor, to address culture shock and to build empathy between members of staff who differ in nationality and culture. The course includes 14 modules including, but not limited to the following: Introduction, Interpreting the message, Work ethic, Race, Conflict, Body language, Language

Acquisition, and Gender. Each unit includes objectives, instructional strategies, review, self-reflection, and action planning strategies.

Multicultural Training Institute

This non-profit training corporation provides workshops and seminars to clients in the Midwest United States. Possibly due to the small spectrum of its clientele, Multicultural Training Institute (MTI) provides training divided into career fields such as education, government, health care, and language skills. Their proclaimed specialty lies in "cultural diversity and organizational change processes" (Multicultural Training Institute).

Third Wave Workforce

The Multicultural Workplace Training Program was designed to provide assistance for organizations and companies looking to "...prepare managers to work with people from other countries" (Third Wave Workforce). Not just another diversity training program, these workshops focus on background demographics, foreign-born populations, culture-based value systems, and communicating with people from other nations. The program, however, does not ignore the native-born cultures. An entire workshop is dedicated to American-born subcultures, such as African-Americans, reminding companies that there's more to multicultural training than foreign cultures.

Cultural Savvy

According to Cultural Savvy, to gain power in the global marketplace knowledge and skills are not only important that is needed to survive. It is crucial that cultural knowledge through understanding the learning process and practicing cultural awareness with sensitivity for various cultures are attended with education or training. Cultural Savvy provides companies and organizations with services that will enhance their success rate in the global environment. Cultural Savvy thinks that the most effective learning experience is to be able to address all the specific issues and objectives and also to enable the maximization on the company's financial bottom line is through the customization of cultural competency learning.

Similarities

The second column of Table 1, *Similarities and Differences found in Multicultural Training programs* (see table following), provides some basic information on the similarities found for Europe at Work, MTI, Third Wave Workforce, and Cultural Savvy. Surprisingly, there are very few "true" similarities found in Multicultural Training programs. For instance, though all of the programs the authors reviewed contain some form of Language Skills Workshops, each program is different. Europe at Work offers their classes in different languages. Multicultural Training Institute offers courses in basic language skills for business use. Cultural Savvy workshops contain "useful expressions" to bridge language barriers. On the other hand, Third Wave Workforce goes in a completely different direction and provides courses on communication barriers other than language. Similarly, some form of Diversity Training is offered by each program. However, the programs reviewed do not necessarily agree on what is considered "Diversity Training."

However, there are some items that exist within all four programs. For one, every program has courses taught in English. Second, education and culture are main areas of focus. Finally, each program has some format of introduction that covers historical information and/or

demographic information to provide students with a sense of why multicultural training is so important and necessary in the workplace. These introductions and other various workshops include case studies and individual examples to help the student understand the direction of the course and goals behind the program.

Differences (Unique Elements)

The number of unique elements found in the review of these four programs are many. Each program approaches multicultural training from a different perspective with a different concept as to what is needed to mitigate issues in the workplace. Table 1 goes into additional detail as to the differences between the programs, but a few of these differences are highlighted below.

Possibly the biggest reason there are so many differences between the programs is due in part to the audience. Cultural Savvy and Europe at Work both focus on educating audiences who will work in the business marketplace in Europe. Third Wave focuses on the US marketplace, while MTI further narrows its audience to focusing on the Mid-west US. The audience often determines what is needed in the training program and which areas should be studied in more detail. MTI has clientele that requests a great deal of assistance from the Latino culture due to a lack of understanding and response from the Latinos, so understandably this is one of MTI's main focus. Cultural Savvy and Europe at Work, on the other hand, don't require a similar focus because of their location and audience. Conversely, Third Wave's audience is the entire US; therefore, they have found it essential to include a workshop on the Impact of Islam. Unlike its counterparts, Third Wave has a found a great need for this type of training for its clientele.

Another difference lies within the Outcome/Assessment area of the programs. It appears that these four programs have varied ways of measuring, or in some cases not measuring, the outcome of their workshop. MTI states that it uses Self-Assessments. Third Wave uses activities throughout the workshop. Europe at Work has Study Outcomes. Unfortunately, none of the programs provide detail on their outcomes/assessments, so it's difficult to imagine there would be many similarities. Considering that even the objectives and outcomes of different workshops within the Multicultural Training Institute are not comparable, it would be hard to imagine that there would or could be similarities between the four programs.

Table 1

Similarities and Differences found in Multicultural Training programs

Area	Similar Elements	Unique Elements			
		Europe at Work	**MTI**	**Third Wave**	**Cultural Savvy**
Profit vs. Non-Profit Organization		Non-Profit	Non-profit corporation	For-profit	For-profit
Audience		Europe, world-wide	Mid-west US	US companies	Europe, world-wide
Languages Supported	English workshops provided	English, Bulgarian, German, Greek, Italian, Norwegian, Polish, Finnish, Swedish	English	English	English
Language Skills	Various levels of language skills; English	English, Bulgarian, German, Greek, Italian, Norwegian, Polish, Finnish, Swedish	Spanish, Arabic, French, German, Japanese & Mandarin Chinese	Workshop on communication barriers other than language	English uses "Useful Expressions" in the areas of training.
Diversity Training	Diversity Training of some kind	Diversity Training	Diversity Training	American-born subcultures, Foreign-born populations	Comparing and Contrasting Global Cultures, Global Mgmt. Styles
Communication	Communication between cultures and levels within organization	National, Regional, Corporate and Personal Experience	Recruitment and Interviewing Skills		Establishing Credibility and Building Relationships, Customer & Partner Relationships, Dealing with Culture Shock, Negotiating Across Cultures, Bridging the Skills Gap
Major Area of Focus: Training	Education/ Training Services	Appearance, Work Ethic, Food, Religion. Time, Authority, Race, Conflict, Qualifications, Body Language, Language Acquisition, Gender, Personal Qualities	Education, Government, Healthcare, Latino culture. Also provides basic workforce skills	Focuses on all areas/organizations	Current affairs, Business etiquette & protocol, Communication & negotiation styles, Meetings & presentation styles, Effective relationships, Leadership styles & decision-making Focused on organizational communication and managing
Major area of Focus: Culture	Culture Sensitivity and knowledge	All the above	Latino culture Seminar on Teaching in Multicultural Society	Impact of Islam	Asian cultures, Significant ways in which American and Asian cultures differ
Class Time	Mixed Mode Training	Need Dependant / DVD	2 – 3.5 hours*	DVD Time: 11 min – 2 hours / DVD	Need Dependant
Goals & Objectives		Each Module and Area	Both measurable and not measurable	Not provided	Understanding Global Communication Styles
Information / Case Studies	Case studies	Case Studies	Demographics/case studies/Historical info	Historical Information/demographic	Scorecard and sample list of consulting projects (case study)
Evaluation / Outcome	Some form of Outcomes	Study Outcomes	Self-Assessments	Activities/Exercises Used	All areas of communication

Optimal Program Review

There are numerous companies and organizations that focus on training in the multicultural arena; however, on their informational websites and blogs, there are most often empty words instead of genuine case studies with the necessary information to be able to judge as to the probability of success and a proper outcome of the various learning sessions. EIW provides by far the best, as to what we found in our search, modular explanation as to what will be focused on in the learning session and what the suggested outcome would be, if properly done. The narrative for the Europe at Work training program will leverage the information provided in the supplemental reading.

Various cross cultural training programs have been analyzed and evaluated through four different categories. The first category is *Conceptual Framework*, which includes Cultural Awareness, Attributing Training, and Cultural Assimilators. A conceptual framework in research is used to outline various courses of action or to enable a presentation of a preferred approach to a systems analysis. The framework is founded on a set of concepts that are linked to a system of methods, behaviors, functions, objects, and relationships. The conceptual framework has three categories: cultural awareness, attributing training, and cultural assimilators. Given the details of the framework, the training program EIW fits within the designation of cultural assimilator. The role-plays and discussions within the EIW program provide the basis for this designation.

The second category is *Objective*. Multicultural methods and programs can be differentiated by their different objectives. The objectives can be focused on the cognitive, affective, and behavior. In the case of EIW, their objective is "to highlight key issues for managers, employees and customers from host and immigrant cultures in public, private and education sectors."

The third category is *Training Rigor*. This category entails the following areas: training educational approach, training complexity, trainee's involvement, and training model rigor. Regarding the training educational approach, EIW uses an experiential model as evidenced through many hands-on activities and role-plays. This ensures a moderate to very high the overall involvement of teacher or facilitator, as well as the attendee. The training program complexity used by EIW can range from simple to complex.

The fourth category represents the best situational application of the chosen method. There are three areas: cultural novelty, interaction, and job novelty.

In table 2, *Well and Not Well Designed Features of Europe at Work Multicultural Training Program*, we present examples of well designed and not well designed elements of the instructional design. Among the details presented, it is worth noting that while the audience analysis is very robust, other areas that are basic to the field remain weak. For instance, the instructional objectives do not clearly state the target outcomes; the objectives mix the cognitive and the affective domains; the guidelines for how and what to deliver as far as feedback is concerned remains undefined; the schedule for the course is unknown, so we have no way of knowing if the objectives and instructional strategies are viable; and there are significant elements that are missing within the stated assessment strategies, although these missing elements could be due to explicit design decisions. On the other hand, the program is very strong in the coverage of topic areas and the structure of delivery that includes multiple delivery and participant engagement strategies. Since the program addresses complex topics, it remains reasonable that the assessment strategies could include a degree of ambiguity.

Table 2
Well and Not Well Designed Features of Europe at Work Multicultural Training Program

Instructional Design Feature	Well Designed Feature & Explanation	Not Well Designed Feature & Explanation
Target Audience		
As derived from asking the following questions: What is the course title? Who is teaching the course and through what organization? What country is the course offered in? What language is the course offered in? Who is the identified audience that would be interested in/stand to benefit from this course?	The target audience who would benefit from the results of the research, which includes the training program, are very well defined, as evidenced by the level of detail the organization states they are targeting: Employers/ Managers, Employees and Clients. In addition, potential users include: • Policy Departments of National governments and local authorities • EU Department of Education, Trade, Justice • Trade Unions • Professional business organizations • Migrant Organizations • Training Organizations for the development of training curricula or modules • Schools • Higher Education Institutions & Centers of Further Education • International business consultants • Teacher trainers The research project that led to the development of the training program investigated workplace practices in the following key areas: • Education (primary, secondary, third level) • Public Sector (healthcare, security, transport) • Private Sector (SME's, multinationals, tourism/hospitality) In addition, the training materials are offered in the following languages: English, Bulgarian, German, Greek, Italian, Norwegian, Polish, Finish, Swedish	
Instructional Objectives		
Clearly state target outcomes?		Only the details of the first two modules are provided, so a thorough examination is not possible. From the details available, the objectives presented include description, but do not include condition or criteria, which would allow the objectives to be measurable. Four objectives from the second unit, *Interpreting the Message*, exemplify this point: - Understand that migrants may not understand the host language very

Instructional Design Feature	Well Designed Feature & Explanation	Not Well Designed Feature & Explanation
		well. - Appreciate the differences between everyday language and specialist language. - Adapt your style of speaking to different people and situations. - Recognize the importance of interpreters.
Do the objectives leverage design considerations appropriate to the cognitive, affective, or psychomotor domains? Do you find that the lesson objectives follow Bloom's taxonomy or revised taxonomy?	The course structure and the details of the instructional strategies for the units' design clearly indicate the designer's vision that the objectives encompass both the cognitive and the affective domains. Some evidence of this is seen with the stated objective "…to build empathy between members of staff of different nationalities and from different cultural backgrounds." As far as the development of empathy, the program identifies the following outcome targets: - Curiosity about other cultures - Acceptance that there are other people of different backgrounds equal to yours. - Tolerance of ambiguity when you are not sure of the outcome or the communication flow - Flexibility in looking for alternative solutions to provide a win-win solution to disagreement - Empathy in being able to see a situation from the other person's point of view - Ability to adapt your use of language to the level of the other person and to develop strategies to improve essential fluency	The stated objectives that were provided in the sample training material did not provide evidence that the designers made use of Bloom's original taxonomy or the revised version of the taxonomy by Anderson & Krathwohl (2001). By way of example, the use of the verb "appreciate" would indicate an affective objective that would suggest the intended objective into the Valuing or Organizing levels of Bloom's original taxonomy for the affective domain, but the choice of verb and the remaining description do not provide sufficient clarity of the target outcome. Further, the use of "adapt" would suggest a possibility that the target outcome is either or both cognitive (it could fall within the Apply domain) and affective (it could fall within Organizing or Characterizing).
Instructional Strategies		
Generally speaking, do you find that the materials, activities, and exercises specifically support each learning objective?	The instructional design structure allows for up to 15 specific strategies per course unit. The following are the strategies incorporated into the units (at least within the sample unit we have access): • Objectives • Context • Focus • Scenario • Issues • Reflection	

Instructional Design Feature	Well Designed Feature & Explanation	Not Well Designed Feature & Explanation
	• Role-cards • Take a view • Transfer • Good Practice • Check • Outcomes • Objectives (Review & Reflect) • Action Planning • Script Further, each of these 15 strategies is structured by providing details that cover the strategy's Aim, Activity, and Method, each of which is clearly defined.	
Do you find that the lesson content sequence flows from the general or easy to the specific or more difficult?	The units would seem to be sequenced from easier, or "lighter" topics, to those requiring more attention: for example units 3 and 4 focus on Appearance and Food respectively, while units 9 and 10 focus on Race and Conflict. Additionally, within the unit, the design structure strategies move progressively towards fulfillment of the unit objectives by employing multiple treatment techniques that balance the individual's perspective (through reflection) with group activities.	
Do you find that the lesson includes a well-defined feedback strategy using multiple channels between instructor and student?	The 15 strategies employed encompass a general strategy of structured dialog, which include multiple opportunities for exchanges between student-instructor and student-student.	The guidelines for feedback details are incomplete. Some of the topic areas will likely provoke animated discussions (e.g., within the units Authority, Race, Conflict, Qualifications, or Body Language), which would make necessary a carefully selected moderator/instructor who could successfully bring the participants though these activities to the targeted outcomes. No such instructor guidelines are provided, so this element of the instructor feedback remains unknown.
Is there sufficient time for students to successfully complete all activities and exercises?		Without access to the course timeline or schedule, or any reports on actual course delivery, it's not possible to determine whether there is sufficient time to complete all activities and exercises.
Assessment Strategies		

Instructional Design Feature	Well Designed Feature & Explanation	Not Well Designed Feature & Explanation
Do you find the assessment strategies support each of the learning objectives?		While there are assessment strategies for each objective, they are blended to satisfy each objective (i.e., there is no one-to-one correlation of objectives to assessment strategy elements). The focal point of the assessment strategies is that each participant will come to internally recognize whether or not the objectives are met through reflection and directed discussion in group settings. This represents a weak design, but due to the nature of the course and the participants, this may be an explicit design decision. Unfortunately, the sample of the unit that is accessible is incomplete, and it's unknown the full extent of the assessment strategies.
With consideration to Bloom's taxonomy/revised taxonomy, do you find the assessment strategies are appropriate for the topic or area of study?		The assessment strategies reach into the Apply, Analyze, Evaluate, and even to some small degree into Create (i.e., these are the categories in the revised Bloom's taxonomy), but the primary verbs employed with the objectives do not all match appropriately with these levels. For example, one of the objectives for unit 2 is to "recognize the importance of interpreters," which should be categorized through Bloom's taxonomy of the cognitive domain as Remember or Understand. But within the provided framework of the assessment strategy, the structure of the assessment is derived from individual and group reflections, and from answering a set of questions intended to determine if the participant now understands the topic or not. This internalized assessment strategy, which is recorded on a questionnaire as a result of numerous activities designed to highlight the course topic, represents the complexity of what must be learned against how successful achievement of unit objectives can be knowable: the outcomes must be considered in context that empathy and understanding of differences is increased, not as a score on questionnaire. Another example is the objective that is written in the following way: "Adapt your style of speaking to different people and situations." In the assessment, which is the same for all the objectives (as previously noted), an instructional designer would usually be looking into the Apply level of Bloom's revised taxonomy, but the actual assessment has the participants in the Analyze or Evaluate levels through the use of

Instructional Design Feature	Well Designed Feature & Explanation	Not Well Designed Feature & Explanation
		reviews, discussions, and reflective activities. The point here is that the assessment strategies cover the objectives, but they do not specifically match the identified levels in Bloom's taxonomy.
Do you find there is sufficient variety in the assessment strategies to maintain student engagement?	The 15 different levels provide more than enough evidence of variety. In addition, participants have access to DVD movie clips of training scenarios and a training manual that includes self-study components.	
Do you believe the assessment strategies are reasonable given the class time, as well as the skills and knowledge of the students?		Without access to the schedule details of course delivery, it's unclear whether the assessment strategies are reasonable or not. Neither do we have any indication that participants are screened for specific prerequisites that might be applicable, such as language skills or managerial experience levels.

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