

# A curriculum for raising for raising intercultural communicative competence

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# A Curriculum for Raising Intercultural Communicative Competence

Elizabeth Lokon

## Background

This culture-crossing project came about as I planned a cross-cultural communication course for low-intermediate Japanese college students. The course was to be taken during their third semester in the college, which is also the semester prior to their semester of study abroad. It is part of our college's curriculum to require all students to go to the U.S., Canada, England, New Zealand, or Australia in their fourth semester and enroll in a full time university study there. It is within this context and for this purpose that this ethnographic project was designed.

## Purpose

The adoption of the ethnographic approach in ESL environments is nothing new. It became popular in ESL education and research in the 1980s "because of its promise for investigating issues difficult to address through experimental research" (Watson-Gegeo, 1988, p. 575). The use of it in ESL can be grouped into three main categories based on its primary purpose. (1) Many of these ethnographic studies are conducted by teachers/researchers to investigate the teaching and learning processes in settings where English is being taught to non-English speakers (for examples, see Guthrie, 1985; Watson-Gegeo, 1988). (2) Some articles address the use of ethnographic research projects by ESL/EFL students to increase their language/culture knowledge of the target culture (For examples, see Damen, 1987; Donan, 1997). Here the main goal is to use the ethnographic approach to mine as much information about the conventions in the target culture as possible so that non-native speakers can function more competently in the target culture environment. (3) Very few readings I found address the use of ethnographic studies as a means to improve students' Intercultural Communicative Competence or ICC (Byram, 1997). The activities described here are meant to address this third purpose.

Using ethnographic studies to mine information of the target culture (Purpose #2) is different from using it to improve students' ICC (Purpose #3). ICC involves more than the accumulation of information about customs and conventions in a foreign culture. Byram (1997) describes ICC in terms of competence in three areas: attitudes, knowledge, and skills. An interculturally competent person has an open and curious attitude that makes him/her able and ready to "suspend disbelief and judgment with respect to others' meanings, beliefs and behaviours... and to suspend beliefs in one's own meanings and behaviours" (p. 34). Though it is not possible to exist in a vacuum while our beliefs about the other and about ourselves are being suspended, raising our awareness of these beliefs can serve to decenter

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what we have taken for granted and uncritically assumed to be natural. This enables us to relativize our "own valuing of others' meanings, beliefs and behaviours" (p. 35), a necessary process in successful intercultural encounters.

Byram (1997) writes further that an interculturally competent person has the above attitudes as well as two types of knowledge learned both formally and informally. First is the knowledge about one's own social group and culture as well as, to a lesser extent, that of the target culture. Such knowledge includes the conscious and unconscious awareness of certain shared beliefs and meanings that bind them as a group and distinguish their group from other groups. Ethnographic projects that are aimed at mining information of the target culture focus on this type of knowledge. Within the ICC promoting framework, such knowledge is only one part of the competence needed for crossing cultures.

The second type of knowledge is the "knowledge of the processes of interaction at individual and societal levels" (p. 35). This is knowledge about "the ways in which their social identities have been acquired, how they are a prism through which other members of their group are perceived, and how they in turn perceive their interlocutors from another group" (p. 36). This is essentially the knowledge of the meta-narratives that guide their social interactions whether interacting within one's own culture or across cultures. It is an awareness of how and why things work the way they do in social situations.

Finally, an interculturally competent person must have the skills to interpret social texts of another culture group and relate to one's own familiar ways of constructing social texts (Byram, 1997). What is meant by social text here includes everything that a culture group produces: from language to artifacts, written texts as well as enacted scripts (Goffman, 1959), movies, songs, conversations, roles people play, or even a mere side-glance. These are all "texts" that are created in social situations involving parties who interactively construct social realities. In successful intercultural encounters, the interpretations of the realities negotiated are not necessarily identical but somehow mutually comprehensible so that the encounter may proceed. Whether the encounter proceeds harmoniously or not, is beside the point. What matters here is that the parties involved construct social realities that are mutually comprehensible.

In addition to the above skills to interpret and relate social texts, Byram (1997) suggests that an interculturally competent person also has "the ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction" (p. 52). This involves the skills to acquire more knowledge about cultural others as one interacts in that culture.

In conclusion, to move from an ethnocentric to a more ethnorelativistic worldview (Bennett, 1986), one needs to have curious and open attitudes, knowledge about one's own culture and how one acquires that knowledge, and skills to interpret and evaluate social texts, as well as skills to continue to acquire more knowledge and develop attitudes that make it possible to construct mutually comprehensible realities across differences. If all these are in place, it is more likely that people can quickly "establish an understanding of a new cultural environment and the ability to interact in increasingly rich and complex ways with people whose culture is unfamiliar to them" (Byram, 1997, p. 53). Byram likens these necessary intercultural skills with the skills needed in conducting ethnographic studies:

They are able to draw upon whatever knowledge they have *but above all have the skills of the ethnographer* entering into a 'field' of study, whether in a remote community, a street-corner gang or the staffroom of a school...quickly discovering the streams of thought, power, influence underlying events which they are to report. The intercultural speaker has different purposes from the ethnographer...but operates similar skills under similar constraints of time and place. (Italics mine, p. 53)

Having arrived at the same conclusion as Byram (1997) that these ethnographic skills are "fundamental to successful interaction but not acquired automatically" (p. 35), I set forth to teach my Japanese college students ethnographic skills the semester before they studied abroad.

## Rationale

Conducting an ethnographic study is not the only path towards improved ICC. One can get there through orientation training programs, through reading history, literature and geography, through studies of popular culture and the media; the options are many. So, why have students do ethnographic studies with the above purpose in mind? More specifically, why have Japanese students study a subculture within their own society as a method to prepare them for study abroad?

Sending students out to interact with members of a subculture with which they are unfamiliar gives them the opportunity to encounter "difference". McAllister & Irvine (2000) cite Kohlberg (1984) who recommends "various techniques that provide students with opportunities to gain an understanding of other perspectives, a critical component of cross-cultural learning" (p. 5). Doing an ethnographic study is one such technique because it provides students with the direct experience of interacting with people from a different culture group.

What is meant by a culture group here is not the static, monolithic, neutral and essentialized construct with fixed boundaries such as "The Japanese" or "The Americans". Rather, it assumes a smaller scope involving "any number of people with similar norms, values, and expectations who regularly and consciously interact" (Schaefer, 2000, p. 109). Every society is made up of many such cultural groups. Some call these groups "subcultures"; while others, objecting to the deficient connotation, refer to them as "co-cultures" (Samovar & Porter, 2001). I choose to continue using the more common term "subculture" here not because I consider them deficient, but because I would like to emphasize the relatively small size of these cultural groups. Each individual usually belongs to more than one such subcultural group.

Interacting with subcultural others (such as surfers, punk rockers, nursing home residents) in this project not only gave my Japanese students the opportunity to negotiate meanings across cultural difference without having to necessarily overcome linguistic barriers, but it also gave them the opportunity to recognize diversity within their own communities. It gave them the opportunity to debunk the myth of Japanese homogeneity. This recognition is a critical foundation for beginning to suspend, or even question, what is taken for granted and uncritically assumed as naturally "Japanese" (for more discussion on this, see Dale, 1990; Kubota, 1999). This expanded understanding of the complexity and diversity of one's own society is a key prerequisite and first step for students before they can begin to understand and appreciate foreign societies (McAllister & Irvine, 2000). Realizing that one's own world is socially constructed is the first step in relativizing or

decentering one's own worldviews. Barro, Jordan and Roberts (1997) observe that such realization can be achieved through doing ethnographic studies in the target culture. These ethnographic studies allow students to "begin to question their own social identity and to develop analytical and conceptual ways of thinking which are quite new to them" (p. 83). I believe that students engaged in ethnographic study of a subculture in their own communities can also develop such new ways of thinking.

The two final reasons for having students do ethnographic studies are motivated by practical points. First, while overseas, students in my college are required to write "Cultural Reports" and "Independent Research Projects" based on their experiences there. This is not necessarily an easy assignment to do without practice. Their study of a subculture gave them the necessary skills and practice to do the assignment abroad. And secondly, interacting with cultural others within their own society gave them the opportunity to experience and analyze complex and subtle interactions without the stress created by linguistic barriers.

## **Procedure**

### **Understanding Basic Concepts (Knowledge)**

Before going off to their selected field sites, students need to learn the basic elements of culture and how they work in social situations. They will also need to learn the basic techniques of collecting and sorting qualitative data. I will go into this further later. First, we need to make explicit how social interactions shape the way we view the world around us and at the same time realize that our view of the world shapes how we interact in social situations. This initial module is derived primarily from concepts in sociology and communication. These concepts are explicitly taught through mini lectures, illustrative examples, followed by small group discussions. The discussions generally consist of two parts. First, students discussed their understanding of concepts just presented. Then, students are invited to relate these new concepts to their own lives through citing examples, reflecting upon and critiquing current practices, and so on. The concepts discussed in this module include basic concepts found in most introductory sociology textbooks such as functions and elements of culture, cultural change and variations, attitudes toward cultural variation, elements of social structure and power inequities (Schaefer, 2001).

### **Understanding Perspectives (Attitudes)**

Since perspective shifting is an important skill in intercultural communication, I took some time to let students explore this topic. The experiential and inductive nature of these activities also provided for a nice change from the more deductive sessions in the first part of the course. We began with the two versions of the "Three Little Pig" story: one written from the pigs' point of view and the other one written by "A. Wolf" (Scieszka, 1996). Half the class read the original version and the other read the more controversial version. After initial pre-reading activities that prepared them for the text, they read without realizing the differences in their texts. After they discovered the perspectival difference in the two versions of the story, we discussed in more general terms the relative nature of truth and reality. A similar activity can be done with various versions of Cinderella or other folktales with similar motifs told around the world (Samovar, 2001). Students compare these different versions and discuss the different values reflected in the stories. The movie *Rashomon* (Kurosawa, 1950) is also an excellent source to discuss perspectives as it tells the

story of a murder and rape from four different perspectives: a woodcutter, a bandit, a wife, and a dead husband. The multiple perspectives of the incident reveal the complexity and ambiguity of truth.

By this point in the course, about midway through the semester, students will be ready to benefit from the marvelous simulations available to cross-cultural communication trainers. The more common ones are BaFa BaFa (Shirts, 1974), Barna (Thiagrajan & Steinwachs, 1990), Ecotonos (Nipporica & Saphiere, 1997). In all of these simulations students are divided into groups. Each group has its own "cultural rules." Confusion and misunderstandings, as well as delight and discovery, occur when they interact cross-culturally. In the debriefing of these simulations, students by this time have the necessary conceptual and linguistic foundation to discuss their experiences in a more meaningful way. These simulations gave them the opportunity and autonomy to use the concepts and language learned in the course to reflect on and discuss their simulated experiences and real feelings.

## **Understanding ethnographic techniques (Skills)**

Up until this point, we have only addressed the first two components of Byram's (1997) Intercultural Communicative Competence: the knowledge and attitudes. The current section on "Understanding ethnographic techniques" is aimed at the third component of ICC, skills. Below are some activities that are aimed at developing ethnographic skills in ESL/EFL settings.

Borrowing the metaphor of the five blind men and the elephant, I decided to assign the ethnographic project as a small group assignment. The more perspectives they have about the subculture they study, the more complex is their understanding of that subculture. Students were grouped based on their interests. After the small groups were formed, I gave them the overview of the assignment (see Appendix 1). To do this project adequately, my students needed several scaffolding activities that will be described below.

### **Practicing descriptions**

Having trained ourselves to selectively perceive only relevant information, we often overlook details around us. This is a natural process to prevent stress from information overload. This lack of awareness and attention to details in cross-cultural encounters are often the source of miscommunication. In using the attentiveness of the ethnographer, we try to unlearn this natural tendency by making strange the familiar. This attentiveness needs to be modeled and explicitly taught. Additionally, ESL/EFL students need the language support to practice detailed description. The point here is not so much the "accuracy" of the description, but the practice of suspending culturally predetermined selectivity. By attending to every single detail, we minimize our tendency to prejudge what is important and what is not.

### **Describing visuals**

To do this activity, students practiced describing a particular place using magazine or calendar pictures. Descriptive phrases in English were given to provide them with linguistic support. Then they did the same for describing people; this time using short segments of video clips that were played over and over again to capture the details of appearance, movement, gestures, expressions and mood of the

character on the video clips. An excellent clip to use is the opening scene of "Dead Man," where Johnny Depp without a single word conveyed his apprehension and fear as he took the train to the unknown Wild West. Any number of short video clips can be used for this activity so long as they meet the following criteria:

- Students do not need to depend too much on the verbal text to understand the clip.
- There is not more than one single point to focus on and describe in the clip.
- This single focus needs to be transparent enough so that major cross-cultural misunderstanding of the clip is unlikely.
- The clip is rich in visual details.
- The clip is short enough to show several times.

For students with lower English proficiency, I would modify the above activity as suggested by Tony Ryan (2000). He describes an activity using a picture of a scene and a written description of this scene. This written passage is created by the instructor and is relatively short, five to six lines (60-80 words). It describes the scene and action in the picture. Old calendars and picture magazines can be used for this activity.

Using the information gap approach, students A and B take turns doing the following activities. First, without showing her picture, Student A reads the description of her picture aloud to Student B. Student B quietly listens to the description in the first reading. In the second read aloud, Student B orally repeats Student A's description, sentence by sentence. In the third round, Student A reads the passage again, each sentence is first read in English and then translated to the students' native language (assuming they have the same one). Student A can either do this translation alone or in collaboration with Student B. After the fourth and final read aloud, Student B sketches the picture based on the description. Student B may ask questions, in English, to help sketch the picture. Only after Student B completes her sketch may Student A reveal the original picture. Students A and B then reverse roles and attempt to describe and sketch a different picture. In their debriefing sessions, they discuss how the sketch compares with the original picture and what aspects of the descriptive text help or hinder their imagining of the scene.

### **Describing an object**

An activity called "Close Encounters" used in multicultural education courses can be used here to teach detailed description (Schmidt & Dunn, 1994). In this activity each student is given an orange (or other readily available fruit). First they observe their personal orange carefully and take notes if necessary. They give their personal orange a name and introduce it to the rest of the class, using anthropomorphic narratives if they like, describing their personal orange's interests, occupations, specialty, character, history, etc. Then all the oranges are mixed in a bag and students are to find their personal orange from the bag. In the debriefing session, students should come away with the realization that not all oranges look alike. If given careful attention, even an orange is unique.

### **Describing a life scene**

After these initial activities, students were ready to make descriptions on their own from real life scenes. I asked them to "sketch" the scene using words instead of paint. To simplify matters, I asked them to do two separate descriptions, one of a place and another of a person. In these activities students were asked to

they see, hear, smell, and feel. They then turned these notes into a written descriptive paragraph. They worked individually but students in the same small groups worked on the same scene. Then they shared their written sketches and discussed perspectival differences that existed within the group. This was another opportunity to expose students to the possibility of multiple meanings in the same social scene. Through this activity, hopefully students became more aware of their own selective perceptions. The point here is not to record things more objectively and describe things more accurately. Instead, the focus was placed on understanding the fact of perceptual selectivity and reflecting on the ways in which one selects what to perceive.

### Practicing Interpretations

If the previous section focuses on getting students to describe scenes in as much details as possible, this section focuses on interpreting these descriptions. Peshkin (2000) defines interpretation quite clearly when he writes:

I select what will come into and affect my conception. Such selection, together with ordering, associating, and meaning making, is an element of interpretation. Stated otherwise, interpretation is an act of imagination and logic. It entails perceiving importance, order, and form in what one is learning that relates to the argument, story, narrative that is continually undergoing creation.... [I]nterpretation has to do with a perspectival accounting for what I have learned, or the shaping of the meanings and understandings of what has gone on from some point of view.... It is inconceivable to me that I can conduct any aspect of my research except from some point of view, which is to say that other interpretations, other meanings and understandings, are imaginable. (p. 9)

Peshkin also writes that interpretation is inherently an "assumption-laden" and "judgment-driven" process because it is impossible to have an "objective" view that transcends certain points of view. Teaching students to develop a reflective awareness of their points of view is bound to enhance the quality of their interpretive acts in cross-cultural situations.

I began teaching about interpretation by asking students to distinguish an observation (description) and an inference of the observation (interpretation). This activity is adopted from a textbook aimed at teaching the scientific process (Rezba, Sprague, Fiel, Funk, Okey & Jaus, 1995). To start, I provided students with simple observational sentences such as "*Two men carrying a TV set from your neighbor's house*" and elicited possible inferences for this observation. Students came up with a variety of possibilities: The neighbors are moving out; the two men are thieves; the TV is broken and being taken to a repair shop by the two men, and so on. After several such sentences they clearly understood the distinction between description and interpretation. I also used ambiguous pictures and asked students to create two columns, observations and inferences, as they figured out what was going on in the picture. Generally, photos of unfamiliar events in other cultures often found in magazines such as *The National Geographic* would work here. In the debriefing sessions, students discussed possible sources of their different interpretations. These discussions invited students to face and articulate their own subjectivity that affected their interpretation.

We concluded this portion of the activities with the actual journal assignment that they would use in their subculture fieldwork. I asked students to write their notes in two separate columns: Description/Observation and Inference/



Interpretation/Reflection. Since they had plenty of practice making this distinction in class, they did not have too much trouble with the assignment (see Appendix 2 for sample journal questions).

### **Entering the Field**

By this point, my students were ready to begin their fieldwork in the subculture. Before leaving the classroom, students generated initial questions they would like to ask their informants. I showed them the three types of question explained in Spradley & McCurdy (1972): the grand tour question, structural question and attribute questions. Students then worked in small groups to generate initial questions to take to the field. These questions are generally revised, deleted, or changed somehow as they get deeper into the project. Since the primary focus of the project is encountering difference first hand, it is not too critical to come up with the ultimate list of questions before entering the field. As a final parting handout, I gave them some "Tips for Doing Fieldwork" (see Appendix 3) culled from various sources and my own fieldwork experience and simplified for ESL/EFL students. The next few classes were then spent in their respective field sites collecting data.

The process of entering the field is a complex one. It involves starting relationships with total strangers, assuming a new role as a student researcher, using newly learned ethnographic principles and techniques, and creating some sort of product of the research in a foreign language. When I thought too hard about everything that needed to come together to make this a successful experience for students, I became quite nervous. It is not an exaggeration to say that this project was challenging for my low-intermediate level students. Despite my personal worries, this was the point in the course when students took leadership in their learning process and I became an available resource person back on campus.

### **Analyzing Field Notes**

I knew that I could not simply assume that students would know how to work with their field notes. So, we did an activity called "Describe Yourself" as a relatively simple illustration of the coding and categorizing process to generate an organizational framework for telling the ethnographic story (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992).

In this activity students generated three adjectives that best describe themselves. These adjectives were then written on "Post-It" sticky notes. Students then worked in small groups to sort the sticky notes into categories based on certain shared attributes or "properties." These shared attributes were then to be used to describe the group. This was initially confusing for my students to do. Students who have never done this process before tend to be concerned that they are somehow not doing it right or not getting the correct answers. To resolve this problem, I borrowed a technique that I once used when teaching scientific classification in my fourth grade science class: Using various sizes and shapes of nails and screws, I asked students how they would sort these nails and screws into several categories. The most important point here is to get it across to students that there are many different ways of sorting the very same set of objects, depending on the sorting criteria (attributes or properties) that are applied. If the nails and screws were sorted based on their length, the grouping will be different than if they were sorted based on the shape of their heads or the presence of threads. Students in my classes were very interested in volunteering a variety of different criteria to sort these objects. Any other objects such as buttons or students' shoes can be used to illustrate the same

point. When my students completed this exercise, they were more confident and ready to work with the sticky notes prepared earlier.

To transfer the sorting and categorizing skills learned to their actual field notes, students needed to come back to class with sufficient data to work with. Depending on various factors, inevitably some will return to class with more field notes than others. Asking students to share their notes minimized this unevenness. After sharing their notes, students discussed ways to use everyone's perspectives into a more complete representation of the subculture group studied. They used the sticky note sorting technique practiced earlier to label and then sort their field notes.

Reviewing these categories, they now had the necessary framework to prepare their group's ethnographic report. Students organized the content of their group reports using the categories they generated from their field notes and shared their findings and experiences with the rest of the class.

### Preparing the final product

The final product can take as many forms as can be imagined, from creating digital videos to presenting a conventional research paper. Students can hold a poster session open to the rest of the college, or simply write a paper individually. There are also many possible processes to guide them from their sorted notes to the final product. I chose to have my student groups prepare a group presentation (see Appendix 4 for presentation guidelines). At this point I again became an available resource person to assist them whenever they needed me. I also used these group work sessions to address specific language needs on an individual basis. The most important point here is that by this point students have a lot of information to report and a clear framework to organize the report. Students' sense of ownership of the project was quite high since they gathered the information themselves, created the framework themselves, and most importantly because they had real human relationships with their informants.

### Conclusion

In this paper, I have described various activities that I have used with my Japanese college sophomores in order to improve their Intercultural Communicative Competence as outlined by Byram (1997). This competence consists of three parts: *Knowledge, Attitudes, and Skills*. I attempted to address these three areas of competence by designing three separate modules that build upon one another and culminated in an ethnographic project of a subculture within my students' own communities. In the first module, "Understanding basic concepts," I described briefly the sociological concepts, or "*Knowledges*," that I believe the students needed before doing their fieldwork. In the second module, "Understanding Perspectives," I described inductive activities that allowed students to experience first-hand the possibility of multiple perspectives. These activities are aimed at developing curious and open *attitudes* towards difference so that they may suspend both their disbelief of others' frameworks and their belief in their own framework. In the final module, "Understanding ethnographic techniques," students tried to develop the necessary *skills* to become an attentive and reflexive ethnographer. The combination of these three modules, I believe, serves the students well in their preparation for a semester of study abroad. At the end of this project, some students expressed increased empathy with their informants while others realize the importance of relationship building across difference. Let me close this paper with a couple of students'

comments below. Errors are not corrected to preserve authenticity of students' comments.

EMPATHY (By a student who did an ethnographic project on a package delivery service company, where his non-college bound high school friend works full time): "At first, I thought this job is not such difficult or hard work.... [But now] I thought this delivery company is so hard work and many difficulty. But we can use very useful and it is because their hard working make our life more comfortable."

IMPORTANCE OF BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS ACROSS DIFFERENCE (By a student who did an ethnographic project on an Indian restaurant): "We like to make good atmosphere and learn new things in this world. The lesson learned from this project: If we want good and lots of information, we need good relationships with informants."

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## Appendix 1: Project Overview

### Project Description:

In this class you will have the opportunity to “travel abroad” without leaving Miyazaki. You can do this by conducting a study of a subculture that is unfamiliar to you. For example, if you don’t know anything about surfing, you can study that subculture through observation and interviews. If you are unfamiliar with the world of surfers, the process of trying to understand the subculture of surfers is not that different from trying to understand a foreign culture. As you try to understand this subculture, you will experience confusion, anxiety, and rewards similar to those you will experience when you travel abroad. You will do this project in small teams.

### Purposes of Project:

- To understand an unfamiliar subculture and become a temporary member of that subculture
- To acquire skills and develop strategies that can be used when trying to become a member in a foreign culture
- To compare and contrast one’s own culture and the culture of people being studied
- To become more aware of one’s own biases and ethnocentrism
- To become more aware of the role of culture in shaping people’s understanding of the world

### Project Requirements:

1. For this project, you will keep two types of journals: “Descriptive Journal” (DJ) and Reflective Journal” (RJ).
  - Use the same blue journal notebook for this, but start from the back of the notebook.
  - In the DJ you record all of your observations and interview notes about the people and culture you are studying.
  - In the RJ you record all of your own feelings as you do this project. Both journals are equally important in your final product. The instructors of the course will collect these journals at certain checkpoints.
2. A final paper written collaboratively as a team about the subculture studied and team members’ reflection on the project (minimum 7 typed pages, double space, size 12 font)
3. A final team presentation that is based on all team members’ descriptive and reflective journals.

### Evaluation Criteria:

1. **EQUAL PARTICIPATION:** Do all group members participate equally in the project and the presentation?
2. **FINAL PAPER:**
  - Quality of ideas: Are ideas in the final paper well developed, supported with details, and clearly explained?
  - Mechanics: Is the paper well written and proofread?
3. **FINAL PRESENTATION:** Is the presentation interactive, interesting, using various modalities (written oral, visual, and kinesthetic elements)?

## Appendix 2: Journal Questions

When writing your final report on your subculture, make sure that your paper answers the following questions. Your answers do not need to be organized in this order, but all questions must be answered somewhere in your paper.

DESCRIPTIVE JOURNAL	REFLECTIVE JOURNAL
<p><u>1. At the beginning -- Descriptive Journal Questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who did you pick as your key informants? Why did you select him/her/them?</li> <li>• How did you make contact with the informant(s)? How did you begin the interaction? Describe what you did and said to your informant(s) and how he/she/they responded to you.</li> </ul>	<p><u>1. At the beginning: Reflective Journal Questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did you feel when you first approached the people you are going to study?</li> <li>• Why do you think you felt that way?</li> <li>• Did your feelings change over time? Describe any changes you noticed and explain why these changes occurred.</li> </ul>
<p><u>2. In the middle -- Descriptive Journal Questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the place and the people. Pay attention to details.</li> <li>• What rules do people in this subculture need to know in order to behave in an acceptable manner inside this subculture?</li> <li>• How do they talk about themselves? What do they see themselves doing?</li> <li>• How do they see (or talk about) people and the world outside this subculture?</li> <li>• What do they believe in?</li> <li>• How do they interact with other members within the subculture?</li> <li>• How do they interact with people outside their subculture?</li> </ul>	<p><u>2. In the middle -- Reflective Journal Questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did you feel throughout the data gathering process?</li> <li>• Why do you think you felt that way?</li> <li>• Did your feelings change over time? Describe any changes you noticed and explain why these changes occurred.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Cross-cultural Comparison:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare this subculture with your own culture. How are the two cultures similar and how are they different?</li> </ul>	<p><u>Cross-cultural reflection:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What feelings went through your minds as you did this project? What made you angry, frustrated, nervous, anxious, awkward, sad, happy, confused, insecure, excited, encouraged, rewarded?</li> <li>• Why do you think you felt this way?</li> <li>• How did your feelings change over time? Why did they change?</li> <li>• Describe your relationship with your informant(s) and how this relationship changed over time</li> <li>• Describe how you felt when you discovered <i>similarities</i> between your culture and the subculture you were studying</li> <li>• Describe how you felt when you discovered <i>differences</i> between your culture and the subculture you were studying</li> <li>• Finally, <u>the most important question to answer:</u> What did you learn about yourself as you try to “cross-over” into another culture? What lessons can you take with you from doing this project when you go on your study abroad?</li> </ul>

### Appendix 3: Tips for Fieldwork

- **GROUP SIZE:**  
When approaching potential informants, remember that you may intimidate the informants if your group is too large.
- **CHOOSING AN INFORMANTS:**  
Good informants have to know the culture well and must be willing to talk.
- **FEAR and SHYNESS:**  
Fear, anxiety, awkward feeling and shyness are all common and natural feelings when approaching informants for the first time. Write these feelings down in your Reflective Journal, analyze the feelings (Why do you think you felt that way?) and discuss the feelings with your teammates.
- **RELATIONSHIP WITH INFORMANTS:**  
Develop good relationship with your informants so that they are willing to speak honestly and spend time with you.
- **QUESTIONING STRATEGY:**  
Sometimes it is better to avoid asking directly for your informant's opinion. Instead, ask what s/he thinks OTHERS in his/her group believe, or what OTHERS in his/her group would do/say.
- **DESCRIBING THE SUBCULTURE:**  
When describing the subculture, try as much as possible to describe it from your informant's point of view, not so much from you own. In other words, don't ask, "*What do I see these people doing?*" Instead ask, "*What do these people see themselves doing?*"
- **ACCURACY:**  
Check your understanding with your informants to make sure you did not misunderstand him/her. (For example, you may say: "I'd like to review what we talked about last time to see if I got it right.")
- **WRITING UP FIELDWORK NOTES:**  
Write as quickly as possible during or immediately after you meet the people. When you get home, immediately add as much detail as possible to these quick notes. Remember to describe not label. Don't postpone this work, or you will forget the details and you will not be able to create a vivid description. Complete both descriptive and reflective journals whenever you go into the field.

**GOOD LUCK!!**

## Appendix 4: Presentation Guidelines

### SUBCULTURE PRESENTATION

**PRESENTATION GUIDELINES:**

- Your presentation should be 20 minutes long (including all activities given to the class).
- Everyone in the group must have a speaking part.
- You need audio-visual materials like OHP transparencies, posters, drawing on the board, videotape, photos, sound effects, etc.
- The audience must be actively involved (not just passively listening to you.) This can be done by giving them some activity to do, having them answer a quiz at the end of the presentation, etc.
- You need to practice your presentation.

**EVALUATION:**

Your presentation will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

	0= no	5=somewhat	10=yes
1. Length of presentation is 20 minutes.	0	5	10
2. Everyone in the group participates equally in the presentation.	0	5	10
3. Audio-visual materials help clarify the presentation.	0	5	10
4. The audience is actively involved in the presentation.	0	5	10
5. The presentation is clear and easy to understand.	0	5	10
<b>SUBTOTAL:</b>	____/50		
6. The content of the presentation is well-researched(Max. 50).	____/50		
<b>TOTAL:</b>	_____/100		

**COMMENTS:**

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