Intercultural Competencies: International Automotive Companies in Eastern Thailand

—— Dynamics of Multiculturalism in Automotive Companies in Thailand

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Preface

This book consists of four chapters. Chapter One explores a background of the topic, the significance of the book, the definitions of the main terms used throughout the book, and a review of related literature, which comprises four sections: these are, (a) the impact of culture on intercultural teams; (b) the role of HRD professionals and their contributions; (c) the concept of competency; and (d) studies related to cross-cultural competencies. Chapter Two describes the methods used to collect, analyze, and organize the comprehension provided in this book. Chapter Three reports what has been discussed with many individuals in international automotive companies in Eastern Thailand. Chapter Four discusses critical aspects of intercultural work environment, and offers recommendations for further investigations.

About the Author

Mahmoud Moussa is a lecturer at the International Business Management Program (IBM), Faculty of Business Administration and Liberal Arts in Rajamangala University of Technology Lanna (RMUTL), ChiangMai, Thailand. He is also a member of the editorial board at Emerald Emerging Markets Case Studies (EEMCS) Journal, Emerald Group Publishing. He comes from Egypt, and has been working and studying in Thailand for the last eight years. He holds a B. A from Helwan University (majoring in Arts of Philosophy) Cairo, Egypt, a M. A. in the International Graduate Studies Programs from Burapha University, Chonburi, Thailand (majoring in Human Resources Development). He has conducted research and published extensively on human-computer interaction, attitudes and perceptions of interactions within organizations, cross-cultural management, HRD, and HRM. His current research interest involves education trends in the ASEAN countries in the AEC era.

Contents

Chapter 1

Introduction

In the 21st century leaders have realized the importance of globalization, due to the changing workforce. Nowadays, leaders have become aware of the need for cross-cultural understanding, so that people can work positively whether locally or globally. Recently, the competitive global business environment, and human resource development (HRD) practitioners have become more international in orientation and facing frequent challenges, which require high levels of competencies (Wheelen & Hunger, 2004). Further, Daft (2008, p.332) acknowledged that, "employees with global experience and cultural sensitivity are in high demand in many industries, and almost every employee is dealing with a wider range of cultures than ever before". Furthermore, cross-cultural management is not solely seen as the management of cultural differences, but also cross-cultural managers are seen as collaborative knowledge workers in a global organization. Thus, cross-cultural knowledge will become even more important in our era of globalization. Additionally, decision makers have started to wonder how HRD concepts contribute to a better understanding of intercultural perspectives in their businesses and practices, and whether their investments into cultural management training have been worthwhile. It is helpful to ensure that everyone in the organization fully understands how cultural differences can influence the management and organizational practices, either positively or negatively. Kenworthy (2003 cited in Sun & Shi, 2007) recommended looking at competence as a description of what people do and how people do it, however, Hager and Gonczi (1996 cited in Han, 2004) argued that when describing competency, the focus should not be only on task description. They emphasized that competency cannot be directly observed. On the other hand, Park (2003 cited in Han, 2004) defined competency as if it only contributes to high job performance. Accordingly, competency is a difficult concept and encompasses attitudes, values, knowledge, and some other factors which lead to an incredible job performance. Moreover, new competencies take place according to changing needs and individual demands.

Therefore, globalization make leaders committed to difficult tasks to compete and make their development sustainable. Most importantly, Jackson and Schuler (2003) demonstrated that the workforce diversity term, is a sweeping statement, and implies to people from different backgrounds in today's world. Moreover, Gomez-Mejia, Balkin and Cardy (2004) interpreted that our businesses can utilize human resource strategies to gain the desired outcomes. In short, businesses need to undertake a global perspective and the threats that might face it to survive in the 21st century.

The sea of information about other cultures is insufficient to make people more efficient, effective, and motivated in their intercultural workplace. Another important issue is that companies have realized that culture is a significant issue. Hence, they can only succeed with people who have an international mindset. Following this line of thought, the role of HRD as a facilitator becomes critical. Cultural diversity can produce several advantages to businesses; however, others stated that many obstacles have arisen in multicultural organizations (Jonkeren & Brinkmann, 2003). Human resource has an important role to provide managers with more insights about how to improve the human resource function. Consequently, management practices will have to be integrated with cultural diversity. For instance, it is important to consider family occasions and important festivals for people from different cultures in order to avoid clashes between company meetings and important cultural occasions. Ultimately, the author viewed that the lack of intercultural competencies might be a barrier in multicultural organizations in Thailand, as well as to those who have the potential to become global.

The three main purposes of this textbook are: (1) To identify the competencies required for managers of intercultural consultancy services in order to optimize the effects of cultural diversity in Thai international automotive companies;

(2) To investigate ways which allow diversity to work effectively; and (3) To identify barriers confronted by different cultures in international companies. Hence, it was fundamental to raise the following questions: What are the competencies required for the manager who provides intercultural consultancy services, and how to utilize the competencies to work in Thailand?

What are the most needed competencies for the manager who provides intercultural consultancy services? What are some ways that allow diversity to work effectively?

What are the barriers confronted by differences in culture in international automotive companies?

1.1 Significance of the Book

First, human resource managers or managers who provide intercultural competencies, and intercultural consultants, should have interpersonal skills, knowing their own values, attitudes, purposes, as well as integrity to behave in good manners while providing help to their employees or clients. Accordingly, those managers should serve as role models, and act in ways that are credible to organization members. Second, this comprehension may help in providing general knowledge to those who work or manage diversity in the workplace, with the aim of turning diversity into a competitive advantage. Third, as organizations expand globally, their challenges get involved in adapting structures, coordinating processes, and human resource practices to worldwide operations. As such, there are vast tomes of literature about cultural diversity, and its impact on organizational and management practices. However, studies in planned change processes in cross-cultural settings still have their own uniqueness; therefore, the outcome of this text may be helpful for increasing concentration on globalization. In other words, there is high potential for organizations to become global in the 21st century. According to Marshall and Rossman (1999) there is no project without limitations. Also, limitations help readers to know how they should read and interpret the researcher's work (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). Therefore, the author made a decision to limit this study to four international automotive companies in the Eastern seaboard of Thailand, to learn how diversity works best to those who have the potential to become global, as well as to compete globally in the twenty-first century. Moreover, the purpose of this literature was not to find a definite answer to what competencies are required, but to develop an understanding of cultural diversity to managers in multicultural organizations.

For the purposes of this book, these terms and definitions were used to gain the most possibilities of understanding the following:

Multiculturalism: the state of working with different cultures with the respect of diversity.

Workforce Diversity: a workforce made up of individuals with different human qualities or is belonging to various cultural groups. From the perspective of individuals, workforce diversity is used to describe the composition of a workforce in terms of difference among workers in gender, age, race, ethnic culture, religious affiliation, and sexual orientation.

Diversity: refers to differences among people in terms of dimensions, such as age, ethnicity, gender, race, or physical ability.

Ethnocentrism: is the tendency to see one's culture as superior to others.

Cross-cultural: the term cross-cultural is used by different ways in this book with many other terms. However, it possesses the same meaning as multicultural, intercultural, and global were also encompassed in order to notice the most possibilities that cover the term cross-cultural.

Competency: the characteristics that an individual needs to implement their present role(s) effectively. It is a mix of knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for a job, which result in a continuous success within the framework of the organizational values.

1.2 Conclusion

In the expanding global economy, cultural awareness is helping to facilitate organizational practices, so that leaders around the world can realize the importance of sharing and learning from one another. As Hofstede (2001, p.138) stated, "Disregard of other cultures is a luxury only the strong can afford". The author of this book used some terms and definitions through this study (e.g. multiculturalism, workforce diversity, diversity, culture, and ethnocentrism) to gain the most possibilities of understanding the meaning of a culture. Moreover, managing diversity is the most crucial objective of this text; therefore, the author believes that managing diversity is both a personal and organizational challenge. Additionally, the author will attempt to explore what factors could strengthen organizations, the importance of valuing diversity, and establishing multicultural organizations that support and respect everyone. In other words, to find out ways, which allow diversity to work positively, and help creating high performing organizations. Finally, the author will try to gain an understanding of the interpersonal skills of managers, which provide intercultural competencies, as well as planned change processes in cross-cultural settings. In the following section, the author will present a review of related literature, which consists of four parts: the concept of competency; the impact of culture on intercultural teams; cross-cultural competencies; and studies related to cross-cultural competencies.

1.3 Review of Related Literature

In designing this literature review study, several searches were conducted to gain the most possibilities of understanding the following terms: Intercultural, Competencies, and Cross-cultural competencies.

This literature review was conducted to emerge a better understanding in how to deal with cultural diversity in the workplace through compiling the following issues. Thus, this literature review is presented in four parts, as follows:

1. The Concept of Competency;
2. The Effect or the Impact of Culture on Intercultural Teams;
   - The Pros and Cons in Building Intercultural Teams, and General Criteria of Effective Teams
   - Theoretical Models of Cultural Diversity
   - Some of the Challenges in Facing Global Teams
3. Cross Cultural Competencies; and
4. The studies Related to Cross-Cultural Competencies.

1.3.1 The Concept of Competency

In this section of the reviewed literature, the author will look at the term competency. A fundamental question will arise of ‘what competency is’. Interestingly, (HRD) practitioners took over the meaning of competency and examine the validity of its expectations because many corporations restructure their businesses as global competitors by identifying employees’ individual competency as an essential part to achieve their goals (Gomez-Mejia, Balkin &

Cardy, 2004). Since then, competency models have taken place. Losey (1999 cited in Chao, Huang & Chuang, 2005) noted that emerging competence is a combination of education, experience, interest, and ethics. Interestingly, competency can be perceived differently depending on who interprets the term, and what they expect from it (An & Choe, 2003 cited in Han, 2004). The author found the most frequent competencies required or relevant for businesses, through searching and reviewing a large amount of articles. The following are some of these competencies:

- The open minded character and the assurance against contingencies;
- Being able to respond quickly to a variety of situations and achieving the target properly;
- Using the most relevant strategies according to the tasks, and the interaction with others in a friendly manner;
- The ability to deal with complexity without any sort of anxiety and demonstrate what has been done in reports or assessments;
- The acceptance of the others, trust and encouragement are the best policies to motivate others;
- The ability to lead as a relationship builder by motivating and empowering;
- Problem solving and the ability to interpret the system and procedures for data analyses; and
- Lastly, the experience in viewing the customer value, as well as satisfaction.

Further, Van Der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000 cited in Jonkeren & Brinkmann, 2003) showed significant elements to an intercultural competence approach, and they have been able to test the practicality or the validity of these competencies with various organizations. The following terms in table 1.1 will illustrate this information.

Table 1.1 *Four Intercultural Competencies.*

Intercultural Sensitivity	The ability to recognize multiple perspectives on an event or behavior, to recognize one's own cultural values and those of others, and to pick up on verbal and nonverbal signals
Managing Uncertainty	The ability to manage the greater uncertainty of intercultural situations
Intercultural Communication	The ability to emphasize with the feelings, thoughts, and behavior of members from different cultural groups
Building Commitment	The ability to stimulate interaction and cooperation, and take the lead while keeping others on board. Involves sensitivity to the dynamics within larger groups of people inside and outside the organization, an understanding of these dynamics and the ability to benefit from them

Source: Adopted from Van Der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000). The Multicultural Personality Questionnaire.

For each competence, they developed specific training that can be mixed in different ways, depending on the individual needs or the group. For managerial functions, for instance, building commitment should be the key, while for non-managerial functions, intercultural communication will take place. Managing uncertainty depends on the cultural group involved on the task. Finally, intercultural sensitivity should always be trained but it depends on whether we are dealing with an existing multicultural group or with individuals who are not working as a team. This section can be clarified into two important aspects, one of which is the most frequent competency required or that which is relevant for businesses. Another aspect is the significant elements to an intercultural competence developed by Van Der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000).

1.3.2 The Effect or the Impact of Culture on Intercultural Teams

One of the most interesting issues is that intercultural teams should confront a variety of sources of human resources. Therefore, diversity would bring good things and ironically, bad impacts to the building of intercultural teams. Further, culture is an important concept that should be perceived to gain the insight or the vision of managerial practices and specifically, intercultural teams that consist of several cultural backgrounds (Yang, 2003). Accordingly, managerial styles vary culture by culture; however, there are different managerial styles, and each country has its own style. Chesla (2000 cited in Woo, 2003) mentioned that cultural diversity causes different managerial styles, such as rules, relationships among individuals, and communication styles, which bring several problems to the workplace (e.g. stereotyping, mistrust, and stress among team members). Therefore, cultural diversity is the salient point that intercultural teams should face to be effective. In short, managing differences well, and being aware of cultural diversity in the workplace, will allow individuals to perform better than single culture teams (Adler, 2002).

(A) The Pros and Cons with Building Intercultural Teams and General Criteria of Effective Teams

An important point is found when reviewed the literature, pros and cons in building intercultural teams by (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). They noted that the more an organization is globalized, the more diversity exists, and global business practices based on building intercultural teams. As such, the study of Marquartdt and Horvath (2001 cited in Woo, 2003) found that there are several advantages of intercultural teams, as follows:

- Ability to reduce costs and gain economies of scope;
- Ability to get specialized talent from anywhere in the organization or outside;
- Ability to solve the complexity in twenty-first century problems;
- Ability to make the organization a global company;

- Ability to increase speed of operations;
- Greater understanding of local customers;
- Development of future global leaders for the organization;
- Increased access to knowledge and information;
- More opportunities to form alliances; and
- Increased ability to become a global learning organization.

Also, their studies demonstrated that there are general criteria of intercultural teams or effective teams. Some of which are technical task activities, some are supportive environmental factors, and others are related to social relations among individuals. On the other hand, it was found that group cohesion is not easy to achieve in intercultural teams. In other words, in global business, people bring their own values to the workplace and team as well, so this cultural diversity would cause lack of cohesion. Therefore, Adler (2002) noted the disadvantages in building intercultural teams, as follows: mistrust, miscommunication, and stress. First, Marquardt and Horvath (2001) interpreted that mistrust brings lower attractiveness, reinforcement, and inaccurate stereotypes. While, Levi (2001) illustrated that miscommunication causes slower speech because of language barriers. Finally, Adler (2002) commented that stress causes tension and disagreement on content. Hence, Patricia, Erwan, and Susan (2003) noticed that these factors mentioned above, produce conflicts and unacceptable behavior among individuals. Adler (2002), Marquardt and Horvath (2001) similarly concluded that this lack of cohesion, causes the difficulty to gain consensus on decisions, and taking positive actions whenever needed, which ultimately results an ineffective, and inefficient intercultural teams. However, Patricia, Erwan, and Susan (2003) critically stated that, most studies emphasized visible and diversity types (e.g. gender, age, and ethnic group); therefore, they underline cultural diversity (e.g. values, beliefs, and attitudes) because these factors have the most influence on teams' behavior.

In conclusion, building an intercultural team is a considerable challenge because it brings advantages and disadvantages to the workplace; however, global business practices are based on building intercultural teams. Therefore, there are various factors that need to be considered, as mentioned above in driving an intercultural team.

(B) Theoretical Models of Cultural Diversity

Table 1.2 *Five Dimensions of Personality as Being Relevant for Adjustment and Performance of Expatriates.*

Cultural Empathy	Empathize with the feelings, thoughts and behavior of members from different backgrounds
Flexibility	The ability to move from a strategy to another, and never fear from the unknown with the acceptance of unknown situations
Open-mindedness	Being open and fair with all the workforce diversity
Social initiative	Being inclined to actively approach social situations and to take the initiative
Emotional Stability	Controlling your anger and remaining calm in stressful situations

Source: Modified from Van Der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000).

These five dimensions were developed by two researchers from the University of Groningen in the Netherlands, Van Der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000) for analyzing the success factors of one of the most challenging intercultural work environments. They demonstrated these five dimensions of personality for adjustment and performance of expatriates. However, Wiersinga (2003 cited in Jonkren & Brinkmann, 2003) argued that the five personality dimensions may not have the same importance; it will be depending on where the assignment takes place.

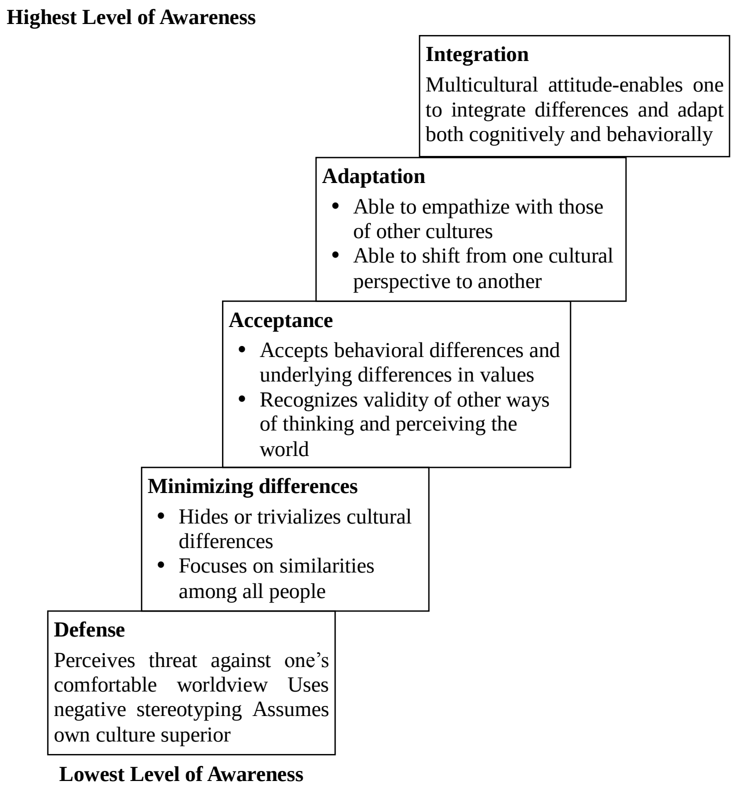

Figure 1.1 *Stages of Personal Diversity Awareness, Adopted from Bennett, M. J. (1986).*

As mentioned earlier, global organizations' potential is to achieve or provide equal opportunities for all their workforces. As such, leaders can manage diversity, where all individuals are valued and supported. For its most basic, leaders are different; therefore, the model above illustrated five stages of personal diversity awareness. People at stage 1, cannot maintain good relationships with other cultures and leaders at this stage see themselves successful if their record is good, also, these leaders promote some people to executive level jobs to meet legal requirements. At stage 2, people tried to minimize differences and look at similarities among all people, and leaders at this stage do not pay attention to the challenges in the organization. At stage 3, people accept cultural differences and openness to other cultures, attitudes, values, and leaders at this stage are aware of gender issues, race, which is needed for the health of the workplace. At stage 4, people are more comfortable with those who are different from them, and leaders here develop policies and practices, as well as to ensure that everyone is given equal opportunities. At stage 5, of diversity awareness, none feels discriminated, people's skills and abilities from different backgrounds are supported by the company's system, there are no stereotypes here, and people are able to adapt themselves. Hence, we can conclude that the last stage is the goal; any organization is struggling to achieve it, although it may see incredible or hard to reach.

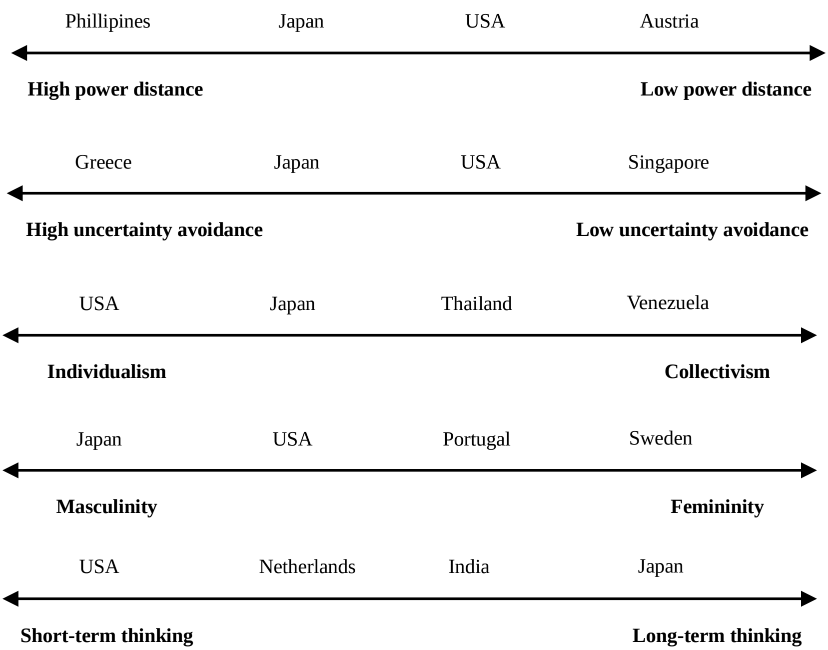

Figure 1.2 *How Countries Compare on Hofstede's Dimensions of National Culture. (Dorfman and Howell, 2002).*

- Power distance: the degree or the extent to which a community decides the unequal distribution of power in the workplace and institutions of society.

- Uncertainty avoidance: the degree or the extent to which a society is opened to risk and situational uncertainties.
- Individualism- collectivism: the degree to which a society focus on individual efforts and achievement, versus collective accomplishments.
- Masculinity-femininity: the extent to which a society values assertiveness and material success, versus feelings and concern for relationships.
- Time orientation: the degree to which a society emphasizes short term considerations versus greater concern for the future.

In conclusion, in this section the author presented some theoretical models published in different venues, which consist of: (a) five dimensions of personality as being relevant for adjustment and performance of expatriates, developed by two Dutch scholars for analyzing the success factors of one of the most challenging intercultural work environments; and (b) stages of personal diversity awareness, and it is followed by how countries compare on Hofstede's dimensions of national culture.

(C) Some of the Challenges in Facing Global Teams

This book presents the competencies of intercultural consultants, the nature and the environment needed or expected to lead global businesses to success and get their work performed effectively and efficiently. There is more research needed to develop a better understanding of one's self as well as the flexibility and tolerance of ambiguity. Also, this literature contributes to knowledge in organization development with the aim of compiling challenges, and critical analysis for consultants who work across cultures to improve their skills, ethics, and processes. Gibson (1998 cited in Cseh & Coningham, 2004) suggested the following for consultants:

- The willingness to monitor your own ethnocentrism;
- The ability to adapt yourself to different cultures; and
- The flexibility in a variety of intervention techniques and tools according to the business culture.

Additionally, Gibson recommended strategies for international consultation in order to recognize suitable interventions, such as,

- Develop a network with professionals working in the culture you exist;
- The need for research to measure a particular intervention and its success; and
- Use organization insiders and consult them when choosing the best tools.

Also, Hyde (2004) identified consultants' competence as one of the important factors to lead businesses to success. Hyde mentioned several suggestions for international consultants. First, ensure that consultants have the required competencies for the multicultural organization. Second, ensure the consultants' propensity to spend time with the client organization before choosing the best tools to develop them. Finally, Hyde recommended that consultants have to develop clear ground rules and be unambiguous.

Moreover, Zakaria, Amelinckx, and Wilemon (2004) looked at social relations for intercultural teams' challenges. However, they presented the following for human challenges in implementing global teams:

- Creating effective team leadership;
- Dealing and managing conflicts among global teams;
- Developing relationships and trust;

- Awareness of cross-cultural differences; and
- Emerging intercultural communication competence.

Similarly, Marquardt and Horvath (2001) noted challenges for global teams such as:

- Maintaining teamness;
- Maintaining communication;
- Handling coordination issues;
- Managing cultural differences, and diversity; and
- Be aware of geographic distances.

Importantly, Greenberg (2005) recommended some factors considered challenges of cross-cultural communication:

- Different words are perceived differently to different people;
- Different cultures have different cultural norms when using some words; and
- Cross-cultural communication is made difficult, because in different languages one word possesses several meanings (e.g., in Thailand).

Moreover, Smith (1995 cited in Cseh & Coningham, 2004) concluded some obstacles faced by international consulting such as, the potential to find our behavior accepted and others unacceptable, the trouble or effort to see how our culture influences our behavior, and lastly, Smith found a number of cultural differences between the East and the West that he collected and analyzed from experience, and ensured that techniques for consulting internationally are different from one another. He suggested the following:

- The awareness in literature of the society where you reside;
- Get acquainted with people's behavior with whom you will work;
- The readiness for unexpected behavior due to culture shock;
- Understanding that culture changes; and
- Emerge, adjust or be flexible in the values between your culture and those whom you work with.

According to Jaeger (2001 cited in Cseh & Coningham, 2004) it was recommended, to test in practice the organization development (OD) values of consultants, and see if they are suitable in a variety of situations and environments, since OD values were an essential part in U.S. literature. Briefly, the author would like to present some challenges for international management, as follows:

- Global managers are expected to be aware of international developments, and be able to compete in working with people from different backgrounds;
- International management should have a deep understanding of the global economy, which makes the diverse countries of the world increasingly interdependent, regarding product markets, and business competition;
- The awareness of cultures and how does it relate to global diversity;
- Management and global businesses are influenced by differences in national cultures, according to Hofstede's dimensions; and
- Global operations or businesses are driven by local cultures and situations.

In conclusion, this part reported consultants' competence as one of the fundamental factors that can lead businesses to success, as well as human challenges in implementing global teams. Then, it was important to mention some obstacles faced by international consulting, and finally challenges for international management.

1.3.3 Cross Cultural Competencies

During the process of reviewing the literature related to intercultural competence, the author realized that, in order to fully understand this issue, it was essential to understand the concepts of cross-cultural competencies. Therefore, the literature related to cross-cultural competencies is reviewed. Cross-cultural competencies are learning processes, which result in reacting positively or effectively to barriers and challenges consumed by cultural diversity in an organization (Cox & Beale, 1997). According to Holden (2002) there were common challenges to international cross-cultural management, such as 'ethnocentrism', cultural diversity, the differences among people which varied, and its noticeable effect. Moreover, he suggested some solutions to these problems (e.g. adaptation, reacting positively, and developing the required skills through some interventions). However, Holden (2002, p.31) noticed that, "…trends in global business and major shifts in the nature of management work and perceived competencies. On the other hand, there is among management scholars a growing skepticism when it comes to the usefulness of the prevailing essential culture concept". Alongside, workforce diversity has been increased; thus, managing diversity effectively has become significant in organizations (Werner & DeSimone, 2006). Another important issue, is that the lack of training in cross-cultural issues made organizations strive to evaluate how much training has been successfully conveyed to employees' performance (Drewry & Stout, 2003). Further, addressing differences among people does not illustrate why or how conflicts arise; though, perceiving everyone as the same might be a step for conflict among people from different cultures (Worchel, 2005). However, Worchel (2005, p.743) reported that, “large gaps in understanding intercultural conflict still exists. In order to bridge these gaps, social science needs to develop new paradigms for research and new perspectives to define the issues”. Furthermore, Hewapathirana and Pruetipibultham (2006) synthesized some factors to successful engagement in international companies, as follows:

- Skilled workforce;
- Developing global business surrounding;
- Encouraging foreign investments;
- Cooperation and flexibility when dealing with other countries; and
- Positive feedback from the customer about services or quality.

In contrast, they concluded that there are some other challenges, such as an unknowledgeable workforce about cultures and foreign markets, differences in theoretical models and practices, and different management styles. In conclusion, cross-cultural competencies as defined earlier are learning processes that enhance skills in dealing with cultural diversity in a workplace. The challenges of cross-cultural management and solutions to overcome obstacles are confronted by differences among people or cultural diversity. It was found that lack of training in cross-cultural issues has a great impact on organizations’ evaluation of the job performance. Thus, the author focused on cross-cultural issues in this study, to gain an insight and understanding of intercultural competence need of managers in international companies.

1.3.4 Studies Related to Cross-Cultural Competencies

Yaeger (2001) conducted a study to understand what are the factors which drive global OD consultants to success, and how they can overcome cross cultural complexities such as, language barriers and gender issues. Park (2003 cited in You, 2004) found that there is an urgent need for HRD professionals with English fluency in Thailand and Southeast Asian region, and those professionals will assist in developing the local workers in their English skills or levels. Gibson (1998) urged on the significance of selecting interventions according to cultural variations, which might assist in driving an effective intervention. A large number of studies have demonstrated that cultural diversity in a workplace can foster a variety of perspectives and experiences to encourage or promote innovation and creativity, which lead to the desired outcome in organizations. Cox (1991 cited in Paek & Hong, 2005) identified how ethnic differences influenced cooperative and competitive behavior on group activities. They concluded that, workers from collectivist cultures have the tendency to be more cooperative, whereas, those from individualistic cultures were more competitive. Yoo (2000 cited in Paek & Hong, 2005) conducted a survey on twenty secretaries who were working with foreign supervisors. The results demonstrated that the Korean secretaries preferred to work with foreigners having efficient and systematic work procedures; even though all the interviewees expressed some sort of cultural differences in their workplace, the majority accepted their situation as a chance to learn and understand other cultures (Bohlander & Snell, 2004; Boone & Kurtz, 2003). Ivancevich and Matteson (1999 cited in Huang, 2005) noted that Microsoft of Redmon, Washington believes that people from different backgrounds and different talents add to the effectiveness of the organization; hence, it produces products suitable to all types of consumers because a diverse organization would better be able to market to a diverse world.

In addition, Hofstede (1993 cited in Huang, 2005) conducted a survey of cultural differences among managers in fifty-three countries and developed five dimensions to ensure that we fully understand problems of managing in the diverse culture. These cultural dimensions consist of: MF= masculinity-femininity; IC= individualism- collectivism; UA= uncertainty avoidance; PD = power distance. His research showed that various “national” cultures of the world score differently on these dimensions. However, a new framework arises of OUI (Openness, Uncertainty avoidance, Individuality) model was emerged by Moon (2004) as a response to Hofstede’s model. Therefore, instead of ‘Power Distance’ and ‘Masculinity’ in Hofstede’s model, Moon combined those into ‘Openness’ dimension. Briefly, the author can conclude that OUI model by Moon, showed the start of autonomous efforts of regional experts to measure and understand the cultural competitiveness, as well as complementing Hofstede’s model. Ultimately, most of the reviewed literatures suggested that consultants/OD practitioners should bear in mind cultural differences and construct the relevant interventions, frameworks, and models accordingly.

1.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, it was apparent that specifically intercultural teams are very essential for successful global organizations because they bring various experiences, but also the effective communication and trust were critical points in teamwork. However, it is found that it is crucial to urge all HRD professionals and experts, who have experience in working across cultures, to provide aids for those who cannot recognize cultures’ differences. It was crystal clear that these professionals should keep on developing the required knowledge, competencies, and positive mindsets; since HRD had a significant role in the Asian region to obtain a strong economy. Thus, the author can conclude that culture remains a hot topic in management circles. Also, researchers emphasized the significance of leaders’ development, and advancement to keep their organizations healthy. Hence, they urged that leaders must commit to valuing diversity and providing equal opportunities for everyone to prevent lots of barriers. One major point is that diversity is an important topic in today's world, and leaders can play a very significant role to establish change in organizations to keep their successes. Another important issue involves leaders' level of awareness of the impact of cultures, and how diversity can help organizations develop employees' potential. Further, it is found that leaders should first develop their personal characteristics to be able to manage and support diversity to benefit from diversity as it is desired. Undoubtedly, leaders in the twenty-first century have several challenges, most important of which is to succeed in making their organizations as integrated or cohesive communities, where all people commit and undertake certain and common purposes to achieve a sustainable development. Finally, this review of literature can contribute to enrich HRD research and to help HRD researchers explore cross cultural aspects through theoretical diagnosis and scientific contributions. In chapter two, the author will describe the methods used to collect, analyze, and organize the comprehension provided in this book.

Chapter 2

Methodology

The purposes of this book are: to identify the competencies required for managers of intercultural consultancy services in order to optimize the effects of cultural diversity in Thai international automotive companies; to investigate ways which allow diversity to work effectively; and to identify barriers confronted by different cultures in international companies, as mentioned in the first chapter. Also, the author explored the following questions with many individuals, who got involved in managing and working in international automotive companies in Thailand. Some questions were, as follows: (1) What are the competencies required for the manager who provides intercultural consultancy services, and how to utilize the competencies to work in Thailand? (2) What are the most needed competencies for the manager who provides intercultural consultancy services? (3) What are some ways that allow diversity to work effectively? (4) What are the barriers confronted by differences in culture in international companies? In order to get answers to these questions, the author had to rigorously follow specific methods to accomplish the purposes. Hence, this chapter describes the methods used to collect the data needed for accomplishing the purposes aforementioned.

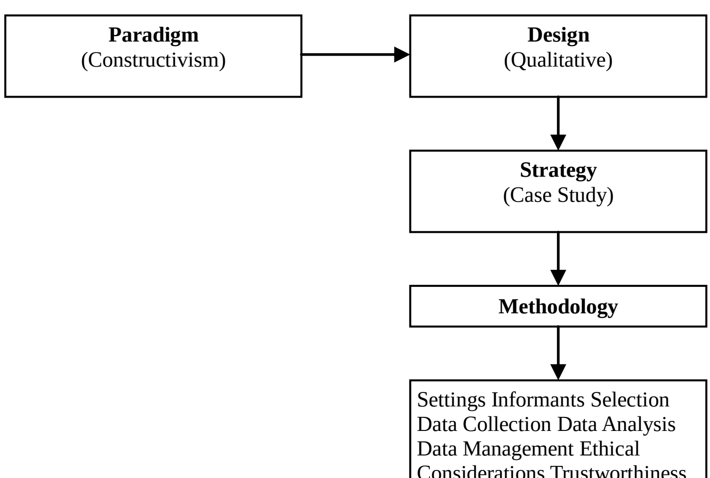

Figure 2.1 *Overview of the Book's Design & Methods.*

The author started this study with selecting a problem, writing inclusive ideas about the research problem, and a variety of knowledge of the related literature. The next step involved in the paradigm, the choice of methodology providing a detailed explanation of the proposed methodology, and the focus on specific methods of data collection, analysis, strategies, ethical considerations, as well as offers a pragmatic description on how to design a qualitative study.

2.1 Paradigm

First, it is important to define what is a paradigm? Guba (1990) noted that a paradigm is some certain assumptions in connection with reality (ontology), knowledge of the reality (epistemology), and how we get this reality (methodology). Guba, also mentioned that researchers should realize what assumptions are relevant to the topic of interest and then choose the appropriate methods with the chosen paradigm. Additionally, Lincoln and Guba (2000), Mertens (1998) stated that a knowledge claim might be called paradigms, and it means that investigators begin their studies with some assumptions about how they will investigate and what they will accomplish during their inquiry. According to Guba and Lincoln (1994) they reported that there are four schools of thought about knowledge claims including postpositivism, constructivism, advocacy/participatory, and pragmatism.

Undoubtedly, each school of thought presents philosophical ideas, and the author intended to claim his knowledge in this study through the constructivism paradigm. Going a bit further, Lincoln and Guba (2000), Schwandt (2000), Neuman (2000) and Crotty (1998) illustrated social constructivism, or this school of thought that individuals have the potential to understand the world. As such, they seek varied views, which are often complex, as well as count on their informants' experiences to interpret the desired situation or study. Accordingly, Schwandt (1989, p.399) stated that:

Our constructions of the world, our values, and our ideas about how to inquire into those constructions, are mutually self-reinforcing. We conduct inquiry via a particular paradigm because it embodies assumptions about the world that we believe and values that we hold, and because we hold those assumptions and values we conduct inquiry according to the precepts of that paradigm.

Moreover, researchers assert to show the difference between qualitative and quantitative methodology, by several characteristics. The following is a composition of assumptions by many researchers:

- Qualitative research exists in a natural setting, where behavior and events happen;
- Qualitative research relies on paradigms that differ from quantitative designs;
- The investigator is the fundamental instrument in data collection;
- Meanings and interpretations are negotiated between the researcher and the participants, in order to allow the researcher to build and reconstruct the knowledge; and
- The principle for assessing a qualitative study differs from a quantitative study.

For instance, in a qualitative study, researchers are seeking insight and believability and trustworthiness whereas in a quantitative study, researchers count on validity and reliability measures (Creswell, 2003). Further, constructivist researchers focus on the ‘processes’ of the relationship among individuals, as well as the environment in which people interact to obtain the knowledge (Creswell, 1998). Therefore, the author selected the constructivism paradigm for this study because it is obvious that throughout the study, the author explored all human’s behavior in how to manage or deal in a multicultural environment. Creswell (1998) also noted that investigators position themselves in the study, to clarify their formulation through their experiences, personality, and culture.

Interestingly, ‘constructivist inquiry’, this paradigm also has been called ‘naturalistic inquiry’ (Kuzel, 1986 cited in Crabtree & Miller 1992) and ‘hermeneutics’ (Gadamer, 1976 Guba & Lincoln, 1989). They called it constructivism, because the investigator creates constructions in such work. Consequently, Crabtree and Miller (1992, pp.10-11) interpreted that:

Shiva the androgynous Hindu Lord of the Dance and of Death. A constructivist inquirer enters an interpretive circle and must be faithful to the performance or subject, must be both apart from and part of the dance, and must always be rooted to the context. No ultimate truth exists; context-bound constructions are all apart of the larger universe of stories. Constructivist inquiry is best for storytelling. If one wants to understand how patients and providers experience pain or being informed their cholesterol is high, then this is the paradigm of choice.

In summary, researchers should realize what assumptions are appropriate to the topic of interest and then choose the appropriate methods. The author chose the constructivism paradigm for this study because it is clear that throughout the study, the researcher explored all human’s behavior in how to manage or deal in a multicultural environment. It was evident that the preferred paradigm or knowledge claim, is in connection with the selected problem, and personal experiences. Therefore, researchers should not assume that a paradigm works better than others, rather than determines the process of making claims, then combines three elements or factors (e.g. knowledge claims, strategies, and methods) to produce a variety of approaches to research.

2.2 Design

Creswell (2007, p.41) noted that, "…there is no agreed upon structure for how to design a qualitative study. Books on qualitative research vary". Nevertheless, Creswell concluded that all researchers begin with a problem, review literature related to the topic, generate questions, collect data, analyze them, and then write their reports. On the other hand, Richards and Morse (2007) reported that the research design is both challenging and necessary, but it is the less discussed, and the less criticized in lots of qualitative studies. Further, Richards and Morse recommended that researchers when planning a research design begin with: first, 'the scope of the project' which means the limitations of the study, the setting to be studied, and the sample. Second, 'the nature of the data required', which means how researchers will collect data, and how they match these data to the research questions. Merriam (1998, p.3) stated that:

Planning a research project can be compared to planning for a vacation trip. Before starting out, you consider what sort of trip most appeals to you, what you like to do, what it might cost, where you want to go, how best to get there, how long to stay, and so on.

A research design is a step for studying the research problem. Glatthorn and Joyner (2005) noted that the common steps in all research designs are: the research design, (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods research); noting the location where the study will take place; giving an explanation on how you collect, analyze the data, and which methods and instruments will be used. Similarly, Yin (1994) recommended that a research design comprises of five components including, research questions, the study's proposition, units of analysis, the linkage of the data and its proposition, and the criteria for interpreting the findings.

Moreover, David (2006: 4, p.289) concluded that, "…diversity is probably more often thought of as qualitative rather than quantitative". Accordingly, the author selected the qualitative approach for this study, as it is related to cross-cultural issues and how diversity works best in multicultural organizations. Creswell (1998) mentioned that qualitative research today puts a great emphasis on gender and culture issues or topics, which concern individuals, and practices in organizations. As such, a qualitative approach in this study will be the relevant strategy to find out answers to the questions previously mentioned. Crabtree and Miller (1992) outlined that qualitative studies allow researchers to investigate and illustrate problems and events from the perspective of their participants. Furthermore, Creswell (1998) noted that, researchers play a significant role in a qualitative study because they are learning from their participants, and then the researchers are expected to tell the story from the informants' views. On the other hand, Glesne and Peshkin (1992) argued on what is the best technique to use which dominates in a qualitative inquiry. They pointed to some elements considered important, such as, knowing exactly what you want to learn, because different questions have different needs for data collection. Although, researchers make lots of decisions before the process of collecting data, Glesne and Peshkin (1992) recommended choosing techniques depend on:

- Drawing facts in data needed to understand the phenomenon in question.
- The plethora of perspectives on the topic.
- Managing time for data collection.

In addition, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) noted that researchers seek answers to questions to illustrate how experiences and meanings are created and that the qualitative researchers throughout history have been judged by whether and how researchers conceptualize realities or the study says something to the reader.

Moreover, Locke, Spirduso and Silverman (2007) addressed many characteristics of a qualitative study; hence, the author would like to elaborate some, as follows:

- The salient points in most qualitative studies, are to interpret how people deal with their world, then how they describe, accept and feel that world;
- Interviews, observations, and documentations are the most usual types of data collection, though some of it is used as supplementary tools;
- Qualitative researchers, usually provide full description of participants, as well as the location, where the study will take place;
- Despite recording the respondents' answers, the researcher plays a significant role in the data analysis section, as a primary instrument in the study;
- Qualitative researchers attempt to avoid any sort of bias, as well as being aware of what they bring to their studies; and
- Finally, most qualitative researches are presented in the first person and attempt to report findings that are both accurate and reasonable.

On the contrary, Crabtree and Miller (1992) found two major weaknesses of qualitative studies:

- The complexity in different qualitative methods, in the vocabulary, such as jargon or technical terms; therefore, the writing of a qualitative study is not going to be an easy task.
- The variety of terms is another obstacle to comprehending the methods and findings of qualitative studies.

Similarly, Locke, Spirduso and Silverman (2007) presented two threats for qualitative studies, such as:

- Writers of qualitative studies sometimes lose control in matching the information provided among several sections.
- The length and complexity of qualitative studies make investigators lose important data in case that there is no plan for recording regularly and sufficiently.

Also, Hoyle, Harris, and Judd (2002) confirmed that, participants might not act as they normally would once they see that their behavior is recorded for research purposes, which may decrease the accuracy of findings and thereby the results of a qualitative study.

Historically, qualitative researchers believed that they had the ability to observe the entire world objectively. Accordingly, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) addressed that qualitative research is an interconnected group of terms, concepts, and assumptions, constitute the term qualitative research. Moreover, they noted that qualitative research describes routine, problems, and individuals' lives with the aim of making the world visible. Thus, Denzin and Lincoln concluded that qualitative researchers are philosophers because they are guided by high principles, and these principles include beliefs about 'ontology', 'epistemology', and 'methodology'. Berg (1995) noted that qualitative researchers are often interested in how people handle themselves, their locations, and how they interpret their environment. Thus, qualitative inquiry, as Berg noted, permits the researcher to gain understandings and perceptions of people. Crabtree and Miller (1992) formulated that a good qualitative researcher should be comfortable with uncertainties, as well as high tolerance with ambiguities. However, they mentioned that tolerance should not be taken to mean anything goes or is accepted. Crabtree and Miller pointed out, that a good qualitative research investigates a question that is important for the researcher, respondents, and the audience; also, it should report a convincing argument. On the other hand, Holliday (2002, p.13) concluded that, "…scientific qualitative research is that the researcher must take on the discipline of making the familiar strange. Even where the research scenario is familiar, the researcher must find ways of recovering the stranger position". As such, it is inadequate to collect and describe what the researchers see, and observe in the setting where they investigate. However, Holliday stated that viewing the familiar as strange, is a difficult task because it requires special strategies; thus, qualitative research is hard to see, as well as hard to explain. Merriam (1988, 1998) pointed out to characteristics of qualitative researches, as follows: Researchers are involved with processes more than products. It means their priorities are how things happen and what is the nature of such events?; qualitative researchers are looking for how people describe their meanings, and experiences; and importantly, the researcher in a qualitative study is the 'primary instrument' for collecting and analyzing the data.

As such, researchers invent ways of interacting with respondents according to circumstances. Qualitative research can reflect how parts can function together to produce a whole. Most qualitative researchers in describing a setting or a process, as in case studies, become familiar with the case being studied; and finally, qualitative researches are conducted due to the inexistence of a theory, or the existent theory is insufficiently interpreting a particular phenomena. Additionally, Marshall and Rossman (1999) developed three more challenges to qualitative researchers, such as developing a good framework for their studies, drawing a systematic and organized design, and synthesizing all materials that may persuade readers. Nevertheless, David (2006: 2, p.133) concluded that, "Two kinds of problems of understanding to which systematic inquiry is a possible response are: problems of understanding the world in which we are called upon to act and problems of understanding what we ought to try to do". In short, a qualitative study is focusing on understanding and interpreting rather than testing and experimenting. In other words, qualitative inquiry is 'inductive' rather than ‘deductive’. Also, one purpose of the research design is to prove that the researcher has the ability to conduct a qualitative study. Marshall and Rossman (1999, p.65) stated that, “The research design section should draw supporting evidence for the decisions by using relevant quotations from researchers who have written about these issues”.

In conclusion, the more qualitative researchers interact with participants to identify the findings, the more they get along with their data. Although it is not easy to interpret complex variables, we can learn how to deal with this complexity through the use of many qualitative techniques. Qualitative researchers should believe in multiple realities, as well as, learning from others’ experiences. Importantly, we should believe that everyone has some hidden skills, visions, attitudes, feelings, and thoughts. Qualitative researchers are seeking complexity, varied terms to have specific meanings, and interactions throughout several tools to gain the knowledge from every angle or holistically. Qualitative researchers hope to identify terms not fully appreciated or seen in the past, through their descriptions and analysis of the complex data. David (2006: 4, p.16) noted that, “…qualitative research strives to understand how all the parts work together to form a whole”. Ultimately, the author in this section attempted to show what steps were taken to design this study, as well as the author’s awareness of the qualitative inquiry, which is considered the relevant approach for this study.

2.3 Strategy

In this section, the author will discuss the most appropriate strategy for this study. The author decided, after careful consideration to select the case study, as it is one of the five strategies in qualitative approach. Thus, in this part of the book, the author preferred to begin with a brief history on qualitative case studies.

Historically, case studies were important to the development of ‘anthropology’, ‘psychology’, ‘sociology’, ‘management’, ‘social work’, ‘political science’ and recently ‘education’ have used case study research to discover processes through practice (Merriam, 1988). The name of case study research has been developed since the World War Two (WWII), within sociology (David, 2006: 1-4). David reported that in the last twenty five years there has been an increasing attention to meanings and language to identify human subjects in case study researches, rather than quantification and survey methods in social sciences. In addition, he stated that the name ‘study’ prefixed by the word ‘case’ refers to a complete investigation.

Merriam (1988, p.9) noted that, “The nature of the research questions, the amount of control, and the desired end product are issues to be considered when deciding whether case study is the most appropriate design for investigating the problem of interest”. In other words, the decision of choosing a qualitative case study or another strategy depends on what the researcher wanted to explore. Merriam mentioned that, case studies are used interchangeably with ‘fieldwork’, ‘ethnography’, ‘participant observation’, ‘exploratory research’, and ‘naturalistic inquiry’ as well as the terms ‘case history’, ‘case record’ and ‘case method’ are used with case study, though there are differences among each one. Yin (1994), noticed that case studies are the most relevant strategy when ‘what’, ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are taken place, and when researchers have not enough control over situations or event. Therefore, this study fits with the case study strategy because the author’s questions get involved with what and how questions, as discussed earlier. Besides, Yin (1994, p.21) reported that, “Every exploration, however, should still have some purpose. Instead of stating propositions, the design for an exploratory study should state a purpose, as well as the criteria by which an exploration will be judged successful”. Therefore, ‘What’ questions in this study are ‘exploratory, as Yin (1994, p.7) noted and its purpose is to develop an understanding of cross-cultural issues. Overall, "…the first and most important condition for differentiating among the various research strategies is to identify the type of research question being asked." Furthermore, there is a common criticism to those who undertake a qualitative case study (e.g. how can you generalize from a single case?) and Yin (1994, p.10) concluded that, "the short answer is that case studies, like experiments, are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes". On the other hand, Creswell (2007) and Stake (1995) illustrated types of case studies as 'intrinsic case study', when it is the researcher's interest in a case, 'collective or multiple case study' when the researcher seeks various sites to interpret the issue, and the 'instrumental case study' the researcher first selects an issue or a problem, then chooses the setting. However, David (2006) demonstrated that a case can be chosen not only because of special interest, but also due to the impacts or effects of a social issue. Thus, 'intrinsic case study' took place in this study because of two reasons:

- The author's interest in understanding challenges in building intercultural teams, and
- To optimize cultural diversity in Thai international automotive companies.

Moreover, Merriam (1988) stated different types of case studies, such as ethnographic case studies where researchers are involved with cultural interpretation; historical case studies in which researchers describe institutions, programs, and practices; and finally, a psychological case study on individuals or aspects of human behavior which are going to take place in this study. David (2006: 1) defined a case study by reporting that it is a special kind of approach that may be considered necessary for study, and it could be counted, measured, compared, as well as the behavior noted. Whereas in other literature, such as David (2006: 3, p.59) defined the case by, "…a 'case' is a 'typical' true-to-life management situation or policy issue presented as a mystery or dilemma compounded of multiple dimensions". However, Yin (1994) stated that the common definition of a case study starts with the 'scope of a case study'. Also, he noted that a case study is an 'empirical inquiry' that explores a phenomenon within its situations or events, specifically when obstacles between the phenomenon and events are not obvious. David (2006: 1-4) concluded in his books that there is no one specific definition to a case study, it varies from one another according to practitioners and situations. Additionally, David (2006: 3) mentioned that the case study or the case history is narrative and descriptive, when the researcher emphasizes on development; whereas, when researchers take snapshots from reality, it is called a 'cross sectional or photographic' case study. Further, David clarified the terms case study versus case work. As he noted, a case study should be planned sufficiently before it can be implemented, because a case study refers to collecting data; whereas, a case work implies to the diagnosis or the treatment of such work.

Merriam (1988) illustrated that researchers undertake case study research, to obtain an in-depth understanding of events being studied. She concluded that case study research is valuable when the aim is to extend the knowledge of different aspects. In other words, researchers can choose this strategy in order to gain an understanding of a phenomena as much as possible, or because it is an interesting study. Furthermore, Merriam (1998) acknowledged that researchers in the field contended to know what factors establish a case study, how we differentiate it from other qualitative research strategies or methods, and when it is recommended to choose it. In short, case studies are judged by such questions, as Merriam noticed: (Is the outcome descriptive? Does it build a theory? Does it illustrate the data?). Additionally, Merriam (1988) illuminated in her book four characteristics necessary for a qualitative case study, as follows:

- Particularistic- which means focus on specific phenomenon, an event, or a group of people to take a comprehensive view of situations or processes;

- Descriptive- which means that the outcome of a case study or the results are rich, completed, and covered all areas as possible over a specific time period. Merriam noted that description is mostly qualitative instead of presenting findings in numerical data;
- Heuristic- which means that case studies extend the reader's knowledge of new meanings, experiences, or ensure what is already known; and
- Inductive- qualitative research is mostly inductive, explores new relationships, terms, and understanding rather than predetermined hypothesis or test a theory are characteristics of qualitative case studies.

On the other hand, Merriam (1988) suggested some characteristics for a qualitative case study researcher, such as the following: researchers maximize opportunities to collect rich data with the perception that biases may occur, a high level of tolerance for ambiguity, realization that the right direction to continue is not always clear, ability to unexpected situations, being alert to make decisions according to what the case produced, sensitivity by asking relevant questions and using appropriate words, having good communication skills, and finally, a good qualitative researcher 'looks and listens everywhere'. Alongside, Creswell (2007) clarified that researchers in a qualitative inquiry should spend a long time in the field, be involved in complexity, and write inclusive drafts to show a plethora of perspectives. Following this line of thought, Merriam (1988, p.38) mentioned that, "case study research thus places the investigator in a largely uncharted ocean. For some it becomes an adventure full of promise for discovery; for others, it can be a disorienting and unproductive experience". Nevertheless, there are some limitations or weaknesses of undertaking a case study design in Merriam's view, for instance, a researcher may not have enough time or money to undertake this strategy and if researchers spend time to do a good case study, the outcome is probably too long for scholars and policy makers to read it. Also, Stake (1995) found that such work in a case study probably fails if too many demands were required. Alongside, David (2006: 2) illustrated some barriers where qualitative case study researchers may challenge it, as noticed:

- The researcher's involvement throughout the study;
- Problems related to confidentiality of data;
- How to control the data and gaining access to different people;
- Difficulty in publishing such work, if anonymity needs to be considered; and
- Lastly, problems concerned with how readers get the knowledge through the investigator's interpretation of the data.

Another important point, Merriam (1988) noted that case studies can be delivered and formulated in a 'descriptive narrative', interpretive account' or an 'evaluation'. Speaking of descriptive and interpretive accounts, the results are described qualitatively by using words and photographs rather than numbers, and evaluative case studies also involve description, and explanation. In other words, case studies present 'holistic' description and explanation. Therefore, Merriam (1988, p.20) noticed that, "knowledge produced by case study would then be judged on the extent to which it is understandable and applicable". Going a bit further, David (2006: 3) showed that the comparative case study differs from the traditional case study. The main issue in the comparative case study, as David noted, is that the researcher is allowed to gather explanations and data through multiple settings. As a result, David (2006: 4, p.293) acknowledged that, "case studies can do a whole variety of things. But some case studies do not do any of them well, and this is often because no particular rationale". In short, the author cautiously decided to select the case study, as it is one of the five strategies in a qualitative approach strategy for this study.

2.4 Rationale for the Selection of the Case

According to the previous issue, the author should clarify to the reader the rationale of the selection of the case. It is important that the researcher acknowledges the rationale of the study, as Marshall and Rossman (1999, p.60) urged all qualitative researchers, "… to provide a rationale for the particular genre of qualitative research in which the study is situated". Also, Stake (1995, p.4) concluded that, "Our time and access for fieldwork are almost always limited. If we can, we need to pick cases which are easy to get to and hospitable to our inquiry". As such, the author considered the case in international automotive companies in the Eastern Seaboard of Thailand. The four companies are famous in Thailand in dealing with diversity or people from different cultural backgrounds. Although, single cases will not be strong enough to generalize the results to other communities, people can gain a lot that is general from one single case (Stake, 1995). However, it is hoped that the results and the recommendations of this study will help to develop an understanding of cultural diversity to the selected companies, as well as Thai international companies. In other words, the author attempted to do the following:

- Understanding challenges in building intercultural teams, and
- Optimizing cultural diversity in Thai international automotive companies.

In conclusion, the author in this part clarified the relevant strategy for this study; and clarified different types of case studies, and noticed the difficulty in providing one single definition of a case study. Then, the author showed some of the limitations and weaknesses of undertaking a case study, and in the last section, the rationale of selecting this case. Finally, it was obvious throughout the journey that the choice made in selecting the informants had a great impact upon this study.

2.5 Methodology

The author's intention from this study was to clarify the competencies required for providers of intercultural consultancy services, in order to optimize cultural diversity in Thai international automotive companies; as well as, the role of HRD to Thai international companies. Foremost part, develop an understanding of cultural diversity to international automotive companies in the Eastern Seaboard of Thailand. As such, this study focused on management practices with cultural diversity in international automotive companies in the Eastern Sea Board of Thailand. Accordingly, some certain authorities in those companies were invited to participate in this study, with the aim of illustrating how they can manage diversity in the workplace, and obtain the best outcome. Importantly, Crabtree and Miller (1992, p.89) stated that, "I urge the researcher to reject the tyranny of methodology and use whatever method best answers the question at hand and honestly report what is done".

2.5.1 Setting

With the selected topic and the reviewed literature, Glesne and Peshkin (1992) suggested knowing the following:

- The location where you will conduct the study;
- Who will be your informants;
- What strategies to collect the data; and
- The amount of time you will spend on the process.

However, they argued that each decision needs a careful study by literature, documents, discussions with the desired research participants, and suggestions from experienced researchers, as well as researchers' judgment which all help in making such a decision. Moreover, Glesne and Peshkin (1992) stated that several issues must be prepared before the interviews or conversations take place. For instances, the location needs to be 'physically comfortable', private places are generally preferred, the time of the interview should be suitable for both the researcher and the respondent, and how long does each interview take. As Glesne and Peshkin noted, although there are some exceptions when less time is available to the participant, how often shall we meet with respondents will depend on the length of the interview and the interest of the informant. However, they recommended that it should be at least twice, and certainly no more than is comfortable for the participants.

Table 2.1 *Criteria for Research Settings.*

	Criterion	Details
i)	The setting must have a sense of boundedness.	Time, place, culture
ii)	The setting should provide a variety of relevant interconnected data.	People to watch or interview, artifacts (e.g. documents, pictures, implements)
iii)	There should be sufficient richness.	Different instances, facets and viewpoints-microcosm of the research topic in wider society
iv)	The setting should be sufficiently small.	Logistically and conceptually manageable
v)	There should be access.	For the researcher to take whatever role is necessary to collect data.

Source: Adopted from Holliday, 2002, p.38.

Creswell (2007) and Stake (1995) clarified that case study research engages the study of a subject through one or more cases within a 'bounded system' (e.g. setting). Holliday (2002) concluded that the setting in a qualitative approach is a very important task, to identify where, when, and with whom the research will exist. Also, Holliday mentioned that it is hard to determine what kind of data we are going to gather before we get started, strategies for collecting qualitative data depend on the nature of social settings, and the relationship between researchers and participants in the research process. Moreover, Marshall and Rossman (1999) showed that choosing a site depends on the following factors: possible entry, the possibility to obtain rich information and interact with participants, and be rest assured about data quality and 'credibility' of the study. Also, Stake (1994, p.24) stated that, "… for almost any topic that might be chosen, specific time boundaries are needed to define the beginning and end of the case". Similarly, Holliday advised his students when writing an assignment in a particular investigation to do the following: Assignment extracts (Holliday, 2002, p.74):

I hope to begin by observing three different classes through February and March. This will depend on the school principal giving permission, and three teachers with whom I have a good relationship letting me into their classes. The timing corresponds with the start and finish of a course in communication skills for airport personnel. I intend that the first two weeks of observation will be exploratory. What emerges will help me decide what other types of data to collect.

Therefore, the author should acknowledge that he conducted his interviews in four international automotive companies in the Eastern Sea Board of Thailand, with nine leaders in the top management, (e.g. managing director, Human resource manager, and manufacturing manager) in the middle of January 2009. However, the author contacted his gate keeper to facilitate the process with whom I gained access, and then what is claimed from the informants helped me to decide different types of data to gather.

2.5.2 Informant Selection

The author should first define the term informant. An informant is an individual, who provides information, and other terms that have been used are consultant, respondent, participant, and interviewee. Crabtree and Miller (1992) stated that informants are individuals who are knowledgeable, and willing to cooperate with researchers. Crabtree and Miller (1992, p.74) comprehended that:

Historically, the key informant was often the anthropological researcher's link to the tribe. He or she might have been the translator. It was often the individual with whom the researcher developed a special friendship. Rather than thinking of key informants as distinctly different from any other individual or informant, I think it is more helpful to view key informants as individuals who are able to teach the researcher.

Committee members and experts in the field, such as Glesne and Peshkin (1992) often expect researchers to notice how many, and which persons will be interviewed, as well as which situations will be observed. Moreover, Glesne and Peshkin outlined that the strategy of participant selection in a qualitative research depends on multiple purposes of interpreting, understanding, and the researcher's judgment. As such, David (2006: 3) acknowledged that sampling in a case study depends on three purposes:

- To identify processes as 'units of analysis';
- To inform the 'methodological advantages' of such work; and
- It is hoped that identifying units of analysis and the methodological advantages will prove the researcher's involvement for such an activity.

Also, Crabtree and Miller (1992) clarified how to sample by: considering whether to observe or to interview, talking to individuals, groups, or both, recording or listening such as, videotaping, or audio-taping, and deciding which sampling method in a qualitative inquiry should be employed. They mentioned that the selection is an attempt to pick a small number of informants, who can provide the knowledge needed within the study. Therefore, the author in this study used the 'non-probability sampling'. According to Merriam (1988), anthropologists emerged the non-probability sampling method, and the most usual form of which is called purposive based on how to discover, understand, and gain a new vision. In addition, in various books, purposive sampling is the same as 'criterion based sampling' which urges researchers to create the criteria necessary for the study. Thus, the author interviewed nine participants in four international automotive companies in the Eastern Sea Board of Thailand. However, Marshall and Rossman (1999) noted that even the best experts in the field sometimes cannot determine the sample size, unless they get involved with the procedures. They also suggested to further plan as much as possible for their sampling method. Similarly, Berg (1995) argued that in some researches 'purposive samples' are chosen after studying some group in order to ensure that the individuals selected fit in the study. In contrast, Merriam (1998) urged that researchers have to decide in advance how data will be collected, the number of participants involved, as well as what documents will be used. Sampling in a qualitative inquiry consists of the following steps, all of which underline that enthusiasm and developments are important characteristics of both a qualitative inquiry in general, and qualitative sampling strategies in particular:

- The sample design (Where, and with who do I start?);
- Sample (Who and what comes next? Depend on who and what came before);
- The sample is modified continuously;

- Selection continues to redundancy; and
- Sampling includes “disconfirming evidence” in order to develop a theory (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, Kuzel et al., 1990 cited in Crabtree & Miller, 1992, p.41).

Moreover, Merriam (1988) pointed out that, “the most appropriate sampling strategy for a qualitative case study is non-probability sampling, of which there are several forms.” (p.52). Similarly, Merriam (1998) noticed that sampling in qualitative research is often ‘nonrandom’, ‘purposeful’ and small. Therefore, David (2006) concluded that the common criticism of the case study is that the sample is small, which will not allow both multiple hypotheses to emerge and ‘generalizability’. In addition, Creswell (2007, p.125) reported that, “The concept of purposeful sampling is used in qualitative research. This means that the inquirer selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study.” In conclusion, sampling in qualitative studies used to be purposive rather than random, and the purpose is to decorate the research questions with information richness and not representativeness (Crabtree & Miller, 1992). It is necessary to sample before the process of data collection and data analysis because it is rather impossible to interview everyone, observe everything, and collect all materials required for a case (Merriam, 1988; Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Therefore, the author planned to interview approximately 5-10 participants or leaders in four international automotive companies in the Eastern Sea Board of Thailand. Eventually, the author interviewed nine participants in four international automotive companies in the Eastern Seaboard of Thailand. Eight participants are Thais, and one participant is Korean; however, Thais and Koreans are working with Americans, Japanese, Czech, and French at the companies where the interviews took place.

2.5.3 Data Collection

Sapsford and Jupp (1996, p.98) concluded that:

There is no single best way of collecting data; the method chosen depends on the nature of the research questions posed and the specific questions you want to ask respondents. The aim of all methods is to obtain valid and reliable data, true answers to questions, not distorted by the methods of collection or prone to chance fluctuation, which can be used as the basis for credible conclusions.

Creswell (2007), Stake (1995), and Marshall and Rossman (1999) showed that gathering data in a case study is through various sources of information (e.g. interviews, observations, documents, and audiovisual equipments). Nevertheless, Merriam (1988) noted that interviewing is the most usual way of collecting qualitative data. As a result, she interpreted that the aim of an interview is to get special information, as well as to know things researchers cannot observe (e.g. thoughts, intentions, and feelings). However, she stated that, "throughout the process of doing a case study, investigators continually make decisions, choose among alternatives, and exercise judgment" (p.71). Similarly, Stake (1995) mentioned that each investigator makes continuous decisions on how much focus to empower each role. Hence, interviewing or other sorts of data collection depends on what kind of information researchers are seeking. In all cases, Creswell (2007, p.39) reported that:

The research process for qualitative researchers is emergent. This means that the initial plan for research cannot be tightly prescribed, and that all phases of the process may change or shift after the researchers enter the field and begin to collect data. Merriam (1988) concluded three successful factors in every interview to obtain good quality data, such as the character and skills of the investigator, the attitudes of the informant, and the meanings of both the researcher and the interviewee of such a situation. Nevertheless, Yin (1994, p.11) reported that, "…the skills for doing good case studies have not yet been defined, and as a result, most people feel that they can prepare a case study, and nearly all of us believe we can understand one". On the other hand, Kvale (2007) illustrated the following for a good quality interview:

- Appropriate answers from the informant;
- Short questions by the interviewer, and long answers by the informant;
- The interviewer skills in identifying the straightforward aspects of the study; and
- The interview should be adequate to report the findings without extra explanations, though the researcher's interpretation.

Thus, Kvale (2007, p.81), reported that, "The interviewer is the key research instrument of an interview inquiry. A good interviewer knows the topic of the interview, masters conversational skills and is proficient in language, with an ear for his or her subjects' linguistic style". In contrast, Merriam urged researchers to pay careful attention to some factors, which may impact an interviewee's response, such as the respondent's health, and the respondent's mood throughout the interview. Stake (1995, p.134) concluded that, "we recognize that case study is subjective, relying heavily on our previous experience and our sense of worth of things". In other words, researchers count on their experiences, and abilities throughout their studies rather than relying on how much they are skilled as demonstrated earlier. Researchers, such as Crabtree and Miller (1992) suggested open-ended questioning, with the aim of listening carefully for participants in what they do and how they think. As a result, the emphasis is on listening. "The question is not, how do you talk to an informant? But, how do you listen to an informant?" (Dobbert, 1982, p.118 cited in Crabtree & Miller, 1992). Hence, it is recommended to follow the direction of the participant and wisely listening, in order to conduct a good interview. Yin (1994, p.85) illustrated that:

Interviews are an essential source of case study evidence because most case studies are about human affairs. These human affairs should be reported and interpreted through the eyes of specific interviewees, and well informed respondents can provide important insights into a situation.

The author in this study used the 'semi-structured' interview because I was guided by a number of questions and issues to seek answers and explanations for it, though neither the same questions nor the order of it was determined. In addition, it is important to notice that the purposes of this study were to identify the competencies required for managers of intercultural consultancy services in order to optimize cultural diversity in Thai international automotive companies; to investigate ways which will allow diversity to work effectively; and to identify barriers confronted by different cultures in international companies. Accordingly, the author realized that each purpose may have different way to collect the data, and not necessarily using one way for all purposes. Berg (1995) noted that the questions in a 'semi-standardized' interview imply to the researcher's awareness in the world in different ways. Additionally, Merriam (1988) formulated that this type of interview gives the researcher the space to handle situations, develop the respondents' views, and new concepts on the study. Therefore, each participant at the end of the session was asked for any documents or texts he or she might suggest, as well as names of other participants whom I might wish to interview. The interviews took from me around forty-five to ninety minutes each, and the decision to stop seeking more interviews, depended on how sufficient the data is. There were no fixed numbers as to how long, and how many interviews are needed to collect enough information; although, Glesne and Peshkin (1992) noticed that, short and few interview sessions for those who are inexperienced and incompetent investigators.

However, David (2006: 2, p.138) reported that, “the problem of field research in case study is to gather evidence in such a way as to make it accessible to subsequent critical assessment, to internal and external criticism and to triangulation”. Moreover, David concluded that the case study data when it presents complexity and multiple perspectives, allows policy makers to develop an understanding in what they need to make. Also, he stated that the case study aims at understanding complex human situations; thus, a case study can produce both unique and universal understandings. Accordingly, Richards and Morse (2007, p.2) showed that,“…all methods have the common goal of making sense of complexity, making new understandings and theories about the data, and constructing and testing answers to research questions”. Therefore, Richards and Morse concluded that the big challenge for a novice researcher is to find the relevant method for such work. The author of this book attempted to obtain answers for the research questions, through some interview sessions. Merriam (1998) and Creswell (2003) demonstrated that it is seldom necessary to use all strategies to collect data, usually one or two methods dominate, and others support or a supplement to gain more insights. Creswell (2007) suggested that qualitative research is not only to explore many settings or individuals, but also to gather inclusive details about each site or individual. In addition, Merriam (1988, p.86) showed that:

Interviewing, like any other data collection technique, has its strengths, and its limitations. The researcher who attends to the limitations while maximizing the strengths inherent in all phases of the interview process will be richly rewarded by the data obtained.

However, it takes practice to become a skilled interviewer, although skills in observations and interviewing are necessary, it is not a must for researchers to commit for a case study. Richards and Morse (2007, p.91) mentioned that, "Triangulation refers to the gaining of multiple perspectives through completed studies that have been conducted on the same topic and that directly address each other's findings". As such, Richards and Morse formulated the term 'observation' that it is, "The assumption behind most observational strategies is that they enable the researcher to learn what is taken for granted in a situation and to discover what is going on best by watching and listening" (p.116). Similarly, observation as it is another important method to gather the data required, Marshall and Rossman (1999) formulated that the researcher does not make a special effort to have a specific role, rather than facilitating interactions among people. Marshall and Rossman reported that, "Observation is a fundamental and highly important method in all qualitative inquiry: It is used to discover complex interactions in natural social settings" (p.107). In contrast, Yin (1994) demonstrated that observations in case studies are not necessarily a source of evidence. Another important method is 'documentation' Richards and Morse (2007) noticed that, documents as a supplement tool, consist of (management records, participants' diaries, or policy statements) may help researchers to gain more ideas about their participants. Moreover, Yin (1994) reported that documents are useful to ensure that the spellings, titles or names of organizations are correct, and it could inspire the researcher for new questions. As such, the author in this study collected the data through interviews, and other sources such as observations, and documentations were needless. In conclusion, the author illustrated the methods to gather the data required for this study, and showed different perspectives, including strengths and weaknesses of each method. Richards and Morse (2007) urged researchers to allow the data to guide them to unexpected information, and it is the data which will determine when it is rich, detailed, and sufficient.

2.5.4 Data Analysis

To provide a general framework for the analysis, there is a common argument in qualitative data analysis. For instance, Sapsford and Jupp (1996) argued that the identification of different perspectives from people who get involved with the researcher, notice the barriers they face it, as well as describe the strategies that emerge to deal with those barriers. Therefore, the author looked at identifying the points mentioned above, and data preparation took place, as suggested by Sapsford and Jupp (e.g. audio-taping). For the purpose of the analysis task, it is important to transcribe recordings regularly. However, Sapsford and Jupp stated that the preparation of data is not solely reliant on audio and video recordings because “field notes” also are frequently used as “raw material” from which the informant provided in many qualitative researches. Furthermore, Yin (1994) recommended all researchers to begin their analysis in case studies by setting two general strategies: one of which is ‘relying on theoretical propositions’ which is the favorable strategy, to follow the purpose and the design of the case; and the other strategy is to ‘develop a case description’, which is less recommended than the other one, but it is useful when theoretical propositions do not exist. Nevertheless, Yin (1994, p.123) clarified that, “No matter what specific analysis strategy is chosen, you must do everything to make sure that your analysis is of the highest quality”. Therefore, Yin concluded that because of this problem, experienced case study researchers are more formative than novice researchers. Merriam (1988), Richards and Morse (2007) noted that researchers should start the analysis task at the same time with the first interview, first observation, and first document provided. Moreover, Merriam interpreted that the analysis is the task in which investigators strive to produce worthy data, believable, and applicable results. Finally, she mentioned that, “data analysis in qualitative research very much depends on the investigator’s sensitivity and analytic skills.

Whether one is analyzing data in a single case study or across several individual cases, the process is inductive" (p.121). Accordingly, David (2006) noted that an important decision in all studies is to pick 'units of analysis' that are relevant for the problem the researcher wants to understand.

Intriguingly, Sapsford and Jupp (1996) addressed that the common question proposed by researchers, who undertake qualitative data analysis for the first time is, now I have got the data, what do I do with it?. They noted that it is hard to answer this question because there is no set of rules and no 'simple recipe' guaranteeing good results, but creativity plays a significant role and that is why different researchers are working with same data and produce different analyses. On the other hand, Crabtree and Miller (1992); Glesne and Peshkin (1992) concluded that analysis should proceed at the same time as data collection, reflect on the data, organize them, and then try to express what the data is telling you. As a result of which, Hobbs and Wright (2006) concluded that an early writing would allow researchers to address which points can be developed, categorized and explored.

Crabtree and Miller (1992) noted that the computer programs facilitate the analysis process, because it helps in data management, data manipulation, saving time, as well as many other advantages. Also, May (1997) showed that some computer programs would help researchers in the analysis task to discover the frequency of some words used by the informants in their contexts, and help to link codes to each other. In contrast, Glesne and Peshkin (1992) synthesized disadvantages in developing a partnership with computers. Some of which are: if the researcher is comfortable with the completion of the data analysis, he/she might stop working further on it. Also, a very big problem is that the data or work can be lost. Nonetheless, the author of this study did not use any kind of computer programs, because the software used to accomplish the aim would probably be expensive, and definitely it requires an amount of training time which is difficult for the author to achieve at the present time. Additionally, Creswell (1998) presented general data analysis strategies by authors such as, (Bodgan & Biklen, 1992; Huberman & Miles, 1994; Wolcott, 1994b cited in Creswell, 1998). They showed a variety of "Analytic Strategies" (e.g. sketching ideas, summarizing field notes, working with words, and data display) which is going to help the researcher to choose the most appropriate strategies for the proposed study.

Walliman (2001) also outlined that, "researchers must structure their analytical approaches to fit the nature of the data with which they are faced" (p.261). Therefore, the author decided to use only three analytic strategies from what they presented for the analysis task of this study (e.g. sketching ideas, summarize field notes, and display data). The aim in choosing from those three strategies will be for the emphasis on certain data, summarize drafts on field notes, and develop some contrasts, comparisons, charts or figures as suggested by the author of these strategies. In addition, Walliman recommended that researchers should categorize the information required, in order to structure the information easily, and identify gaps. For instance, contact details, main issues, interesting issues raised, new questions emerging, and a summary of information acquired.

On the other hand, Stake (1995) mentioned that the aim from a case study is to get the complexity of a single case, as well as the study of particularity to understand its process in the setting. Thus, he interpreted three forms of data analysis such as (direct interpretation, patterns, and naturalistic generalizations). In direct interpretation, Stake mentioned that the investigator can explore a single event or situation and interpret it without the need for multiple cases. By patterns, Stake means that the researcher develops some categories, charts, or tables to show differences among data and this process sometimes called data display. Finally, Stake noted that researchers may develop naturalistic generalizations through analyzing the data, so that readers can learn from the case, as well as apply it in many communities. Interestingly, Hobbs and Wright (2006) urged all researchers to be aware that potential interviewees might be too busy to go through all the details, and therefore they might need to count on summaries as much as possible.

A brief summary of what the author implemented in this section or for the analysis task is presented, as follows:

- Transcribed taped interviews;
- Some translations were made from Thai to English;
- Allowed the informants to review their information for accuracy and reliability;
- Organized data according to issues raised;
- Organized the respondents' answers in line numbers;
- Developed some codes from the respondents' answers;
- A comprehensive illustration and description were made;
- Developed categories and themes;
- Summarized each category or each interview session;
- Compare and contrast different data with the aim of synthesizing documents into an inclusive description of the whole process; and
- Drafting and redrafting.

The author believed that the way in which the participants of the study responded during the interviews, can be both unexpected, and complicated. Therefore, the author intended to use some observations, as discussed earlier, as a supplementary tool, which was helpful in analyzing the data. However, the author did not use any documentation. The author also applied multiple strategies with the interviews; such as field notes, reflexive journals, and e-mail the participants, due to the formative and rich information taken from the participants of this study.

2.5.5 Interpretation

As mentioned in the first section of this chapter, in the research design, qualitative researchers have great emphasis on interpretation. Thus, Creswell (2003) clarified that the process of data analysis involves making interpretation of the large amount of data that has been collected. Generally speaking of which, Sapsford and Jupp (1996, p.318) reported that:

All research stands or falls by the way in which the researcher conceptualizes the field of study: in the design of the study, in the way that measures are defined and measuring instruments constructed, in how the data are coded or clustered or segmented for analysis and in the decisions the researcher makes about what it is important to report and what sense to make of it.

Stake (1995), noted that interpretation is a significant part of all research. For example, interviews, observations, and other data, researchers exhibit their own explanations and conclusions. Stake (1995, p.135), concluded that, “qualitative case study is highly personal research. Persons studied are studied in depth. Researchers are encouraged to include their own personal perspectives in the interpretation”. Crabtree and Miller (1992) explained that interpretation follows investigation because it allows understanding and facing problems discussed during interviews. However, they stated that interpretation is important and in the meantime not an easy task; therefore, they suggested the following to understand a text:

Understand the setting in which the text refers. So, in this study I had to understand the locations' backgrounds, where the interviews took place; the awareness of the words and expressions used in the text; and understand the creator of the words. Hence, it is insufficient to understand what was meant by the words, the researcher should also understand the one who constructed these words; and ensure that the participant is willing to converse on the issues being proposed in the study.

Glesne and Peshkin (1992, p.147) advised researchers to ask themselves the following questions to construct more 'trustworthy interpretations':

Whom do I not see? Whom have I seen less often? Where do I not go? Where have I gone less often? With whom do I have special relationships? and in what light would they interpret phenomena? What data collecting means have I not used that could provide additional insight?

As such, they concluded that we should always pay careful attention to our own biases, and our own 'subjectivity' in order to gain a more 'trustworthy interpretation. Moreover, Silverman (2004) noticed that the relationship among individuals' situations, including individual stories, and actions will permit the researcher to interpret individuals' behavior or actions. David (2006: 1) reported that since the case method has referred to gathering and assembling data of the issue, data must be interpreted which is gained from whether individuals, groups or anyone who may add knowledge to the study. Also, Stake (1995, p.134) reported that, "we offer opportunity for readers to make their own interpretations of the case but we offer ours too". Finally, Creswell (2007) noted that investigators, in qualitative studies, interpret what they see, hear, and understand, through their own experiences. Thus, David (2006: 2, p.124) informed that, "… we understand ourselves and others only when we transfer our own lived experience into every kind of expression of our own and other people's lives".

Overall, Yin (1994) showed that there is no definite way of specifying the criteria for interpreting the results, and researchers just hope that the different perspectives could be adequately contrasted or compared.

In summary, interpretation allows an understanding of what has been discussed during interviews, although it is not an easy task. Most importantly, the author paid attention to his personal biases or his own subjectivity, to obtain more trustworthy interpretation. Hoyle, Harris, and Judd (2002, p.484) described an interpretive task by:

Interpretive practice engages both the hows and the whats of social reality; it is centered in both how people methodically construct their experiences and their worlds, and in the configurations of meaning and institutional like that inform and shape their reality-constituting activity.

Accordingly, the interpretation is an important task because the case method implies collecting data for the study, and these data must be interpreted which is gained whether from individuals or groups. In conclusion, the author was fully aware of the words and the expressions used by the participants of the study, as well as to ensure that the participants are willing to converse on the issues being proposed in this book.

2.5.6 Data Management

In this section, the author presents how the data was managed in this study. For the data management section, the author organized all data and related documents in folders. Speaking of the respondents' responses, the author used some codes or numbers instead of the participants' names, companies and identities, to ensure confidentiality. After gathering all data required or answers to the proposed study, the author was able to generate categories, charts, and diagrams.

Accordingly, when gathering rich information, the author was then able to provide categories which helped in the data analysis task, as well as in writing the final report of the study, and the development of a model. Moreover, the author transcribed the interviews, and relevant documents, in order to answer the research questions. Briefly, as everything in a qualitative study is flexible, the author was conscious that probably new techniques for managing the data will arise to make the study more systematic and organized.

2.5.7 Ethical Protocol

Another important section in this study was to look at the ethics throughout the inquiry process. In the last few decades, changing social behavior about research has led to construct codes of ethics in each scholarly institution (Berg, 1995). Therefore, Berg (1995), Marshall and Rossman (1999), and Kvale (2007) urged all researchers to take codes of ethics into account, and sufficiently explain rights, responsibilities of either the researcher or participants. A fundamental ethical point of research found in several studies, is that the issues of the study should not be harmed by it; however, Sapsford and Jupp (1996) mentioned that we should realize that harm may exist if the informants' interests are not reported in the study. Accordingly, they found that this is the reason for promising our informants 'confidentiality' and 'anonymity'. Going a bit further, they suggested that nothing should be done in the research, without consents from our participants, as well as the awareness of what the word harm means. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) reported that in social sciences, since 1980 each institute has formulated its own code of ethics. Moreover, there are two major points which need to be considered in the ethical issues in research; one of which is honesty, integrity and the other is privacy and confidentiality (Walliman & Baiche, 2001; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Therefore, honesty is the best policy to establish good relationships and develop a level of trust. Walliman (2001, p.214) noted that:

Apart from correct attribution, honesty is essential in the substance of what you write. Accurate descriptions are requited of what you have done, how you have done it, the information you obtained, the techniques you used, the analysis you carried out, and the results of experiments- a myriad of details concerning every part of your work.

Alongside, Locke, Spirduso, and Silverman (2007) showed that the aim of a proposal is to provide readers with an understanding on what researchers attempt to do, and to achieve this goal, researchers need to report appropriate facts and not just favorable things. Also, May (1997) noted that ethical considerations are not only defined to know what is positive to the researcher and the study, but also clarification to understand the acceptable behavior, and the participants' involvement in the research. May concluded that, "The development and application of research ethics is required not only to maintain public confidence and to try project individuals and groups from the illegitimate use of research findings, but also to ensure its status as a science" (p.61). Furthermore, Hoyle, Harris and Judd (2002) contended to interpret why ethical issues need to be taken into account, as follows:

- What is acceptable to do to participants in the name of science?
- Is it ethical to engage people without informing them that they are part of the study?
- Is it ethical to deceive people about the methods and the nature of the study?

They also argued that the uniqueness of social science is that the evidence in social science is people, which differ from the physical sciences; therefore, researchers should know how to protect their participants' rights and identities by careful attention to the ethical issues. In short, none is infallible and it is rather impossible to be free from bias. Hence, researchers are urged to acknowledge any bias in any section in the research, and admitting to limitations of whether competence or available resources.

(A) Informed Consent

In this part, the author should clarify what is informed consent and why it is important. Researchers should gain the individuals' agreements before collecting data on them, although an informed consent neither prevents the wrong use of research findings nor establishes a relationship between the researchers and researched (Borg & Gall, 1989; Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). Moreover, Creswell and Clark (2007, p.113) outlined that:

Researchers require permission to collect data from individuals and sites. This permission can be gained at three levels: from individuals, who are in charge of sites; from people providing the data (and their representatives, such as parents); and from campus-based institutional review boards (IRBs).

Further, Glesne and Peshkin (1992), Berg (1995), and Richards and Morse (2007) noticed that the suitable informed consent was generally a written consent form, although lots of arguments surrounded the ethics, by qualitative researchers. Alongside, Diener and Crandall (1978 cited in Glesne & Peshkin, 1992) showed the importance of an informed consent, by illustrating what the participants will be aware of, as follows:

- Participants will be volunteers, so they have the right to whether accept to cooperate or not;
- Participants will be allowed to see if any section in the study harms them; and
- Participants will have the right to stop participating at any time.

Accordingly, Hoyle, Harris, and Judd (2002) suggested that once the researcher informs participants about what was mentioned above, the researcher should clarify to the reader all procedures made to let readers know how well participants were treated, respected, and protected throughout the study. Denzin and Lincoln (2005, p.144) suggested that researchers should inform participants about the nature of the study, the purpose or the aim and methods. They outlined that, "Proper respect for human freedom generally includes two necessary conditions. First, subjects must agree voluntarily to participate that is, without physical or psychological coercion. Second, their agreement must be based on full and open information". Locke, Spirduso and Silverman (2007), Richards and Morse (2007) identified a system of rules for informed consent, and some of which are, as follows:

- Informants should be cognizant of the nature of the subject, limits, time, and effort, as well as provide detailed information about what has been discussed in the appendix of the proposal;
- Informants should be promised that their identities will be protected;
- Informants should be informed that they have the right to ask questions, and sign a form to confirm that they have been told about the study and their willingness to cooperate. They suggested looking at some formats in the scholarly institution before designing a form for the study;
- Informants should know that they will have the right to withdraw or stop cooperating at any time;
- Informants should be informed that they can receive feedback about the results of the study; and
- Lastly, informants should receive the name, address, and phone number of

both the graduate student and the supervisor, in case the participants need any clarification related to their roles.

Similarly, Bryant (2004) reported how informed consent information is composed. Some of which are: the title of the study, the purpose of the study, how long does the participant participate, no harm or intended risks, confidentiality, free to stop participating at any time, and agreement or permission to cooperate in the study. Another important thing, Creswell (2007) noted that researchers should show evidence to the committee members that they took into account the participants' rights, confidentiality, and the anonymity of participants in the study. Finally, Hoyle, Harris, and Judd (2002, p.48) reported that, "respect for persons incorporates at least two ethical convictions: first, individuals should be treated as autonomous agents, and second, that persons with diminished autonomy are entitled to protection". On the other hand, Hoyle, Harris, and Judd argued that researchers can neglect informed consent in case that, "(1) the research involves no more than minimal risk, (2) the rights of the participants would not be adversely affected, and (3) the research could not feasibly be carried out without waiving informed consent" (p.419).

In short, an informed consent form is a background of the researcher's study. It is a written form consisting of some elements (e.g. purpose of the study, procedures, etc.) which allow participants to be aware of the proposition, as well as acknowledging their rights, and finally, the researcher will seek a signature on this form from the participants after reading and understanding its contents.

(B) Confidentiality

In this section, the author intended to show that the confidentiality of the data collected need to be considered by using some strategies. Borg and Gall (1989) recapped a few strategies to meet the confidentiality needs of studies. For example,

- Ask participants to provide information without identifying persons;
- Use a symbol that can be removed once the participant's response is received;
- Use a 'third party' to select a sample, so that the researcher does not recognize who is in the sample and certainly cannot link answers to someone;
- Develop randomized responses; and
- Let the respondents create their own code.

As confidentiality became a necessary part in such work, David (2006: 2, p.119) showed that, "offering blanket confidentiality affords the researcher faster access to relevant data and prevents the need for informants to continuously monitor what they say". Moreover, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) mentioned that 'privacy' and 'confidentiality' are considered codes of ethics, and emphasize on protecting people's reflexion; therefore, confidentiality is a major principle to secure individuals' perceptions, as well as personal data. Furthermore, Hoyle, Harris, and Judd (2002, p.60) stated that although the researcher will know the source of the data, the researcher should promise not to link information to anyone. They reported that, "confidentiality should always be assured to the fullest extent possible. What this means is that nobody else besides individuals on the research team should access to or see the raw data". Additionally, Berg (1995) differentiated between 'confidentiality' and 'anonymity'. He interpreted 'confidentiality' by an active trial to omit from the study anything that might refer directly to the participants' identities; whereas, 'anonymity' in his opinion means that issues are kept without their real names. Thus, Berg (1995, p.213) concluded that:

Researchers commonly assure subjects that anything discussed between them will be kept in strict confidence, but what exactly does this mean? Naturally, this requires that the researchers systematically change each subject's real name to a pseudonym or case number when reporting data.

Finally, Berg urged all researchers to avoid keeping data longer than is necessary for 'safeguarding confidentiality'. Alongside, Kvale (2007) reported that 'confidentiality' in qualitative research refers to hiding private data, in order to protect the subjects' privacy. Briefly, confidentiality is one of the most important aspects of the studies, researchers should not avoid it. Confidentiality should be protected more, by not divulging the participants' names and, whenever possible, destroy names of subjects from data collection and replace it by codes.

2.5.8 Trustworthiness

According to what has been discussed earlier in the research design, the author addressed that qualitative researchers place great emphasis on interpretation. Thus, the author obtained trusted outcomes, as well as provided trustworthy interpretations. Glesne and Peshkin (1992) found some factors to increase gaining trustworthy data, such as:

- Time plays a significant role in trustworthy data, such as the duration for interviewing, and time spent to develop a relationship with the informants;
- Also triangulation of interviews, observations, and documentations may help;
- Be aware of any sort of biases;
- Sharing the interpretive task with research informants;
- Be aware of the limitations of the study;
- Identifying which documents, locations, and persons were unreachable; and

- What data I haven't touched, and how it could assist in the study.

Moreover, Walliman (2001, p.213) concluded that, "Honesty is essential, not only to enable straightforward, above-board communication, but to engender a level of trust and credibility to promote debate and the development of knowledge". In short, being honest and clear were the best policy throughout the study, with the aim of gaining healthy information and contributing to the nature of the study. Also, the author attempted to avoid common sense or personal ideas, which helped to construct trustworthy interpretations.

2.5.9 Reflexivity and the Assessment of Validity

Such considerations should be taken into account by researchers who undertake a qualitative data analysis. How the research was carried out is an essential point in terms of credibility, and did the participants give the researcher what he or she wanted to hear? (Sapsford & Jupp, 1996). Further, they mentioned that the researcher should think about his or her role in the process, continually thinking of the research tasks, or in other words to be a reflective practitioner. They also suggested that:

An equally important aspect of reflexivity is that the process of data collection and analysis should be made sufficiently explicit for a reader to make a reasonable assessment of the credibility of the findings. Of course, the information about the research that we have available to us as readers will always be quite limited. It will also vary a great deal between research reports. Not surprisingly, book length reports tend to provide more information than do articles. (p.295)

Crabtree and Miller (1992) argued that, although in qualitative research the "generalizability" is not the aim, they still worry about the validity of themes based on small sample sizes. There are several uses of the term 'reflexivity' in qualitative research, one of which reflects the awareness of researchers and their methods of getting involved with politics of the social world (Holliday, 2002). Also, Holliday described this term as the way in which researchers benefit from their contribution within the research setting, in a 'methodical' way. Holliday reported that, "…the researcher acknowledges the unavoidability of interacting with, and perhaps changing the culture she is investigating, but opens all channels of perception to capitalize on what is revealed about the culture, during the process" (p.146). According to David (2006: 1), he attempted to propose what makes the data sufficiently presented in a case study, as thus:

- Data must be referred to the research problem or questions;
- Data must show facts or true events faraway from any sort of deception;
- Flexibility of case methods is required;
- Data should refer to the location where the information is obtained; and
- Finally, systematizing and organizing data are also required.

Moreover, Marshall, and Rossman (1999, p.196) concluded that, "methods are proposed for ensuring data quality (e.g., informants' knowledgeability, subjectivities, and candor) and for guarding against ethnocentric explanations by eliciting cross-cultural perspectives". However, Locke, Spirduso, and Silverman (2007) found three threats to validity in qualitative researches, such as: How the researcher can confirm that the informants' responses are clear and adequate? Does the researcher bias in the interpretation task? If yes, so what the researcher can do about that? And to what extent do informants react to researchers? Silverman (2004) pointed out that qualitative researches involve the quality of recording, and the 'truthfulness' of the analysis process in order to increase the validity of qualitative studies. Hoyle, Harris, and Judd (2002, p.529) noticed that, “the overriding criteria for good scientific writing are accuracy and clarity”. In conclusion, researchers should not neglect their perceptions of things, and should therefore account for ‘subjectivity’ whenever possible, as well as being conscious about threats to validity or accurate data. However, David (2006: 2, p.118) reported that, “educational case studies are almost always conducted under constraints of time and resources and therefore reliability and validity pose considerable problems”.

2.6 Conclusion

The author presented in this chapter the research paradigm, the research design, as well as a variety of discussions about the qualitative approach. The author decided to use the case study as a strategy for this study, and then the author showed different types of case studies, with a brief talk about the history of case studies in sciences, and the rationale for the case. Then, the author looked at the setting, participants’ selection, and sources of data, which are collected for data analysis. Also, how the data was managed, trustworthiness, reflexivity and the assessment of validity took part in this study; and finally ethical issues were thoroughly considered throughout the inquiry process. In chapter three, the author will provide a detailed description of the major findings of the research.

Chapter 3

Findings of the Study

After an exhaustive investigation, the study provided formative explanations according to the intended purposes, namely, to identify the competencies required for managers of intercultural consultancy services, to investigate ways which allow diversity to work effectively, and to identify barriers confronted by differences in culture in international automotive companies, in the Eastern Seaboard of Thailand. This chapter exhibits the most remarkable findings of the study. It is organized and presented in the sequence of answering the research questions. Thus, this chapter consists of the following sections:

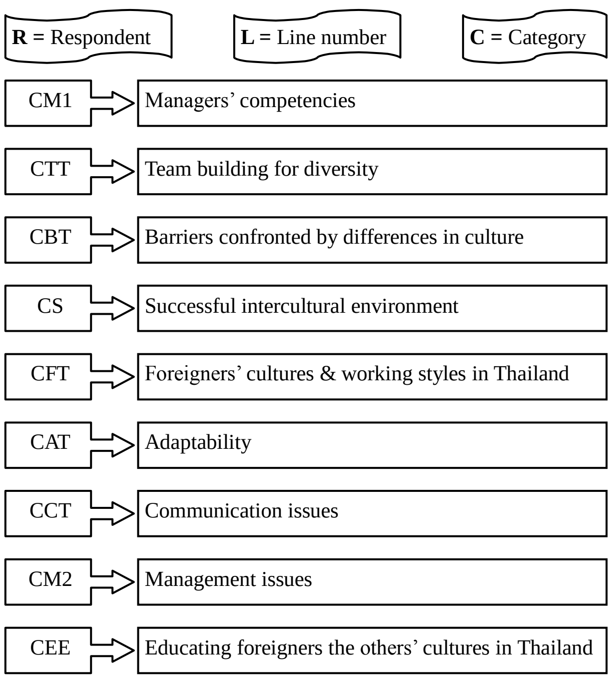

Figure 3.1 *Sequence of Answering the Research Questions.*

3.1 Managers' Competencies (CM1)

When asked the participants of this study, about the managers' competencies, and the most important competencies in intercultural environments, it was found that there was a consensus or kind of agreement around some specific competencies. For instance, open minded managers, worldwide vision, accept others' thinking or opinions, specialists in their work, follow up with the employees, knowledge in psychology, leadership skills, human resource concepts particularly human resources development, background of their employees as well as their organizations, management skills, and motivate the others. Thus, R2, R3, R7 showed all the competencies mentioned above, as follows:

I think the competencies required for our managers must be a lot because they are expected to drive our organizations successfully. For example, a manager should have an open mind, worldwide vision, accept others' thinking or opinions and not follow the Japanese culture which says "Boss is Boss" with people in Thailand (R2, L.22-28, CM1).

Moreover, I believe that managers, who can successfully lead an organization, should be specialists in their work. In addition, managers need to follow everything with their employees, and not just ordering them to perform their tasks. Another important thing is to know the level of all managers. Managers should know how to control their subordinates, have some knowledge about psychology, and to know how to apply this knowledge at work in order to know how to deal with others, and to know how to plan for work effectively (R2, L. 36-45, CM1).

The most important competencies are leadership skills and HR managers should have great knowledge in human resources development (R2, L. 51-54, CM1).

Also, when I say leadership competencies, I think I am covering all competencies required because we can not specify which leadership style works best in all situations. So, generally speaking, any leader should have leadership competencies, in order to know how to lead and how to control and work effectively and efficiently with their subordinates. Also, leaders should be fully aware of their subordinates' backgrounds, and possess enough skills to lead others effectively (R2, L. 57-66, CM1).

Another important competence is management skills. If managers cannot manage the employees or they do not have leadership skills for managing others, they cannot control or drive their organizations and employees successfully. Another competence, is to be open minded. Managers should be open minded and accept others' opinions or others' points of view, as well as being ready to learn from others even if they are bosses. Another competence which is necessary for the manager, who provides intercultural consultancy services, is motivation. Managers should know how to urge their employees how to work effectively. Also, managers should have good arts of communication, as well as presentation skills, in order to communicate successfully with others. Lastly, I think managers should have good knowledge in their field, and no matter what their jobs are. If you have the name (leader) you should know all about your work, whether it is inside or outside your organization. For example, managers should know or catch up with new technologies, and attempt to become change agents and this is what I mean by having knowledge (R3, L. 29-49, CM1).

In my opinion, the most important competence for managers is adaptation (R3, L. 53-54, CM1). So, managers should adapt themselves to everyone's culture in the organization, whether with the top management or subordinates. Second, communication skills is another important competence for managers because it is a must to make everyone in the organization understands what you want them to do. Another important thing is leadership competence, as well as knowledge in psychology to motivate, support, promote and develop the employees' skills to make progress and grow their career path. All these competencies will drive any organization successfully (R3, L. 62- 72, CM1).

In my opinion, managers who provide intercultural consultancy services should have a worldwide vision, as well as great understanding of differences in cultures. Another very necessary requirement is language skills or communication skills; however, most mangers have no problems about that because they usually pass a TOFEL test and receive lots of training. Moreover, managers should understand and respect other people who have different points of view. Further, managers should be very knowledgeable and they should know how to express their ideas or information to their employees or subordinates to let them work effectively. Managers should know how to motivate and convince others, to work together effectively and reach the desired outcome. Managers should have enough knowledge and experience in several areas, such as finance, HR, purchasing, and manufacturing (R7, L. 9-28, CM1).

Managers should be determined before taking any decisions. Although, you cannot make all decisions right, most of your decisions should be convenient, at least 90% if not 100% of your decisions should be appropriate. Second, managers should have enough knowledge and a positive attitude. Third, managers should know how to present their work to the top management to let them know how their businesses are going on (R7, L. 32-43, CM1).

However, other participants, R4, R5 added some necessary competencies, such as high conflict management, working duration with foreigners, foreign language competence, problem solving, non-ethnocentric attitude, eager to learn others' cultures, cultural knowledge, and adaptability. Accordingly, they expressed their ideas, as follows:

In my opinion, there are many competencies required for the manager who provides intercultural consultancy services. For example, they should have strong leadership skills, control and manage conflicts effectively; they should have a lot of experience in working with foreigners, or experience in working overseas, and lastly they should have strong communication skills (R4, L.8-14, CM1).

The most needed competencies are strong leadership, high conflict management, duration of working with people from different cultures or in an intercultural environment, foreign language competence, as well as communication competence (R4, L. 18-23, CM1).

You should train everyone how to respect the others' opinions; you should learn how to listen carefully. As such, everyone can express their opinions; know how to solve problems among themselves, in order to drive the organization successfully (R4, L. 41-45, CM1).

Cultural knowledge of different countries, non-ethnocentric attitude to respect differences among people, eager to learn new cultures, and look for its strengths and weaknesses. These competencies are fundamental for improvement, and for developing consultancy services among people from different cultures. The ability to communicate in different styles for each culture. So, the manager should know how to make people communicate effectively with each other. For example, the manager should communicate openly, concisely, and frankly with westerns. On the other hand, westerners should communicate with Asians in a systematic style, full of information, save face, etc. Moreover, the manager should know how to convince people from different cultures how to get a better understanding of others' cultures. For example, foreign managers may have questions about Thai bureaucracy's red-tape. So, the Thai manager should have effective communication skills to explain the Thai's culture and working style, in order to enhance a better understanding among them (R5, L. 8-27, CM1).

We should have the ability to adapt ourselves to accept different cultures and traditions. The manager should adapt the strengths of each culture, in order to create core values for the organization effectively. Also, the ability to communicate with other people by their native language, if it is possible. If the Thai manager can speak to those who are from different cultures by their own language, it might help a lot. It can also show our acceptance of their cultures. Management skills refer to basic abilities to manage overall consultancy services, including planning, budgeting, reporting, organizing, staffing, etc (R5, L. 28-40, CM1).

Cultural knowledge, communication, and adaptability, are the most needed competencies for the manager who provides intercultural consultancy services (R5, L. 44, CM1).

Speaking of some different competencies considered influential for managers in international settings: a specific plan for each employee, future plans, fair, neutral, and support. R6 formulated these competencies by the following:

Leaders should not only assign their subordinates to perform their roles, but also they should follow them and emphasize what has been discussed, in order to make them accomplish their work effectively (R6, L. 83-86, CM1).

I should have a road map for each employee. Second, I should know what they will be doing for the next year. Third, I should know about their career path, and lastly I should know how they can develop their career paths (R6, L. 203-207, CM1).

Another thing the leader should know is, strengths and weaknesses of both the organization and the employees. Meanwhile, leaders should be fair and neutral, in order to support and suggest everyone how to work effectively (R6, L. 217-221, CM1).

Additionally, one of the participants stressed the need for maturity, coaching skills, acting as a teacher for the employees, responsibility, innovation, sincerity, rewards, and good relationships with others. Hence, R8 illustrated this by these words:

I would like to talk about maturity. I mean by maturity, how much experience do you have? How long have you been working? How can you adapt yourself? How about your coaching skills? How can you motivate other people? How can you make a plan? How can you follow up with your employees? In addition, you should be a teacherfor your employees or your subordinates (R8, L. 30-39, CM1).

The most needed competencies are: good attitudes and the ability to innovate. Also, responsibility is very important because sometimes the management has to work over time. Moreover, good relationships with others, coaching, planning, and seeking knowledge are important competencies as well. Finally, communication skills are another important competence, because managers should be specialists in how to present their work. Thus, managers' skills in English should be good enough (R8, L. 53-64, CM1).

As a leader, you must be sincere and never lie to your employees, whether in good or bad situations. So, the employees should know how it is going on in their organization, in order to feel that they are important for their organization. As a leader, you are expected to motivate and reward everyone (R8, L.168-173, CM1).

R9, added to the knowledge the following comment:

Managers should have standards for everything to gain their subordinates' trust, and from my point of view, this is the most needed competence for managing in an intercultural environment (R9, L. 38-41, CM1).

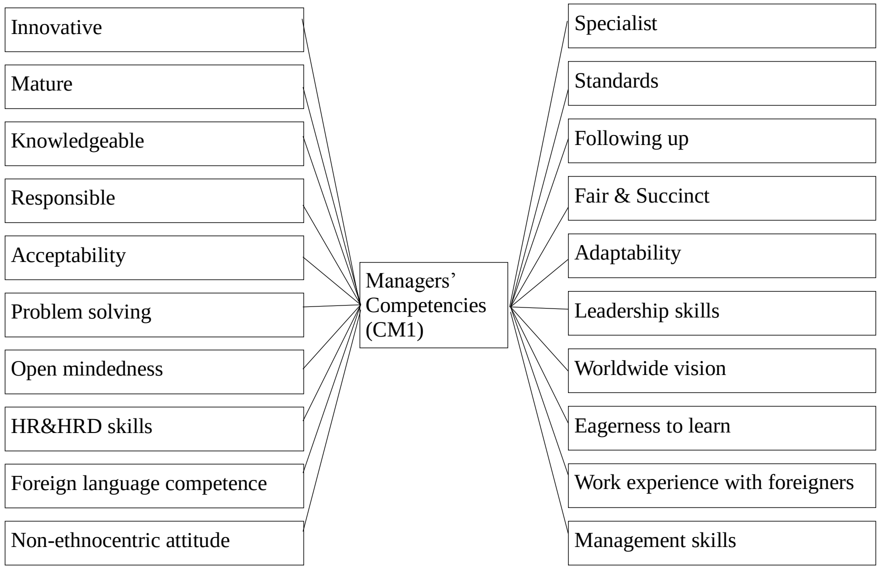

Figure 3.2 *Managers' competencies.*

3.2 Team Building for Diversity (CT)

In this section, the participants of this study emphasized a number of factors needed for allowing diversity to work effectively or building intercultural teamwork. These factors are: listening to others, respecting each other, open mindedness, accepting ideas from others, seeking opinions, meeting each other in the middle, working in groups, understanding the others' cultures, activities, good relationship with others, walking rally, team building, harmony, following the rules, brainstorming, and mixing the employees' needs and the organization's needs. As such, R1, and R3 described this, as follows:

Everyone should listen carefully to the others. No matter what we are talking about, we should listen, and pay respect to the others (R1, L40-43, CT).

I think if we want to make Thais and foreigners work together very well, everyone should be open-minded, accept ideas from each other, and not just take and give orders. Everyone should ask for others' opinions (R1, L90-93, CT).

The main point is how to let Thais and foreigners meet each other in the middle. We let everybody works in groups. I mean, we always divide foreigners and Thais, and have them work together in one group, in order to let them know each other very well. After training, both can work together in the right direction, and respond to the company's policies (R1, L150-155, CT).

In my opinion, the way to make diversity works well, is to allow all employees to have activities together. In my organization, we always let the Thais and Koreans have activities in any Thai festival, such as the Songkran festival. Moreover, design training courses, like a walking rally and team building by taking all employees and all management from all levels, and train them how to work as a team. As a result, everyone will have good relationships with others and be ready to cooperate with others. (R3, L.75-84, CT).

Another thing we do to build group cohesion, is that we always encourage Thais and foreigners to work in harmony and be neutral, no matter if you are a boss or a subordinate. Also, when we come to work, we have to wear a uniform, and we cannot smoke inside the building. So, everyone must follow our rules and regulations (R3, L. 187-199, CT).

We have to brainstorm to know our employees' needs. Then, we can look for the core values of the organization or the organization's needs. For instance, this year, our organization's needs might be a new innovation, and for the next year, it is may be about cost saving. Then, we will mix the employees' needs and our organization's needs, in order to design some training courses, which suit all the employees. (R3, L. 261-270, CT).

Moreover, designing training courses, empowerment, cooperation, learning other languages or other cultures, building a strong teamwork, cross-cultural team projects, selecting the employees' needs, empathy and sympathy, educating all employees, creating values of respect, accepting each other, applying team building activities, multimedia programs, outing trips, cultural exchanges, and formal business language are necessary for building intercultural teams, or allowing diversity to work effectively, as R4, and R5 expressed their opinions:

In my opinion, we should first design training courses for all employees, in order to learn or understand the organization's culture. Second, empower the employees to work as a team, and cooperate either in or out of each department, so that they know how to learn other languages and other cultures by OJT programs (On-the-Job-Training). Moreover, to allow diversity to work effectively, in my opinion, it is very necessary to build a strong teamwork by empowerment (R4, L. 26-34, CT).

To build group cohesion in an intercultural team, we should have cross-cultural team projects to work together effectively, to know and understand each other in order to drive our organization successfully (R4, L. 57-60, CT).

In my opinion, to design training courses that can be suitable for different cultures, we should identify our employees' needs, before we can provide any kind of training course, in order to make the training course useful for all of them (R4, L. 82-85, CT).

I think you should know that both Thais and foreigners should have empathy and sympathy toward each other, in order to work together effectively (R4, L.88-90, CT).

Educate all employees about how to work with people from different cultures, organize activities to harmonize cultures, and create values of respect and acceptance for each other to work together. We can apply team-building activities to harmonize different cultures. Provide multimedia or e-learning programs which suit individuals' needs. Organize outing trips to learn local ways of living and cultures by groups, and let the employees exchange cultures' practices with each other. For example, Koreans invite the Thais to try eating Korean food and vice versa. Choose formal business language, such as English to communicate at work (R5, L. 128-138, CT).

Further, consultations from others, sharing knowledge, avoiding problems, facing problems, talking reasonably, looking for the organization's targets, convincing the employees, training about people's lives, behavior, work styles, giving reasons before doing things, matching others' opinions with your opinion, love and loyalty to the place, family days, clear goals, English courses, and fostering the employees' skills were R7, R8, and R9 points of view:

In my company, we have a small association for each activity (e.g. Golf association) we give the opportunity to anyone who is interested in becoming a member, to play golf together after work or on the weekends. Also, we have a bowling association, and the aim from these associations, is to make the members close to each other. To allow diversity to work effectively, everybody needs some consultations because everyone has different knowledge and specialized in different areas. Thus, when everybody shares knowledge with other people, we can do a very good job (R7, L. 57-75, CT).

As a leader, you should also try to make them avoid some problems. If there is nothing serious "just let it go", but if they cannot let it go, let them face the problem and talk reasonably together. Another important point to build a group cohesion, is that you should look for the organization's targets or aims, and try to convince your employees to work together to reach the targets (R7, L. 111-124, CT).

Also, I used to design training courses that discuss people's lives in each country, people's behavior, and people's work styles in every country (R7, L.195-197, CT).

I can tell you that, being reasonable can make Thais and Koreans work effectively. In other words, we should have reasons before doing anything, and we should solve our problems together. Accordingly, if you are a leader, and you want your subordinates to do something, you should give them reasons for why they have to do this (R8, L. 91-109, CT).

The most important thing is to make everyone love the organization and feel loyal towards the organization, because if the employees do not love and feel loyal to their organizations, it is impossible to have group cohesion or teamwork. Also, if everyone feels loyal to the organization, this will make them work together on one target (R8, L.154-160, CT).

We have a family day to let everyone brings their families, and we have committees to create some activities for us, to make everyone love the organization and feel loyal (R8, l. 174-183, CT).

If you want to train some people from different backgrounds, first, you should have a clear goal. Second, you should provide English courses to let everyone know how to communicate with other people. Moreover, you should nurture your employees to understand how to reach the outcome; which you may receive from the headquarters Meanwhile, you should develop your employees' skills about the organization's mission, vision, and strategies to have them work together in the right direction (R8, L. 210-218, CT).

Furthermore, leaders should motivate their employees to work together as a teamwork, discuss with them about what has been done, guide them, and then make the group submit their report together. Consequently, everyone will feel close to others and work together cohesively (R9, L. 78- 95, CT).

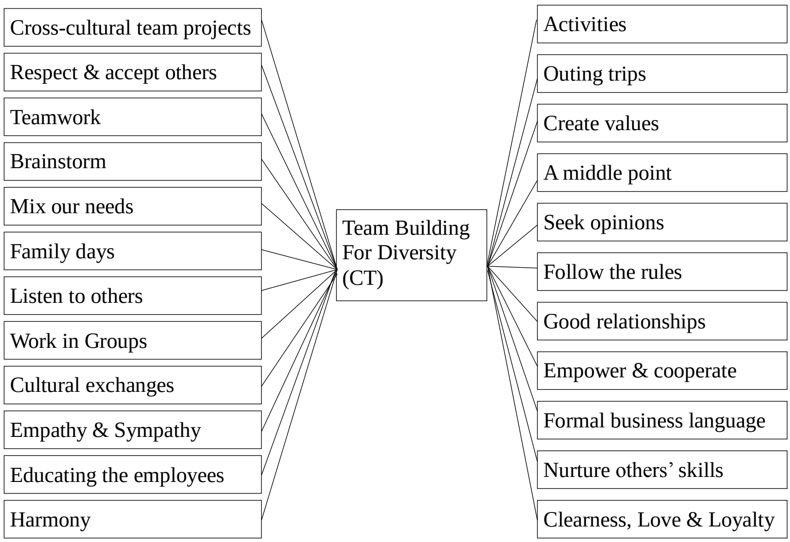

Figure 3.3 *Team Building for Diversity.*

3.3 Barriers Confronted by Differences in Culture (CB)

Speaking of some barriers confronted by differences in culture: disrespect others' ideas, inequality, some parties cannot take decisions, change positions without looking at people's abilities or skills, nepotism, the difficulty to encourage people to be in harmony, feelings of biases, foreigners' behavior with the Thais at work, and dealing with activities as duties, rather than establishing good relationships with others. Thus, R1, elaborated on this issue, as follows:

Some foreigners who came to work in our company, I mean he or she came from the headquarters, always feel proud of themselves and they never respect any idea from others (R1, L.43-48, CB).

In our company now, the Japanese have more authority than the Thais. When we make decisions, the Thais cannot decide anything. I mean, everything must be approved by the Japanese only (R1, L.75-79, CB).

Sometimes, when the top management wants to move someone to another department, they will do it without looking at his or her abilities. Also, some people did not come to work here by recruitment, and this makes people disrespect each other or have a lot of conflicts. So, this might not make good relationships among people, and it might make our company have some major weaknesses (R1, L. 81-87, CB).

It is difficult to make Thais and foreigners meet each other in the middle because of our different cultures (R1, L. 98-99, CB).

I do not think that our environment or our company succeeded in making people from different cultures work together effectively. We just work together, but if you ask about our feelings, we are not working well together. We have some conflicts and we cannot talk, we cannot say what we want and we cannot understand each other. So, I cannot say to you the success factors for an intercultural work environment (R1, L. 110-117, CB).

The problem is coming from foreigners, because they always do what they want without asking anyone for ideas or opinions (R1, L.121-127, CB).

Foreigners are not open-minded with the Thais, and they never say what they want the Thais to do. It seems like foreigners are thinking that it is only them, who have the authority to do everything in the company without the Thais' presence. Foreigners, in my company just command everyone, but never tell us about the outcomes and what we will get from their orders. Foreigners do not like to give any suggestions to the Thais; never ask for the Thais' opinions. Foreigners do not want to empower or give authorities to the Thais to make any decision. There are lots of conflicts between the top management, who are foreigners and Thais in my workplace (R1, L.127-138, CB).

We do a lot of activities but it does not work out because foreigners are thinking that these activities are just duties, and do not have good relationships with each other. So, you know? Even if you have million activities or a lot of training courses, but you do not have an open-mind, then all of these activities will be useless (R1, L. 140-145, CB).

Following this line of thought, R2 made a detailed description and explanation on what they are going through in their organization: The Japanese have more chances than the Thais, because the Japanese are the owners of our organization. As such, they let the Japanese come and control the Thais in our organization, which is a big problem (R2, L. 28-34, CB).

Also, the Japanese never accept to be less than the Thais at work. Moreover, my boss is Japanese, and when he gets upset or mad at something, he used to kick everything in front of him. So, Japanese should learn about the Thais' culture because this is not the Thais' behavior (R2, L. 77-84, CB).

Furthermore, we feel serious with the Japanese bosses because they like to do things straightforward, according to their rules and regulations. However, they should think that the environment in Thailand, is not the same as Japan (R2, L. 162-166, CB).

Foreigners' discipline in my company is considered a barrier. They do not look for the truth, and they are not reasonable. Foreigners manage our organization by their own system. For example, in Japan, they have steps or rules for salary systems, but in Thailand we do not have the same system. In other words, they try to impose their systems in our organization (R2, L. 205-211, CB).

Moreover, you know? What I suffer from, is the Japanese system. They let us (Thais) follow a system called “SOP”, these letters stand for (Standard Operating Procedures). In my opinion, this system blocks our thinking because we must follow “SOP” on everything, we cannot create and we cannot think out of this “SOP”. I know that it is a wonderful system, because it is a standardized system, but it is not suitable for the Thais because the Thais do not like to be controlled. The Japanese want the Thais just to follow what is written in their rules, and make the Thais work like robots (R2, L. 227-239, CB).

The problem is when you work for an organization, which is not sincere with the employees; this might be a big problem. For example, when you are working up to 50, they might ask you to take an early retirement because they do not want to pay a big salary for elderly Thais. Another thing is considered a barrier, you know, now we get an order from Japan to let our organization around the world follow the CSR system. We have problems with labors. You know? It is because our managing director does not listen to anyone, he always thinks by himself, and when I ask for the reason, he cannot answer me. This makes many problems in our company. Also, what I see is that the Japanese like to appear wonderful, and any mistake they hide it. It is not only for not making people see them bad, but also for not making the headquarters know anything bad about them. This is a very bad habit in our top management. You know? When I first came to work in this company, I appreciated the Japanese, but when I worked with them for 12 years, I found that they are not clear. I’m really sad to know this (R2, L. 249-271, CB).

Also, to be honest with you, few Japanese receive training courses because they think that it is unnecessary for them, they think that they know more than the Thais. Moreover, I used to provide training courses, which is mixed for the Thais and Japanese and it is about how to have Quality Control (QC). Alongside, I designed for them a walking Rally program, and what I wanted from them was to have good relationship with each other, but I did not succeed. The Japanese show up for 5-10 minutes, and then they leave. They did not appreciate what I did; they were laughing and looking at me and the Thais, as silly people without seeing the output or the result from this training (R2, L. 279-289, CB).

Moreover, I want to say to you, that when we have a meeting, if the managing director orders something; then, someone argues or discusses with him some opinions, the MD thinks that the one who is talking disobeys him. So, this is not the right way to build an intercultural team. You should not think that “Boss is Boss”. The Japanese do not accept working as a team, and they just follow their bosses, but never accept anything from the Thais. This behavior makes us always have problems in our organization (R2, L. 306-315, CB).

Other participants (R3, R4, and R7) had similar opinions about the barriers mentioned above, such as lack of adaptation, misunderstandings, different attitudes, language barrier, mystery, unfamiliarity, different points of view and working styles. They commented that:

Sometimes, we have skilled managers who have a lot of experience, but they do not know how to adapt themselves with people from different cultures. They do not know how to adapt themselves with their colleagues and co-workers (R3, L. 58-61, CB).

The Thais when they smile, sometimes makes foreigners feel that we look down at them. Also, different attitudes are another barrier. Thais and foreigners always have different attitudes. The Thais do not have enough basic English skills. So, we always have problems whenever we talk to foreigners; even though, the company provides English courses and have TOEIC or TOFEL tests. However, it is not enough; sometimes we have problems when we communicate with foreigners (R3, L. 229- 242, CB).

Furthermore, mystery is another big barrier. Sometimes, the company cannot announce some things for not making the employees know the true situation. Lastly, differences in cultures might be a barrier too, if the Thais did not get familiar with Koreans or other cultures, or Koreans did not get familiar with the Thais' culture. Also, different points of view and different working styles between Thais and Koreans or other cultures might be a problem when we work together (R3, L. 242-258, CB).

The barriers we face by differences in culture in international companies, are: the language barrier or communication skills, the different ways of thinking between Thais and foreigners, and differences in culture might produce a lot of misunderstandings in all processes at work (R4, L. 74-79, CB).

As I mentioned earlier, the good thing when working with people from different cultures is that we try to sympathize with and understand each other, but if we cannot, then this will be a big problem. We cannot work together without understanding each other (R7, L. 153-157, CB).

When I sit and talk to a Korean suddenly, he/she puts their feet on the table, and the Thais cannot accept this behavior. The Thais think that this is impolite, but it is a normal behavior for Koreans. You know? If the Thai and the foreigner are in the same level, it might not be a big problem, because we can talk or suggest each other what we can do and what we cannot do. Nevertheless, if the Thai is talking to someone in the top management, it will be a big problem, because the Koreans will not listen to the Thais, especially if the Korean's behavior is bossy (R7, L. 158-167, CB).

Additionally, I think the communication style might be another barrier because sometimes the top management likes to use one way communication or they like to order others more than listening to them. Lastly, the language competence might be a barrier, because most employees cannot participate with foreigners in English (R7, L. 171-179, CB).

Additionally, ethnocentric attitudes of some expatriates, some historical events, conflicts among people, an unclear agenda, irresponsibility, and no integrity, made the R5, R8, R9 confirmed that:

Ethnocentric attitudes of some expatriates are big barriers. Western people usually look down at the Asians, and do not believe in Asian people working styles. They try to work by their own style and let the Thais just follow them. Historically, Koreans might not have positive feelings with the Japanese. Or Thai people might not have good feelings with the Burmese because of some historical backgrounds. However, these feelings may be less intense at present (R5, L.117-125, CB).

The barriers confronted by differences in culture involve lack of understanding others because if people work together and never understand each other, this will make many problems. From my experience, when I was working with the Japanese, I found that they do not listen to anyone, they are very confident upon themselves, and always think that they are right, and other people are wrong. The Japanese like to command and let the Thais follow them. As a result, we have some conflicts, and if these conflicts escalate, it will be a big problem (R8, L. 197-207, CB).

Some managers make their subordinates feel lost or confused. For example, yesterday the manager might say something, and today another thing different from what has been discussed (R9, L. 35-38, CB).

I think differences in culture could make the employees misunderstand each other. For instance, as I mentioned earlier, Koreans always like to work very fast because of their nature, but the Thais like to work slowly, smoothly and very flexible, and this might produce some problems. Moreover, people's behavior might be a barrier because someone might be irresponsible at his or her work, and others like to throw their mistakes on other people's shoulders. For example, if something wrong happened at work, the one who is in charge might say that, "it is not my mistake" I have gotten this from someone else. So, these kinds of problems you might face when you work with people from different cultures. Furthermore, from my experience, I can tell you that when I was working with Europeans, I felt that they always look down at Asian people, and this is not only the Europeans' behavior, but also the Thais do the same with Vietnamese and Malays (R9, L. 108-124, CB).

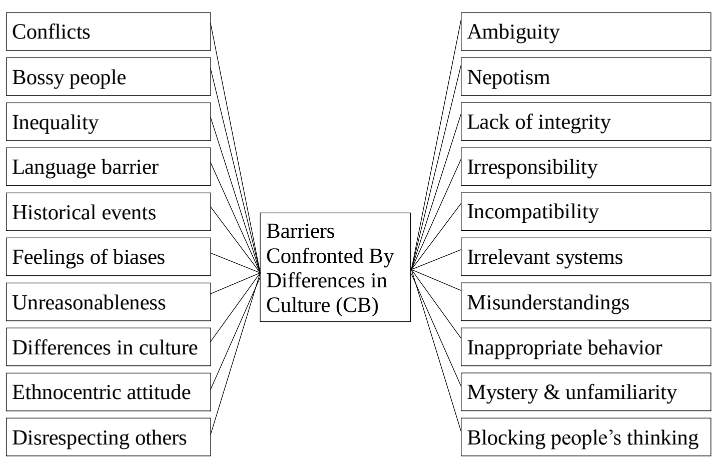

Figure 3.4 *Barriers Confronted by Differences in Culture.*

3.4 Successful Intercultural Environment (CS)

Moving to the other side in this study, which is concerned with successful intercultural environments, R7, R8 addressed the following: technology from others, knowledge, adaptation, foreign investments, good materials at low costs, people from different countries, enjoy working with foreigners, stable financial status, support from the headquarters, innovations, trust, support both parties, looks global, adopt good behavior from other people, discuss and solve problems together, and exchange or share experiences. Thus, R7, R8 explicitly described this issue, as follows:

In my organization, we work with Koreans, we always learn from them about technology because they have knowledge in technology more than the Thais. For example, they have good knowledge about air-conditioning, motors, and some parts of the cars, so we can obtain a lot of knowledge from them. Moreover, the good thing we can try to do in an intercultural environment, is to make the employees know how to adapt themselves, and this can strengthen our organization. Thus, when people can adapt themselves, this will make them work together well and the result is the success and the strength of the organization (R7, 78-91, CS).

Furthermore, to be honest with you, there is something very important by valuing diversity, which is the foreign investment in my company. We get a lot of capital or investments from the Koreans, because they are a big partner. Koreans invest a lot of money in our company, which makes our organization stronger than other companies that have management from only one country or nationality. Lastly, what I found when working with diversity, is that our organization can achieve low costs because we know how to get cheap materials through some people from different countries. These people could bring us good materials, and cheap at the same time because in our country the materials we need might be more expensive than in other countries. Also, sometimes we can negotiate with people, who are in charge in other countries because we have some people from their countries working with us (R7, L. 91-108, CS).

The success factors for an intercultural work environment in my opinion, is that we can gain a lot of knowledge about people from different cultures, and we can gain a lot of benefits from the others' abilities to make our organization succeed more and more. Moreover, we can get a lot of technology from other countries, which can be a success factor for our organization because each country has its own advantages or special abilities. So, we can mix the special things from other countries and try to work on it in our organization to be successful. Further, besides the benefits we can get from foreigners at work, we always enjoy working with foreigners because of their different styles at work and their different characters. Another success factor, is that we feel comfortable due to our stable financial status. We do not fear from being fired suddenly or taking an order to quit because we have a lot of investments and support from the headquarters, which is in another country. So, we are happy to work in our company because we do not fear from anything (R7, 127-145, CS).

Furthermore, we get a lot of innovation from the countries which invest with us. For example, when our company uses a new machine to manufacture some products, we can use a new technology, which helps us becoming more productive (R7, L. 146-150, CS).

Trust each other, is a good thing to strengthen an organization, which means that leaders and employees should be confident and trust each other. Also, the organization should support both parties, Thai and foreign leaders, and subordinates. For instance, leaders can control or guide or suggest the subordinates on how to work in the right direction, in order to let the subordinates trust their leaders' skills or abilities. Meanwhile, the subordinates or the employees should know how to work well and submit their work on time, in order to make their leaders pleased and trust them. Another point, I think when you are working in an international organization, and have people from different countries working with you, this can make the image of your company looks good, and global in your customers and suppliers' eyes. Moreover, when you have people from different countries working with you, who have more knowledge than you about technology, they can give you a lot of benefits which might strengthen your organization. Further, we can learn from people's experiences because I believe that the one who is coming to our country to work, he/she must have experience, and know how to innovate, identify problems, and know how to solve them. However, we can learn from each other, both Thais and foreigners (R8, L.112-135, CS).

Other benefits from working with people from different cultures that could strengthen our organization, are some foreigners' cultures or behavior (R8, L. 135-138, CS).

The Thais might change some behavior and take some good things from other people. For example, we can learn from foreigners how to commit to do things or how to be responsible in doing things. You know? When you have a problem at work, you should not just go to your leader, unless you can offer a solution to the problem. Thus, both leaders and subordinates could discuss and solve problems together. Therefore, I can tell you that we can get some good things or some methods from foreigners, and when the Thais apply it, then it will make us work well together and drive our organization successfully (R8, L.140-151, CS).

Lastly, we can exchange or share our experiences together, with the aim of developing ourselves, and our organizations (R8, L. 192-194, CS).

Moreover, other participants commented on some factors; which exist in a successful intercultural environment, such as welfare, being reasonable, good discipline, foreigners' systems at work, foreign stakeholders, fairness and clearness, good relationships among people, promotions and rewards, brainstorming sessions, unity and harmony, perceiving the same target, responding to the employees' needs, sustainable development, and learning about people from different countries. Accordingly, R2, R3, R9 added more to the issue, as follows:

We learnt about the quality control system (QC) in our organization. As a result, all of us in the organization learnt from this system how to analyze any problem we might face. Another system is called Kaizen, is a wonderful system for any organization. Also, some Japanese have great behavior, such as alertness. The Japanese are never quiet, they are always alert on everything. I will give you an example, if today they do something good, tomorrow they will make it better and better. They will not stop developing themselves, and this is perhaps the best thing about them in my opinion. When we adopt this behavior from the Japanese, it will help us a lot in our organization (R2, L.114-125, CS).

Our organization provides high salaries for everyone, even the Thais, they get high salaries compared to salaries in other companies, and I am sure about that. I will tell you about the salary system in my organization. There is a difference between salary and welfare. Besides the salary, they will look at your position, rent, whether you are working hard or not, lunch, night shifts, and bonuses (R2, L. 127-133, CS).

The success factors for an intercultural environment are, being reasonable, I mean not only following rules and regulations, but also everything should be reasonable. Another thing which might be good for an intercultural work environment is the good discipline from foreigners. Good discipline from foreigners might be one of the good things we can get from them (R2, L. 193-200, CS).

Another thing can strengthen our organization, is the Korean's system at work. Speaking of the Korean's system, I can say that they have a strong system; they have steps for every task or practice (R3, L. 129-132, CS).

So, when the Thais work by the Korean's system, we have to plan before working with them, and then we can follow the steps, which can make all of us work systematically, as well as following the regulations (R3, L. 135-137, CS).

Furthermore, we get a lot of innovation from the Koreans, especially in information technology. Since we first started to run our business, we have gotten many nationalities to be our stakeholders, such as Americans, Koreans, and Thais. Americans brought the technology and machines from their country, and use it in our company. We have gotten a lot of knowledge from them, and we always say that the Thais are very enduring. So, when we experience or deal with a strong technology, this can strengthen our organization (R3, L. 137-148, CS).

Another thing can strengthen our organization is to be fair and clear on everything. You know? If we are working with only one nationality, sometimes people will be partial, unfair, and unclear. For example, when we have an evaluation, we have an indicator to be like a tool for us. By following this way, the employees feel comfortable that they can be treated fairly. Meanwhile, the relationship between the employer and the employee, such as rights and duties are very necessary. We do not need a labor union. So, as much as we work hard, and do a good job, the company will promote us, and give more rewards. Finally, we use the e-learning system, in order to develop our employees' skills. We have started to know about this system from the headquarters, and we have used an effective system to manage all our subsidiaries all over the world. We bring the top management from each branch, to brainstorm; and then, we choose the best ideas or the best model to follow it (R3, L. 148-166, CS).

In my opinion, the success factors in an intercultural environment, is unity and harmony. We should not make any difference between the Thais and the foreigners. We should be one hand. We should work together in harmony, accept each other, and listen to all opinions. (R3, L. 202-208, CS).

Other success factors in my opinion, involve learning about differences between Thais and foreigners; then, we can adopt the good things from others. For example, the Thais might be more diligent than Koreans, and Koreans might have good knowledge about technology more than the Thais. So, we can consider this to be the organization's culture, and it might be a standard to perform our roles effectively. Furthermore, our organization always allows the employees see the same target (mission and vision). Thus, the strategy to respond to the employees' needs, is the key for our success. Finally, sustainable development is one of the success factors in any intercultural environment (R3, L 211-223, CS).

I think people who come from different cultures and work with us, especially those who have good characters and special abilities might add value to our organizations. I m saying so, because each country has its own strengths and weaknesses, so we can benefit from the good things to strengthen our organizations (R9, L. 58-64, CS).

Meanwhile, we can get a great amount of knowledge about people from different countries, as well as learn about different points of view (R9, L. 103-105, CS).

Alongside, one of the participants of this study stressed one more important thing that need to be considered in an intercultural environment. Hence, R5 noticed that:

The company should respect and accept different cultures. Our company allows the expatriates to participate or to do activities, according to their beliefs and cultures (R5, L. 76-78, CS).

Good attitudes to accept different cultures, respect for each other, and the company's strategies to boost these values in reality, can produce a successful intercultural environment (R5, L. 112-114, CS).

Accept differences among people and respect each other are the key points to success (R5, L. 141-142, CS).

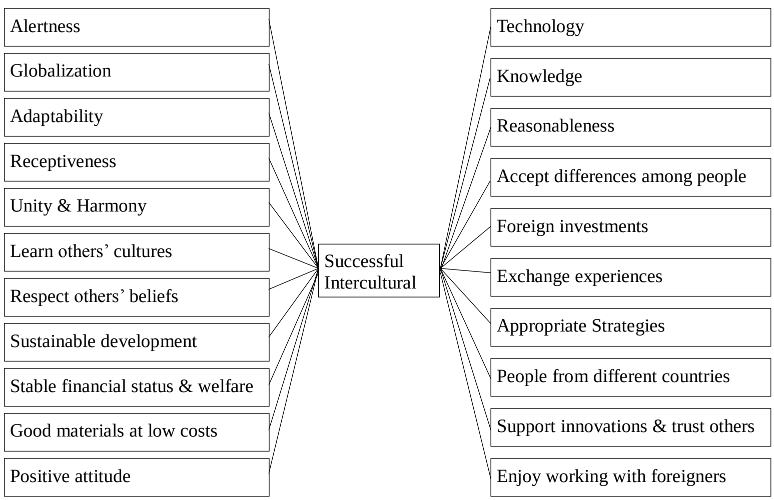

Figure 3.5 *Successful Intercultural Environments.*

3.5 Foreigners' Cultures and Working Styles in Thailand (CF)

In this section, the author attempted to understand and to learn from the participants of this study, some of the foreigners' cultures and working styles. Hence, R2 corroborated the R8 statement, with a succinct description of the Japanese behavior or working style in Thailand, and Koreans' working style versus the Thais' working style or behavior. Accordingly, R2, R8 expressed their concerns, as follows:

Speaking of the Japanese culture, in my opinion, they just listen and perceive any order or command from their bosses only. In other words, when a Japanese leader orders something, the employee just follows and implements what he/she was told immediately. Thus, it seems like that the employees should block their thinking to pay respect to their bosses (R2, L. 9-14, CF).

The Japanese always look down at the Thais, they consider that westerners are the first level, and the second level is the Japanese. This is may be a biased opinion, but you can ask other people and you might get the same perception (R2, L. 315-320, CF).

I want to say to all the Thais to struggle and make foreigners accept us more than at present. I want to say to all the Thais to develop themselves for not making others think that we are lower than them. But you know? Nowadays, the Thais work on the sufficient economy, which makes us peaceful, and not competitive. We just work to take salaries, we are not thinking about our future, so how can we survive? Therefore, I always say that we need Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects (R2, L. 321-333, CF).

I would like to tell you about some issues from my experience. I worked with the Japanese a long time ago, but now I'm working with Koreans. Speaking of the Japanese, they always think that they are better than the Thais, and never accept that sometimes the Thais are better than them, and they never listen to others. Speaking of Koreans, they were also thinking like Japanese. However, when Koreans first came to work with us, they were open-minded more than the Japanese. So, Koreans accepted and understood the Thais' abilities at work, and as a result, they can let the Thais manage the organization and they are just considered as specialists or consultants (R8, L. 80-91, CF).

Koreans always come to work on time, and this is not the Thais behavior, because the Thais always come to work too late (R8, L.138-140, CF).

Furthermore, R1, R3, R5 commented that:

The Thais always ask for opinions before doing anything because of “Krang-Jai” concept (R1, L. 120-121, CF).

On the other hand, Koreans when they are talking, they talk very loudly but the Thais do not like to talk loudly. As a result, when we see Koreans talk loudly, we might think that they are aggressive or they are not pleased from something. Thus, we should know and understand that this is a normal behavior for them (R3, L. 23-28, CF).

The Thais like everything smooth, quiet, and always smile (R3, L.228-229, CF).

In Korea’s culture, people perceive their families as the most important thing in life (R3, L. 99-100, CF).

You know? In Thailand, we always say that we work like “Cho-Cham-Yen-Cham” it means that the Thais are working slowly, and not enthusiastic (R3, L.133-135, CF).

However, Koreans’ working style is high level of responsibility, self-disciplined, thinking logically, and information-oriented support (R5, L. 94-96, CF).

Meanwhile, Thai people are kind, reciprocal, help each other, and care for others’ feelings (R5, L. 97-99, CF).

Additionally, R7, R9 added the following:

The Thais are always kind (Jai-dee) and Americans like to work with documents (R7, L. 198-199, CF).

When you work in an international organization, like a Korean one, you should respect others. You know? In the Thais' culture, we are always modest with elderly people. However, in the Korean's culture, it is a must to do more than the Thais, because their culture is very strict in this point. I mean, Koreans believe and respect seniority more than the Thais. Moreover, when you work with Americans, you should have effective presentation skills. You should know how to present your work effectively because Americans always consider this skill very important at work (R7, L. 208-218, CF).

Koreans nature or work style is fast, so we can let the Koreans work in the departments, which always need work to be done efficiently. On the other hand, the Thais' nature or work style is slow, smooth, and cautious, so we can let the Thais work in the departments which always need people to be very cautious, such as the finance department or the HR department (R9, L.67-73, CF).

If you want to work with Koreans, you should be careful about your behavior. I mean you should be very polite with them because they are very conservative. For example, if you finish your work, you cannot go back home unless your boss goes first, or if you are eating with your boss, and he/she did not stop eating, you cannot go before him/her. Speaking of the Europeans, I can tell you that they are not very serious about these issues, but they care more about work output. So, you have to work very hard with them (R9, L. 148-158, CF).

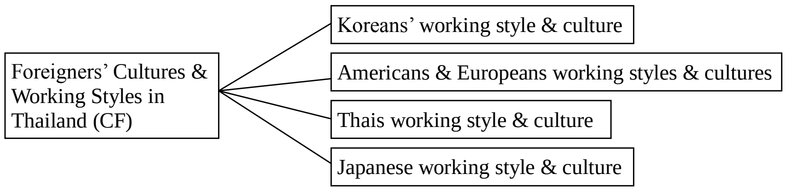

Figure 3.6 *Foreigners' Cultures & Working Styles in Thailand.*

3.6 Adaptability (CA)

The participants in this study emphasized another important factor in order to enhance individuals from different cultures, who work together in an organization. For instance, corporate social responsibility (CSR) projects, accepts different cultures and traditions, and adapts ourselves to others' cultures. Accordingly, R2, R5, R7 articulated their thoughts, as follows:

Most importantly, there is something called CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) it is a way to adapt yourself with people from different backgrounds. For example, when I went to Japan, I knew what people like and dislike, and after that I knew what I should and should not do, and adapted myself to the culture there (R2, L. 99-104, CA).

Adaptability refers to our ability to adapt ourselves to accept different cultures and traditions. The manager should adapt the strengths of each culture to create core values for the organization effectively (R5, L. 28-31, CA).

The good thing we can try to do in an intercultural environment, is to make the employees know how to adapt themselves, and this can strengthen our organization. Thus, when people adapt themselves, this will make them work together well and the result is the success and the strength of the organization (R7, L. 86-91, CA).

Similarly, R8, R9 commented that, learning about others' cultures, trying to understand the others, having good attitude toward others, smiling to everyone, and talking in a good way, are paramount.

When you go to work with foreigners, the most important thing is to learn about their cultures, try to understand them, and have good attitude towards everybody in the organization (R8, L. 221-224, CA).

I think if you want to work in an intercultural environment, you should always smile to everyone, and talk to everyone in a good way in the organization. I think, if you can do what I mentioned, you can work successfully in any environment. Another important thing, you must try to understand people, who are going to work with you (R9, L. 142-147, CA).

Furthermore, R3 confirmed that:

The first thing is that you should know how to adapt yourself. If you are very good at everything, and you cannot make good relationships with others, especially with people from different cultures, you will not be able to work with others effectively (R3, L. 8-12, CA).

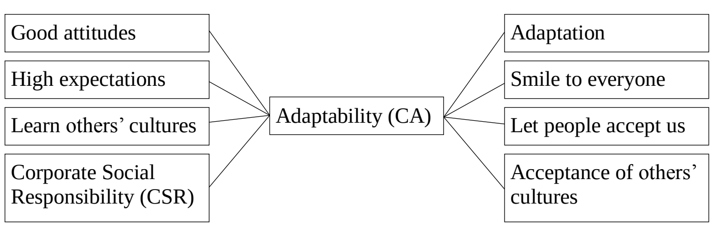

Figure 3.7 *Adaptability.*

If we work with people from different cultures, whether they are Thais or foreigners, we should learn about their backgrounds, and working styles. We should know how to adapt ourselves to work together effectively. We should know what the others expect from us; then, we should know how to develop our skills, in order to work with them effectively (R3, L. 273- 280, CA).

3.7 Communication Issues (CC)

Moving to another interesting issue, which is about communication issues, several answers were repeatedly mentioned by the participants, such as dealing with others as we wish to be treated, two-way communication, communication starts from the employee to the top management, talk straightforward and face to face, and the ability to communicate in different styles. So, R1, R5, expressed their concerns, as follows:

I think we should treat others as we wish to be treated. For instance, if we want others to listen for us, so we should listen for them, and if we want them to talk about what they want, so we should talk to them about what we want (R1, L. 53-57, CC).

We should have two-way communication; it is a must to have this communication style, and it is a must that the communication starts from the employee to the top management. In my company, most foreigners are in the top management. Therefore, in my opinion, Thais and foreigners must speak straightforward with each other and face to face, to know how to work together effectively and drive our company successfully together (R1, L. 61-69, CC).

The Thais always ask for opinions before doing anything because of "Krang-Jai" concept in the Thai's culture (R1, L. 120-121, CC).

Communication refers to the ability to communicate in different styles with each culture. So, the manager should help employees communicate effectively with each other. Additionally, the manager should communicate openly, concisely, and frankly with western people. On the other hand, westerners should communicate with Asian people in a systematic style, full of information, and save face (R5, L. 14-20, CC).

Moreover, R3, R6 expressed similar opinions of the significance of communication skills, as follows:

The language competence is an important thing because if you cannot communicate with other people in their language, you cannot understand them and they cannot understand you very clearly. We should speak the international language to make people understand each other when they cooperate together (R3, L. 12-17, CC).

Besides, body language and communication skills are also important because each nationality has its own culture (R3, L. 21-23, CC).

Another thing that makes diversity work very well, is to give the chance to everyone to communicate their opinions. In my company, you know? My boss (managing director) always comes to see the employees in each department. Every Friday, we have a meeting for the leaders of each department to share ideas, and talk about what has been accomplished during the week in each department, and if there are some problems, they seek opinions from everyone to find out solutions. Also, every Wednesday, we have a meeting for the foreman or leaders of each division in the manufacturing department and we let someone from the HR department come to talk about employee issues or any problems (R3, L. 84-97, CC).

Lastly, in my organization, we make diversity work well by developing the employees' language skills. We use English to communicate with each other, so either Koreans or Thais must know how to speak in English. Speaking of the Koreans, before they come to Thailand, they must pass an English test, and work in the headquarters in Japan for three years at least, in order to know how to communicate with others, to have experience, and to acquire management skills. Speaking of the Thais, we provide English courses to develop their English skills, and every year they should have a TOEIC score. We provide this test twice a year, and they should get at least 500 score (R3, L.102-113, CC).

However, R2 added to the perspective the following comment:

We have another activity to make the Thais and the Japanese work in a cohesive team; such as, communications' parties. Every four months, Thais and Japanese make a party and invite their leaders from each department to discuss different issues together (R2, L.151-156, CC).

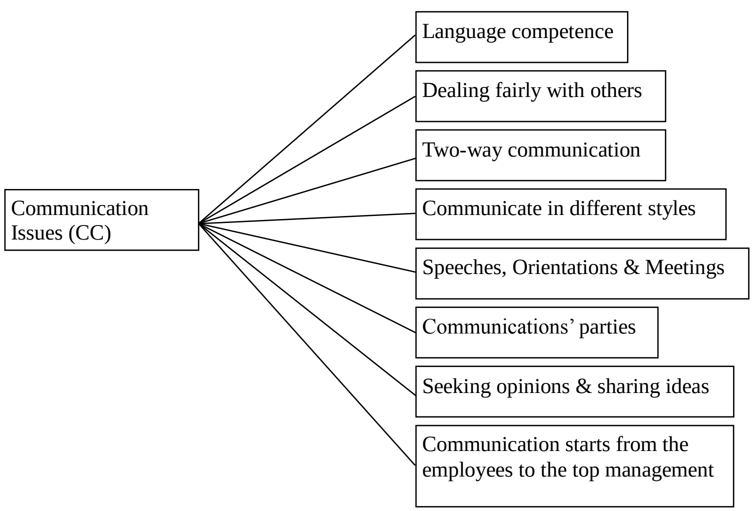

Figure 3.8 *Communication Issues.*

3.8 Management Issues (CM2)

The author found that there is an urgent need to explore management issues when interviewed the participants of this study, in order to notice the most possibilities of understanding the issue of intercultural environments. Therefore, R3, R6, R7 thoroughly formulated their opinions, as follows:

My boss is Korean. He came to Thailand ten years ago, worked as a staff member, and then he got a high position. This is the management style in the East. Do you know what I mean? (R3, L.55-57, CM2).

We invite the employees' families to join us in some activities because in the Koreans' culture, they see that the family is the most important thing. As such, when Koreans see that we care about them, we can make diversity work very well in our organization (R3, L. 97-101, CM2).

Furthermore, if the employees get more than 500 score in TOEIC, they get a reward from the management, which can make the employees develop and motivate themselves to work effectively (R3, L. 114-116, CM2).

We can learn a lot about other cultures; we can design training courses; and design a job description for each position. As a result, we can put the right one in the right place, or we can match the one who has abilities and competencies with the required job to manage our organization successfully (R3, L. 124-129, CM2).

Additionally, we provide orientations for the employees to learn more about their jobs, the nature of each culture, and to make them understand each other. So, no matter where you come from, or what religion you believe in. The company's rules or regulations must be fair for everyone to show how much the top management cares about their employees. For example, Koreans have a nation day, so the company gives the Koreans this day off. For the Thais, when they have any celebration, the company let the Thais off as well. As such, the employees feel pleased and equal, and none feels jealous from others, which make them work together effectively (R3, L. 169-180, CM2).

Moreover, we record everyone's opinion to make the employees feel proud of themselves, and to know that they are important in our organization (R3, L. 208-210, CM2).

You should provide training to the leaders to let them know about each function in the organization, what they are going to do, with whom they are going to contact, and develop an indicator to measure how much they accomplished their tasks. For example, an indicator could measure in the HR department how a leader can control the employees, if they are absent or they come late or how a leader motivates the employees and let them have the desire to work effectively and be enthusiastic. Moreover, you should provide methods and tools for everyone to facilitate their work; and lastly, you should develop standards that can help them work cohesively (R6, L. 105-116, CM2).

In my opinion, everyone in the organization should follow the organization's needs or follow one target to allow people from different cultures to work together effectively. In other words, the organization should determine the mission and the vision and then let everyone follow it. I mean by following one target or following the organization's needs, that everyone should cooperate with the others to implement the tasks required (R7, L. 46-57, CM2).

Accordingly, R1, R2 represented the opinions of the participants by the following:

When foreigners come to Thailand for work, they just take the policy from the headquarters to manage our organization. Therefore, we should think about this issue carefully and consider how we can do what they expect from us, and whether we should do it or not. We should ask ourselves what they want is compatible with the Thais' law or not, and how we can comply what they want with our law and regulations (R1, L. 14-20, CM2).

From my point of view, if you want to strengthen an organization which has people from different cultures; the top management should be from both parties. I mean to be equal on everything (R1, L. 72-75, CM2).

Another important thing that may strengthen our organization is meritocracy. We should also put the right one in the right place (R1, L. 79-81, CM2).

Management should also expect that everyone in the organization is highly responsible at work and can implement their tasks effectively (R1, L. 174-176, CM2).

However, R4, R5 pointed out some necessary strategies, which need to be considered:

The top management empowers a team to implement some projects to launch a new model of a product. Then, the members of this team from each department or each division have to demonstrate their leadership skills, by presenting to the committee, what they have done and what they have developed. However, members of each team are free to participate (R4, L.34-41, CM2).

First, we should make our employees feel that they are the most important and valuable asset in our organization. Second, clearly design each job description. Lastly, provide training courses for every employee, especially to those who are in a managing level, to understand the organization's culture and reduce any conflict that might happen in the future (R4, L. 48-54, CM2).

Our company manages diversity through three important strategies: corporate values, training courses, and special events or activities. Corporate values: the company promotes shared values for all employees, both local people and expatriates (Koreans). It consists of people, customers, and technology. All employers pay attention to employees' level of satisfaction, and quality of work.

We try to enjoy our work, respect each other, care for people's feelings and opinions, etc. Customer satisfaction is our target to achieve through product quality and delivery. Our technical and professional skill levels are maintained on the leading edge of technology. These core values make all of us work together effectively with different cultures (R5, L. 47-60, CM2).

Training courses are one of the strategies to enhance better understandings across cultures. New expatriates will be trained about the Thais' culture, simple conversations, ways of life, beliefs, values, etc. For local people, they will be trained about different styles of working with expatriates. For example, orientation courses to protect them from any culture shock in the workplace. Moreover, the company has supported 'learning by doing' regarding the Korean's culture and provided books, and VCDs in the library (R5, L. 61-69, CM2).

Special events or activities give the opportunity for everyone to learn about what an intercultural environment is. In our company, there are many events, such as Songkran Day or the Thais' traditions of water playing in the summer season. Korean expatriates can join the activity and learn how to enjoy their time with the Thais' beliefs and customs. The company respects and accepts different cultures. Our company allows the expatriates to participate or to practice some activities, according to their beliefs and cultures. For example, the company provides Korean food for expatriates at lunch time. It allows them to take leave by the Korean calendar. For those who believe in different religions, such as Islam, the company will provide halal food for each individual. For Christians, the company allows them to pray in the office in the break. For Thai people, the company can organize some activities, according to their traditions and beliefs, such as monkshood leave, New Year party, Songkran holiday and the other Buddhist days (R5, L. 70-88, CM2).

Finally, R8, R9 commented that:

In our company, when the Koreans came to work with us, we let all of our Thai staff go to Korea, in order to learn about their culture, life style, and work style. Also, we encourage our employees to go to the library to read and understand different cultures. In the library, we have a lot of books about Thais, Koreans, and others' cultures (R8, L. 69-76, CM2).

It is very hard to make everyone feels committed and loyal to the organization. However, I can tell you how the top management in my organization makes me feel loyal. My boss gave me the authority or the power to make decisions at work. If you can make decisions or you have some authority at work, this will make you enjoy what you are doing and make you feel loyal to your organization (R8, L. 160-168, CM2).

We can put the right one in the right job or place, by measuring people's personalities and abilities (R9, L. 64-66, CM2).

Measuring people's abilities could be a very important factor to strengthen an organization that has individuals from different cultural background (R9, L. 73-75, CM2).

In my opinion, the one who should provide a training or the trainer, should be a lecturer, so that all employees can receive enough knowledge. Also, the training in an intercultural environment should be provided in English to ensure that all trainees understand the desired outcome. Moreover, you can design some activities to the trainees, but preferably to be out of their workplace. For example, you let the trainees travel somewhere or go to a place far away from their organization. Additionally, I think the training course should include some academic topics, and always focus on how to make everyone cooperate with others to learn how to work together effectively (R9, L. 127-139, CM2).

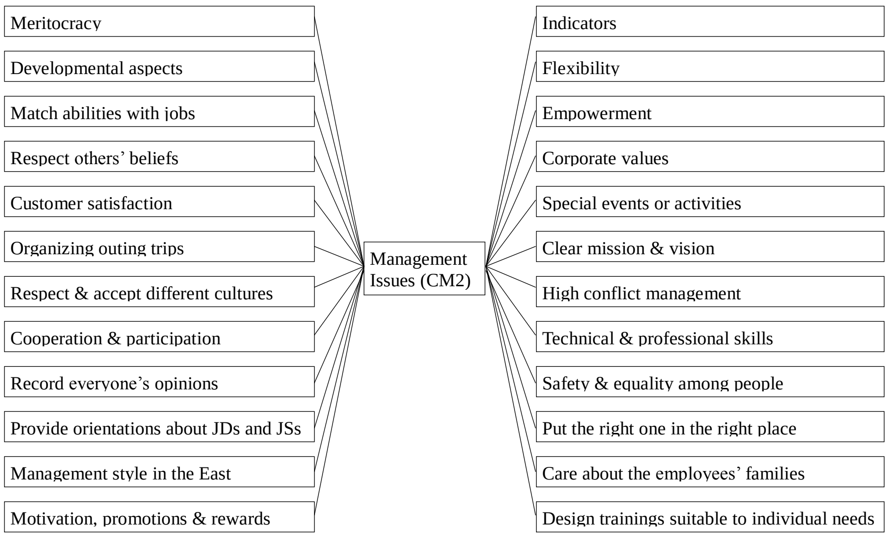

Figure 3.9 *Management Issues.*

3.9 Educating Foreigners the Others' Cultures in Thailand (CE)

Moving to the last issue in this chapter, the author attempted to look at how foreigners could survive with those they are working with. As such, the author was seeking some knowledge and information from the participants of this study on this issue. Based on that, R1, R2 addressed that:

In my department, we provide knowledge for foreigners about Thai law, and the company's regulations because they do not know about the Thai law, safety law, and the accounting system BOI (R1, L. 10-13, CE).

From my point of view, people who live and work together should respect each other and respect the others' cultures. But you know? In general, when we live in another country or another place, we should respect their own culture. For instance, if we work in Thailand, we should respect the Thais' culture, or if we work in Japan, we should respect the Japanese culture (R2, L. 69-76, CE).

Additionally, if foreigners do not want to learn about the Thais' culture, the Thais may teach them about it. You know? My boss used to ask me about the King, he was really surprised and wondered why the Thais love the king so much? and why the Thais wear yellow T-shirts every Monday in 2008? I said to him, that the King always helps us on everything, and whatever will happen, he will be next to all of us and solve any problem that occurs in Thailand. So, we can teach foreigners this kind of knowledge, and you know the result? The Japanese followed us and wore the yellow T-shirt, which means that they can adapt themselves to the Thais' culture (R2, L. 84-99, CE).

What we want from foreigners, is to look at our environment, and see what is possible and what is impossible to exist. I understand that in their country (Japan) they can say exactly what time they will reach their offices because of the mass transportation system in Japan, which is wonderful. On the other hand, in Thailand we face a lot of traffic problems. So, we should be flexible and ask for reasons before punishing the employees (R2, L. 180-188, CE).

I said to the Japanese that they cannot make their culture a standard, and they should apply what is appropriate or suitable to the Thais' culture (R2, L. 225-227, CE).

Moreover, R3, R5 continued the previous comments by:

Our organization provides some programs for foreigners about the Thais' culture, traditions, and everything related to the Thais to let them know how to work in Thailand. On the other hand, we let the Thais go to Korea to learn about the Korean's culture and how to work with Koreans effectively (R3, L. 180-185, CE).

New expatriates will be trained about the Thais' culture, simple conversations, ways of life, beliefs, values, etc. For local people, they will be trained about different working styles with expatriates. (R5, L. 62-69, CE).

We should educate all employees about the strengths and weaknesses of each culture, including how to apply the strengths of each culture to enhance our productivity (R5, L. 91-97, CE).

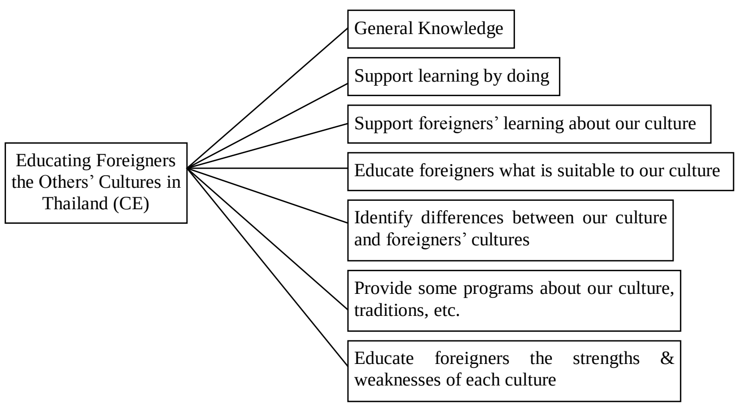

Figure 3.10 *Educating Foreigners the Others' Cultures in Thailand.*

3.10 Summary

This chapter described and displayed the major findings of the study. Hence, this chapter is composed of the following sections: (1) Managers' competencies, (2) Team building for diversity, (3) Barriers confronted by differences in culture, (4) Successful intercultural environment, (5) Foreigners' cultures and working styles in Thailand, (6) Adaptability, (7) Communication issues, (8) Management issues, and (9) Educating foreigners the others' cultures in Thailand. Based on these findings, the author attempted to clarify all aspects by developing some figures under each piece of finding. In chapter four, the author will present all elements, which reflected strengths, weaknesses, and potentials of an intercultural environment, as well as other factors that will be taken into consideration in formulating a developing model for an intercultural work environment. Ultimately, the author will propose some recommendations for further studies.

Chapter 4

Summarizing and Discussing the Results

In this chapter, the author gives particular attention to the findings of this study, with reflection of related literatures, explores the components of the major findings, and makes some recommendations for further researches. Thus, this chapter is presented in the following order:

- Discussions of the major findings of the study, with reflection of related studies;
- Development of a model for an intercultural work environment; and
- Recommendations for further researches.

Discussions of the Major Findings of the Study with Reflection of Related Studies

This study was about intercultural competence needs of managers in international automotive companies in the Eastern Seaboard of Thailand. The purposes were (1) To identify the competencies required for managers of intercultural consultancy services, in order to optimize the effects of cultural diversity in Thai international automotive companies; (2) To investigate ways which allow diversity to work effectively; and (3) To identify barriers confronted by different cultures in international companies. The author selected the qualitative approach for this study, as it is related to cross-cultural issues and how diversity works best in multicultural organizations. Therefore, the author decided after careful considerations to select the case study, as it is one of the five strategies in a qualitative approach for this study. Accordingly, David (2006: 4) demonstrated that a case can be chosen not only because of special interest, but also due to the impacts or effects of a social issue. Thus, 'intrinsic case study' took place in this study because of two reasons:

- The author's interest in understanding challenges in building intercultural teams, and
- To optimize cultural diversity in Thai international automotive companies.

Moreover, the following questions were developed to guide the author in the data collection, and the analysis task:

Main question: 1. What are the competencies required for the manager who provides intercultural consultancy services, and how to utilize the competencies to work in Thailand?

- Sub question: What are the most needed competencies for the manager who provides intercultural consultancy services?
- Sub question: What are some ways that allow diversity to work effectively?
- Sub question: What are the barriers confronted by differences in culture in international automotive companies?

Further, this study was carried out at four international automotive companies, in the Eastern Seaboard of Thailand. The participants of this study were nine leaders or executives in four international automotive companies, who got involved with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. The main instrument used to collect the data from nine participants, was interviews face to face, except two participants provided their information by an e-mail, due to their limited time. The findings of the study were presented in chapter three, with an overview of intercultural work environments. Furthermore, Holliday (2002) formulated that "A simpler way to present data is where the researcher takes categories from the same structure that governed the collection of data" (p.107). Therefore, the author addressed the major findings, as follows: (1) Managers' competencies, CM1 (2) Team building for diversity, CT (3) Barriers confronted by differences in culture, CB (4) Successful intercultural environment, CS (5) Foreigners' cultures and working styles in Thailand, CF (6) Adaptability, CA (7) Communication issues, CC (8) Management issues, CM2 and (9) Educating foreigners the others' cultures in Thailand, CE.

Thus, the following is a discussion of the major findings, in accordance with the literature reviewed in chapter one. Moreover, the author is going to explore or discuss nine issues and its components, according to what has been discussed and found in the previous chapter.

4.1 Managers' Competencies (CM1)

The author found in the current study, the most relevant competencies or characteristics for leaders in the top management in international companies, as follows: open mindedness, worldwide vision, acceptability, following up, specialists, being knowledgeable, leadership skills, management skills, HR and HRD concepts, work experience with foreigners, eagerness to learn, non ethnocentric attitude, problem solving, adaptability, maturity, fair and succinct, innovative, responsible, standardized, and foreign language competence.

Similarly, Gibson (1998 cited in Cseh & Coningham, 2004) suggested the following:

- The willingness to monitor your own ethnocentrism;
- The ability to adapt yourself to different cultures; and
- The flexibility in a variety of intervention techniques and tools, according to the business culture.

On the other hand, one of the participants of this study noted some fundamental competencies to improve and to develop consultancy services among people from different cultures. For instance, cultural knowledge of different countries, non-ethnocentric attitude to respect differences among people, eager to learn new cultures, and look for its strengths and weaknesses, and the ability to adapt ourselves to accept different cultures and traditions.

Further, there is a large number of studies concluded the following:

- The open minded character and the assurance against contingencies;
- Being able to respond quickly to a variety of situations and achieving the target properly;
- Using the most relevant strategies according to the tasks, the interaction with others in a friendly manner;
- The ability to deal with complexity without any sort of anxiety and demonstrate what has been done in reports or assessments;
- The acceptance of others, trust, and encouragement are the best policies to motivate others;
- The ability to lead as a relationship builder by motivating and empowering;
- Problem solving and the ability to interpret the system and procedures for data analyses; and
- Lastly, the experience in viewing the customer value, as well as satisfaction.

Besides, for the current study, one of the participants confirmed that managers should be open-minded and accept others' opinions, as well as being ready to learn from others even if they are bosses or in a leading position. Another competence which is necessary for the manager, who provides intercultural consultancy services, is motivation. Managers should know how to urge the employees how to work effectively. In addition, managers should have effective arts of communication, as well as effective presentation skills, in order to communicate successfully with others. Lastly, managers should have good knowledge in their field, and no matter what their jobs are. If you have the name (leader) you should know all about your work, whether it is inside or outside your organization.

The author found in previous studies that leaders should first develop their personal characteristics to be able to manage and support diversity to benefit from diversity, as it is desired. It is found that it is necessary to urge all HRD professionals and experts, who have experience in working across cultures to provide aids for those who cannot recognize differences in cultures (Park, 2003 cited in You, 2004). Park found that these professionals should keep on developing the required knowledge, competencies, and positive mindsets; since HRD had a significant role in the Asian region to have a strong economy. Thus, the author in the current study found all competencies mentioned above in previous studies, and the participants of this study added, the need for maturity, coaching skills, and acting as a teacher for the employees.

4.2 Team Building for Diversity (CT)

The participants of this study concluded a number of factors needed for allowing diversity to work effectively, or building intercultural teamwork. These factors are: listening carefully to others, respecting and accepting others, trust, seeking opinions, middle point, working in groups, good relationships, developing activities, harmony, following the rules, brainstorming, mixing our needs, empowering and cooperating, teamwork, outing trips, cross-cultural team projects, developing empathy and sympathy, creating values, family days, educating the employees, cultural exchanges, formal business language, nurturing others' skills, clearness, love, and loyalty.

In previous studies, Zakaria, Amelinckx, and Wilemon (2004) looked at the following for human challenges in implementing global teams:

- Creating effective team leadership;
- Dealing and managing conflicts among global teams;
- Developing relationships and trust among all individuals;
- Awareness of cross-cultural differences; and
- Emerging intercultural communication competence.

Similarly, Marquardt and Horvath (2001) noted challenges for global teams, such as:

- Maintaining teamness;
- Maintaining communication;
- Handling coordination issues; and
- Managing cultural differences, and diversity.

Meanwhile, in the current study, the participants acknowledged that they always encourage Thais and foreigners to work in harmony and be neutral, no matter if you are boss or a subordinate. Besides, empower the employees to work as a team, and cooperate either in or out of each department, so that they know how to learn other languages and other cultures through On-the-Job Training (OJT) programs. Further, they argued that, as a leader, you should also attempt to make them avoid problems. If there is nothing serious "just let it go", but if they cannot let it go, let them face the problem and talk reasonably together. Furthermore, you should nurture your employees to understand how to reach the desired outcome; which you may receive from the headquarters. Meanwhile, you should develop your employees' skills about the organization's mission, vision, and strategies to have them work together in the right direction. Moreover, Van Der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000) found four intercultural competencies necessary for developing specific trainings that can be mixed in different ways, depending on the individual needs or the group. For managerial functions, for instance, building commitment should be the key, while for non-managerial functions, intercultural communication will take place. Managing uncertainty depends on the cultural group involved on the task. Finally, intercultural sensitivity should always be trained but it depends on whether we are dealing with an existing multicultural group or with individuals, who are not working as a team. Nevertheless, the author added to this study that there is an urgent need for developing empathy, sympathy, outing trips, and family days, to make people build trust among each other. In conclusion, the effective communication and trust were critical points in developing teamwork.

4.3 Barriers Confronted by Differences in Culture (CB)

Speaking of some barriers confronted by differences in culture, the participants of this study explained their thoughts and feelings clearly, as follows: disrespecting others, inequality, nepotism, feelings of biases, ethnocentric attitude, inappropriate behavior, differences in culture, ambiguity, bossy people, unreasonableness, blocking people's thinking, irrelevant systems, no integrity, misunderstandings, language barrier, conflicts, mystery and unfamiliarity, irresponsibility, historical events, and incompatibility. In previous studies, Chesla (2000) mentioned that cultural diversity causes different managerial styles, such as rules, relationships among individuals and communication styles which bring several problems to the workplace (e.g. stereotyping, mistrust, and stress among team members). On the other hand, it was found that group cohesion is not easy to achieve in intercultural teams. In other words, in global business, people bring their own values to the workplace and team as well, and this cultural diversity would cause lack of cohesion. Following this line of thought, in the current study, one of the participants commented that, it is difficult to make Thais and foreigners meet each other in the middle because of their different cultures. One participant confirmed that his company did not succeed in making people from different cultures work together effectively. In other words, the participant mentioned that, they just work together, but if we ask about their deep feelings, they are not working well together. They have some conflicts and they cannot talk, they cannot say what they want, and they cannot understand each other. Accordingly, Adler (2002) noted the disadvantages in building intercultural teams, as follows: mistrust, miscommunication, and stress. First, Marquardt and Horvath (2001) interpreted that mistrust brings lower attractiveness, reinforcement, and inaccurate stereotypes. While, Levi (2001) illustrated that miscommunication causes slower speech because of language barriers. Finally, Adler (2002) commented that stress causes tension and disagreement on content. Hence, Patricia, Erwan, and Susan (2003) noticed that these factors mentioned above, produce conflicts and unacceptable behavior among individuals. Adler (2002) and Marquardt and Horvath (2001) similarly concluded that this lack of cohesion, causes the difficulty to gain consensus on decisions, and taking positive actions whenever needed, which ultimately results an ineffective, and inefficient intercultural teams.

Importantly, Greenberg (2005) recommended some factors considered challenges of cross-cultural communication:

- Different words are perceived differently to different people;
- Different cultures have different cultural norms when using some words; and
- Cross-cultural communication is made difficult because in different languages one word possesses several meanings.

For the current study, the participants clarified that the Thais when they smile, sometimes it makes foreigners feel that we look down at them. Also, different attitudes are another barrier. Thais and foreigners always have different attitudes. Another barrier is that the Thais do not have enough English skills to communicate effectively with foreigners. According to Holden (2002) there were common challenges to international cross-cultural management, such as ethnocentrism, cultural diversity, and the differences among people which have its noticeable effect. Further, addressing differences among people does not illustrate why or how conflicts arise; though, perceiving everyone the same might be a step for conflict among people from different cultures (Worchel, 2005). Furthermore, Hewapathirana and Pruetipibultham (2006) concluded that there are some other challenges, such as an unknowledgeable workforce about cultures and foreign markets, differences in theoretical models and practices, and different management styles. Finally, lack of training in cross-cultural issues makes organizations strive to evaluate how much training has been successfully conveyed to employees' performance (Drewry & Stout, 2003).

The author in this study found more barriers, such as nepotism, or those who are in a position of power might give their families an unfair advantage (job) in the Thais' companies. One of the participants of this study noticed that when the top management (Japanese) wants to move someone to another department, they will do it without looking at his or her abilities. Some people (Japanese) did not come to work in Thailand by recruitment, and this makes people disrespect each other or have a lot of conflicts. Moreover, one of the participants of this study noted that people's behavior might be a barrier because someone might be irresponsible at work, and some Thais like to throw their mistakes on other people's shoulders. For example, if something wrong happened at work, the one who is responsible might say that, "it is not my mistake" I have got this from someone else. So, these kinds of problems you might face when you work with people from different cultures. Additionally, this study suggested that inequality is another big barrier in Thai international companies. In other words, the Japanese have more authority than the Thais. When the Japanese have to make a decision on something, the Thais cannot decide anything. Hence, everything must be approved by the Japanese only. Another big barrier found in this study, is that foreigners manage the Thais' organizations by their own systems and rules without looking at the Thais' environment and what is suitable for the Thais. Besides, Westerners usually try to work by their own style and let the Thais just follow them.

In conclusion, the author found in the current study that historical events had a great influence on people's perceptions, and feelings; although, these feelings may be less intensive at present (e.g., Thais and Burmese).

4.4 Successful Intercultural Environment (CS)

On the other hand, the participants of this study compiled the success factors in an intercultural environment, as follows: technology from foreigners, as well as a plethora of knowledge, adaptability, foreign investments, good materials at low costs, people from different countries, exchanging experiences, stable financial status and welfare, enjoy working with foreigners, globalization, reasonableness, unity and harmony, sustainable development, receptiveness, learning others' cultures, alertness, accept differences, good attitudes, appropriate strategies, respecting others' beliefs, supporting innovations, and trusting others. In almost the same way, Van Der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000) from the University of Groningen in the Netherlands developed five dimensions for analyzing the success factors of one of the most challenging intercultural work environments. They demonstrated these five dimensions of personality for adjustment and performance of expatriates, as follows:

- Cultural empathy: empathize with the feelings, thoughts, and behaviors of members from different backgrounds;
- Flexibility: the ability to move from a strategy to another, and never fear from the unknown, with the acceptance of unknown situations;
- Open mindedness: being open and fair with all individuals, who come from different cultural backgrounds;
- Social initiative: being inclined to actively approach social situations and to take initiatives; and
- Emotional stability: controlling your anger and remaining calm in stressful situations.

However, Wiersinga (2003) argued that the five personality dimensions may not have the same importance. It will be depending on where the assignment takes place. Thus, managing differences effectively, and being aware of cultural diversity in the workplace will allow individuals to perform better than single culture teams (Adler, 2002). An important point is found when reviewed the literature, pros and cons in building intercultural teams by (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). They noted that the more an organization is globalized, the more diversity exists, and global business practices based on building intercultural teams. Alongside, the study of Marquartdt and Horvath (2001) found that there are several advantages of intercultural teams, as follows:

- Ability to reduce costs and gain economies of scope;
- Ability to attract talents from anywhere in the organization or from the external environment;
- Ability to solve complex problems in the twenty-first century;
- Ability to make the organization a global company;
- Ability to increase speed of operations;
- Greater understanding of local customers;
- Development of future global leaders for the organization;
- Increased access to knowledge and information;
- More opportunities to form alliances; and
- Increased ability to become a global learning organization.

Also, their studies demonstrated that there are general criteria of intercultural teams or effective teams. Some of which are technical task activities, some are supportive environmental factors, and others are related to social relations among individuals. Similarly, in the current study, the participants interpreted that their organizations achieve low costs because they know how to get cheap materials, through some people from different countries. These people could bring us good materials, and cheap at the same time because in our country the materials we need, might be more expensive than in other countries. Also, sometimes we can negotiate with people, who are in charge in other countries because we have some people from their countries working with us. Furthermore, Hewapathirana and Pruetipibultham (2006) synthesized some factors to successful engagement in international companies, as presented:

- Skilled workforce;
- Developing a global business environment;
- Encouraging foreign investments;
- Cooperation and flexibility when dealing with other countries; and
- Positive feedback from the customer about services or quality.

For the current study, the participants mentioned that valuing diversity, and foreign investments are very critical to our company. They get a lot of capital or investments from the Koreans because they are big partners. Koreans invest a lot of money in the company, which makes the other partner stronger than other companies that have management from only one country or nationality. In previous studies, Smith (1995 cited in Cseh & Coningham, 2004) suggested the following:

- The awareness of the literature of the society where you reside;
- Get acquainted with people's behavior with whom you will work;
- The readiness for unexpected behavior due to culture shock;
- Understanding that culture changes; and
- Emerge, adjust or be flexible in the values between your culture and those whom you work with.

For the current study, the participants articulated that the success factors in an intercultural environment are unity, and harmony. We do not make any difference between the Thais and the foreigners, we are one. We work together in harmony; we accept each other and listen to any opinion. Other success factors involve learning about differences between Thais and foreigners; then, we can adopt the positive things from the others. For example, the Thais might be more diligent than Koreans, and Koreans might have good knowledge about technology more than the

Thais. So, we can take all this to be the organization's culture, and it might be our standards to perform our roles effectively. The participants of this study also commented that accepting differences among individuals and respecting each other are the key points to success. A large number of studies have demonstrated that cultural diversity in a workplace can foster a variety of perspectives and experiences to encourage or promote innovation and creativity, which lead to the desired outcome in firms. Cox (1991 cited in Paek and Hong, 2005) identified how ethnic differences influenced cooperative and competitive behavior on group activities. They concluded that, workers from collectivist cultures have the tendency to be more cooperative, whereas, those from individualistic cultures are more competitive. Ivancevich and Matteson (1999 cited in Huang, 2005) noted that Microsoft of Redmon, Washington believes that people from different backgrounds, who have different talents add to the effectiveness of the firm; hence, it produces products suitable to all types of consumers because a diverse company would better be able to market to a diverse world.

In conclusion, previous studies, and the current study showed that it is obvious that specifically intercultural teams are very essential for successful global organizations because they bring various experiences. Undoubtedly, leaders in the twenty-first century have several challenges, most important of which is to succeed in making their organizations integrated and cohesive communities, where all people commit and undertake certain and common purposes to achieve a sustainable development.

4.5 Foreigners' Cultures and Working Styles in Thailand (CF)

In this section, the author found a succinct description of the Japanese behavior or working style in Thailand, Koreans' working style versus the Thais' working style or behavior, the Europeans and Americans working style or cultures. The participants of this study acknowledged that the Japanese listen and perceive any order or command from their bosses only. Further, the Japanese do not usually believe or trust the Thais' skills, and abilities. The Japanese consider themselves the second level, and Europeans are the first level. In other words, the Japanese often think that they are better than the Thais, and never accept that sometimes the Thais are better than them. Moreover, the participants stated that the Japanese rarely feel pleased with the Thais. Speaking of Koreans, sometimes Korean's behavior is taken from the Europeans' cultures. They were also thinking like Japanese. However, when Koreans first came to work in Thailand, they were open-minded more than the Japanese. So, Koreans accepted and understood the Thais' abilities at work, and as a result, they can let the Thais manage the company and they are just specialists or consultants.

Moreover, Koreans always come to work on time, and this is not the Thais' behavior, because the Thais always come to work late. Koreans talk very loudly but the Thais do not like this behavior. As a result, when the Thai sees the Korean talks loudly, the Thai might think that the Korean is aggressive or not pleased from something. In Korea's culture, people see that the family is considered the most important thing for them. Additionally, Koreans' nature or work style is fast, highly responsible, self- disciplined, thinking logically, and information-oriented support. Generally speaking of the Thais and Koreans' behavior, when the Thais sit and talk to the Koreans, suddenly, the Korean puts his/her feet on the table, and the Thais cannot accept this behavior. The Thais think that this is impolite, but it is a normal behavior for Koreans. Lastly, Koreans believe and respect seniority more than the Thais. In Korea's culture, if you finished your work, you cannot go back home unless your boss goes first, or if you are eating with your boss, and he/she did not stop eating, so you cannot go before him/her.

Speaking of the Thais, they always ask for opinions before doing anything because of “Krang- Jai” concept. The Thais like everything smooth, quiet, and always smile. Nevertheless, they work like “Cho-Cham-Yen-Cham” which means that the Thais are working slowly, and not enthusiastic. In other words, the Thais’ nature or work style is slow, smooth and cautious. Meanwhile, Thai people are kind, reciprocal, help each other, care for others’ feelings, always kind (Jai-dee), and modest with elderly people. Americans, like to work with documents. Hence when you work with them, you should have effective presentation skills. You should know how to present your work effectively because Americans always consider this point very important at work. Speaking of the Europeans, the participants of this study mentioned that the Europeans are not very serious about behavioral aspects; they put more emphasis on work output. In previous studies, Cox (1991) identified how ethnic differences influenced cooperative and competitive behavior on group activities. Yoo (2000) conducted a survey on twenty secretaries, who were working with foreign supervisors. The results of this previous study, demonstrated that the Korean secretaries preferred to work with foreigners, who have efficient and systematic work procedures; even though all the interviewees expressed some sort of cultural differences in their workplace, the majority accepted their situation as a chance to learn and understand other cultures. Additionally, how countries compare on Hofstede’s dimensions of national culture, clarified several factors crucial to cross-cultural studies.

4.6 Adaptability (CA)

The participants of this study gave special importance to how people can adapt themselves with individuals from different cultures. Thus, they concluded the following: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), acceptance of others’ cultures, adaptation, learning others' cultures, good attitudes, smiling to everyone, making people accept us, and identifying what others expect from us. Alongside, Bennett (1986) addressed the importance of the following for those who work in intercultural environments:

- Integration: multicultural attitude enables one to integrate differences and adapt both cognitively and behaviorally;
- Adaptation: able to empathize differences among individuals, and able to shift from one cultural perspective to another without major problems;
- Acceptance: accepting behavioral differences and underlying differences in values, and recognizing the validity of other ways of thinking and how people perceive the world; and
- Minimizing differences: hides or trivializes cultural differences, and focuses on similarities among all individuals.

Moreover, Gibson (1998) suggested that we should have the ability to adapt ourselves to different cultures. Also, Smith (1995) suggested the following for developing successful intercultural environments and how people can adapt themselves to different cultures:

- Get acquainted with people's behavior with whom you will work;
- The readiness for unexpected behavior due to culture shock;
- Understanding that culture changes; and
- Emerge, adjust or be flexible in the values between your culture and those whom you work with.

According to Holden (2002), he suggested some solutions to challenges of cross-cultural management (e.g. adaptation, reacting positively, and developing the required skills through some interventions). In conclusion, the current study added a few points to previous studies, which might be helpful to adapt ourselves with others. These were: corporate social responsibility (CSR) and smiling to everyone are perceived to be very necessary because of the Thais' nature or traditions. Accordingly, some participants in the current study interpreted that CSR is a way to adapt ourselves with people from different backgrounds, as well as smile and talk to everyone in a positive way could allow people to work successfully in any environment.

4.7 Communication Issues (CC)

Another interesting issue, is that several answers were repeatedly mentioned by the participants of the current study, such as, dealing fairly with others, communicating in different styles, speeches, orientations and meetings, communication starts from the employees to the top management, seeking opinions, and sharing ideas. Van Der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000) formulated this issue, when they emphasized intercultural communication skills. Zakaria, Amelinckx, and Wilemon (2004) mentioned that emerging intercultural communication competence should be considered for human challenges in implementing global teams. Similarly, Marquardt and Horvath (2001) noted challenges for global teams, such as: maintaining communication, and handling coordination issues. Importantly, Greenberg (2005) recommended some factors considered challenges or barriers of cross-cultural communication, as follows:

- Different words are perceived differently to different people;
- Different cultures have different cultural norms when using some words; and

- Cross-cultural communication is made difficult because in different languages one word possesses several meanings.

In conclusion, the participants of the current study contended that Thais and foreigners must talk straight forward and face to face to know how to work together effectively and successfully drive their business together. Most importantly, the Thai manager should communicate openly, concisely and frankly to western people; whereas on the other hand, westerners should communicate to Asian people in a systematic style, full of information, and save face.

4.8 Management Issues (CM2)

The author explored management issues, when asked the participants of this study, and they thoroughly noted the following: management style in the East, care of the employees' families, motivation, promotions, rewards, development, designing training courses suitable to individual needs, developing specific indicators, putting the right one in the right place, matching abilities with jobs, developing clear mission and vision, providing orientations about JDs and JSs, recording everyone's opinion, empowering, flexibility, high conflict management, cooperation and participation, corporate values, customer satisfaction, technical and professional skills, special events or activities, respect and accept different cultures, respect others' beliefs, organizing outing trips, safety, and equality among people. Meanwhile, related literatures, such as Gomez-Mejia, Balkin, and Cardy (2004) concluded that many corporations restructure their businesses as global competitors by identifying employees' individual competency, as an essential part to achieve their goals. Additionally, they noted some issues that need to be considered:

- Using the most relevant strategies according to the tasks, and the interaction with others in a friendly manner;

- Dealing with complexity without any anxiety and demonstrating what has been done in reports or assessments;
- The acceptance of others, trust, and encouragement, are the best policies to motivate others;
- Motivating and empowering others; and
- Lastly, the experience in viewing the customer value, as well as satisfaction.

Van Der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000) believed that management should develop specific trainings that can be mixed in different ways, depending on the individual needs or the group. However, Yang (2003) demonstrated that managerial styles vary culture by culture. There are different managerial styles and each country has its own style. Similarly, Chesla (2000) mentioned that cultural diversity causes different managerial styles, such as rules, relationships among individuals, and communication styles. Thus, managing differences effectively, and being aware of cultural diversity in the workplace, will allow individuals to perform better than single culture teams (Adler, 2002). Briefly, the author found in several studies critical challenges for international management, as follows:

- Global managers are expected to be aware of international developments, and be able to compete in working with people from different backgrounds;
- International management should have a deep understanding of the global economy, which makes the diverse countries of the world increasingly interdependent, regarding product markets, and business competition;
- The awareness of cultures and how does it relate to global diversity;
- Management and global businesses are influenced by differences in

national cultures, according to Hofstede’s dimensions; and

- Global operations or businesses are driven by local cultures and situations.

In conclusion, the participants of the current study added to previous studies, that management should develop standards, in order to make people work together cohesively, as well as provide some methods and tools for everyone to facilitate their work. Moreover, they emphasized on the importance of the right one in the right place. In other words, meritocracy is crucial, where people get power or money on the basis of their ability.

4.9 Educating Foreigners the Others’ Cultures in Thailand (CE)

Lastly, the author found useful information on how to make foreigners survive with those they are working with, as follows: provide general knowledge for foreigners, support learning by doing, support foreigners learning about our culture, identify differences between our cultures and foreigners’ cultures, educating foreigners what is suitable to our culture, educating foreigners about strengths and weaknesses of each culture, and provide some programs about our culture, traditions, etc. It is found that executives in Thai companies let their employees go to foreign countries to exchange or to learn about the others’ cultures to learn how to work with people from different cultures, which is called cultural exchanges. Most importantly, the author in this part of the study did not find similar information in previous studies or related literatures. The reason behind that is because most researches on cross-cultural workplace take place in the developed countries, but little has been done on the cross-cultural workplace in the developing countries, such as Thailand (Colignon, Usui, Kerbo, & Slagter, 2007).

4.10 Development of a Model for an Intercultural Work Environment

In the previous chapter, the author mentioned that he will present critical elements, which reflected strengths, weaknesses, and potentials of an intercultural environment, as well as other factors will be taken into consideration in formulating a developing model for an intercultural work environment. Hence, the following model compiled possible and necessary factors in an intercultural environment.

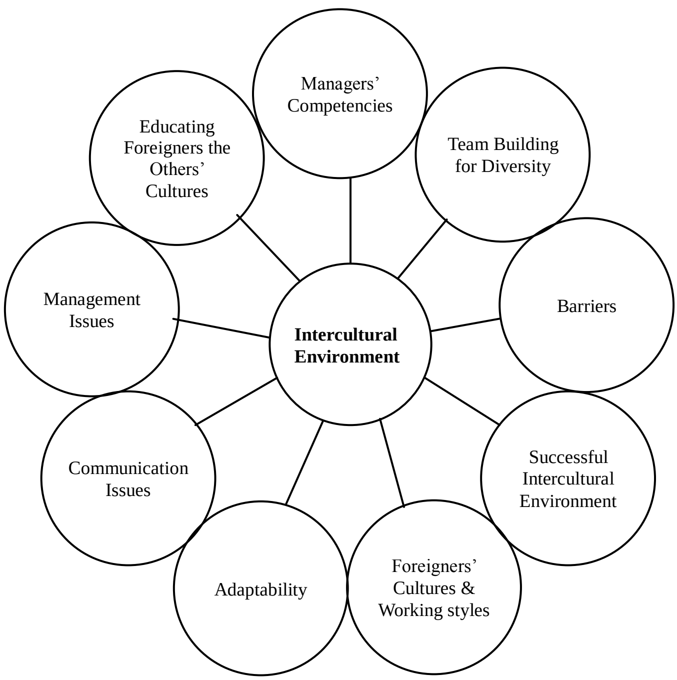

Figure 4.1 *Intercultural Environment.*

4.11 Recommendations for Further Studies

According to Glatthorn and Joyner (2005, p.203) they concluded that, "an older style uses the title conclusions and recommendations. The title summarizing and discussing the results used seems more accurate; however, since many studies include neither conclusions nor recommendations". Nevertheless, the author has the potential to draw a succinct recommendation for further researches. As previously mentioned, most researches on cross-cultural workplace take place in the developed countries, but little has been done on the cross-cultural workplace in the developing countries, such as Thailand. Therefore, researchers in the developing countries should realize that lack of researches in a particular issue could cause a lot of obstacles in our organizations. Additionally, the author selected the qualitative approach for this study, as it is related to cross-cultural issues and how diversity works best in multicultural organizations. However, the author suggests more researches on cross-cultural workplace, uses the mixed methods approach, because of the need for an authentic assessment to evaluate the advancement of skills and attitudes in such activities, or special events. Hence, the quantitative approach is needed in this study, besides the qualitative approach, and the non-random sampling with the random sampling might give equal opportunities to the participants of further studies.

4.12 Conclusion

We all learn how to relate to other people and how to respond to our environment from our cultures and other people's cultures. Because different cultures exist in the world, an understanding of the impact of culture on behavior is critical to the study of cross-culture management. What is logical, reasonable, and significant in one culture, may seem illogical, unreasonable, and unimportant in another. In other words, managers need to cautiously adjust their management approaches to match the values of specific cultures. Some managers are very pragmatic; others are highly humanistic and ethical; others are emotional and judge issues in terms of whether they are pleasant. In short, culture is acquired knowledge that people use to interpret experience and generate social behavior. However, cultural competency refers to the ability to apply a sound level of knowledge, understanding, sensitivity, and appreciation of culture in a practical and appropriate manner. It is an ongoing process that must not be perceived as a process that ends. It must be continually monitored and reviewed to meet the specific cultural needs of individuals and organizations. There are different methods or tools that can be applied to monitor and assess the level of cultural competency of individuals and organizations. For example, interviews, observations, peer evaluations, community feedback, and self-evaluations. Nevertheless, some organizations may not have the capacity to apply these methods and may need to employ or contract external individuals to perform these tasks. Lastly, it is important to realize that people we are working with or managing are very likely to be culturally different from ourselves. Another significant issue is to remember that differences are not always culturally-based; some differences arise from individual personality differences.

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Appendix

Appendix A

Sample for Data Analysis for one of the participants of the Study

Interviewer: Mahmoud Moussa

Respondent: R2

Location: Company A, Eastern Seaboard, the respondent's house

Date: 02/20/2009

Time: 20:30 pm- 21:20 pm

I: What are the competencies required for the manager who provides intercultural consultancy services?

R: Speaking of the Japanese culture, in my opinion, they just listen and perceive any order or command from their bosses only. In other words, when a Japanese leader orders something, the employee just follows and implements what he/she was told immediately. Thus, it seems like that the employees should block their thinking. If I'm going to talk about the Japanese competencies, although they are in the top management, their levels of competencies are very low. I think the Japanese who are working in the top management in our company, were chosen by their teams in Japan. For example, our financial director (FD) is very young and he has no experiences. When he worked in Japan, his position was just a supervisor and not in the top management like his position in Thailand. I think that the competencies required for our managers must be a lot, because they are expected to drive our organizations. For example, a manager should have an open mind, world wide vision, accept others' thinking or opinions and do not follow the Japanese culture which says "Boss is Boss" with people in Thailand. From my point of view, the competencies of the Japanese managers are not excellent, and they are not better than the Thais. However, the Japanese have more chances than the Thais, because the Japanese are the owners of our organization. As such, they let the Japanese come and control the Thais in our organization, which is a big problem. Also, the Japanese never accept to be less than the Thais at work, but if they think for a little bit and open their minds, we can work together effectively. Moreover, I believe that managers, who can lead an organization, should be specialists in their work. Additionally, managers need to follow everything with the employees, and not just orders. Another important thing to drive an organization successfully is to know the level of all managers. Managers should know how to control their subordinates, have some knowledge about psychology, as well as to know how to apply this knowledge at work, to know how to deal with others, and to know how to plan for work. All competencies mentioned above are considered intercultural competencies, required for managers in my organization.

I: What are the most needed competencies for the manager who provides intercultural consultancy services?

R: The most important competencies are, leadership and HR. Managers should have human resource concepts in their minds, and the best thing is human resource development. I m saying so, because I think in my company, the top management should develop themselves, as well as develop our organization to be more successful and gain more outcome. Also, when I said leadership competencies, I think I can cover all competencies required, because we can not specify which leadership style. So, any leader should have leadership competencies, in order to know how to lead and how to control and work effectively and efficiently with the subordinates. Also, leaders should have a strong background of their organizations, and a background of their subordinates, and possess strong skills to lead in the right direction and effectively.

I: What are the ways to allow diversity work effectively?

R: In my point of view, people who live and work together, should respect each other and respect the others' cultures. But you know? In general, when we live in another country or another place, we should respect their own culture. For instance, if we work in Thailand, we should respect the Thais' culture, or if we work in Japan, we should respect the Japanese culture. Another important thing you should know is, that you should learn everything about the others' cultures. Moreover, when you have knowledge about the others' cultures, you should bear in mind that there are some things you cannot do it if you are staying in a foreign country. I'm saying so, because my boss is Japanese, and when he gets upset or mad at something, he used to kick everything in front of him. So, Japanese should learn about the Thais' culture, because this is not the Thais' behavior. You should learn about the Thais' culture or the culture of the country you are working and living, in order to know what you can do and what you cannot do. Additionally, if the foreigner does not want to learn about the Thais' culture, so the Thais may teach foreigners, and tell them about the Thais' culture. You know? My boss used to ask me about the King, he was really surprised and wonder why the Thais love the king so much? And why the Thais wear yellow T-shirts every Monday in 2008? I said to him, that the King always helps us on everything, and whatever will happen, he will be next to all of us and solve any problem appears in Thailand. So, we can teach foreigners these kinds of knowledge, and you know the result? The Japanese followed us and wear the yellow T-shirt, which means that they can adapt themselves to the Thais' culture. Most importantly, there is something called CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) a way to adapt yourself with people from different background. For example, when I went to Japan, I knew what people like and dislike, and after that I knew that I should follow and adapt myself to the social there.

I: How do you strengthen an organization by valuing diversity?

R: We can strengthen an organization, first, by taking know how (technology and innovation) from different countries, different nationalities and different cultures. Second, is to brainstorming, or we take a lot of know how, then we can discuss and brainstorm together. Third, we can take the result from the brainstorming sessions, and implement what have been discussed to strengthen our organization. For example, we learned about the QC in our organization. As a result, all of us in the organization learnt from this system, how to analyze any problem we face. Another system is called Kaizen, is a wonderful system for any organization. Also, some of the Japanese behavior are really great, such as alertness. The Japanese never be quiet, they are always alert on everything. I will give you an example, if today they do something good, tomorrow they will make it better and better. They will not stop developing, and this is the greatest behavior on them. When we take this behavior from the Japanese and adopt it with the Thais, it will help us a lot in our organization. The welfare is another important thing could strengthen our organization. Our organization provides high salaries for everyone, even the Thais, they get high salaries compared to salaries in other companies, and I m sure about that. I will tell you about the salary system in my organization. There is a difference between salary and welfare. Besides the salary, they will look at your position, rent, how much you are working hard, for lunch, for night shifts and bonus.

I: How do you build group cohesion in an intercultural team?

R: To build group cohesion in an intercultural team, I should let the employees have activities together. For example, last year I let them have a walk rally. All Japanese and all Thais went together, ate and stayed together for 2-3 days, and you know? In this period, they all had good relationships with each other. They shared the troubles, the happiness and everything, in order to make good things for our social, and to feel that they are one hand in the environment. For example, we went to a school in Chaiyaphum province, to give food for students, build new classrooms for them, and water the plants to grow vegetables for them, etc. We called this project “from heart to heart” this project made everyone; either Thais or Japanese felt that we did something valuable together. Also, this made the Japanese feel proud of themselves and that they can do a good thing for Thailand. Moreover, we have another activity to make the Thais and the Japanese work in a cohesive team; such as, communication’s party. Every four months, Thais and Japanese make a party and invite their leaders from each department in our company to communicate together. I want to tell you something, you know? When you want to see a cohesive team in any workplace, you should think of something they can do out of work to let them stick together, because at work we are bosses and subordinates. Meanwhile, if we are out of our workplace, we will talk about things which make us know each other more. Furthermore, we feel serious with the Japanese bosses because they like to do things straightforward, according to their rules and regulations. However, they should think of the environment in Thailand, it is not the same as Japan. In Thailand or the Thais are always flexible on everything, if they will not make you in a bad situation in the future. I would like to tell you about a situation which recently happened to people in the Eastern Seaboard area. One day, everyone went to work and you know, there is only one way to reach our companies in the Eastern Seaboard. Unfortunately, one of the buses was stopped and cannot move, which made the other cars, stopped and cannot get back because it is just one way to reach the companies. As such, everyone went to work too late, and our bosses (Japanese) said, that it is our fault and they cannot give us an excuse because it is our duties to come to work on time. You know? These kinds of situations create conflicts between the Thais and the Japanese, because of our different points of view. So, what we want from foreigners is to look at our environment, see what is possible and what is impossible to exist. I understand that in their country (Japan) they can say exactly what time they will reach their offices, because of the mass transportation system in Japan is wonderful. On the other hand, in Thailand we face a lot of traffic jam. So, we should be flexible and ask for reasons before we punish the employees. I think all these problems, might make the Thais think that the Japanese are not, sincere, open mind and very hard to work with them in a cohesive team.

I: What are the success factors for an intercultural work environment?

R: The success factors for an intercultural environment are, being reasonable, not only rules, not only regulations, but also everything should be reasonable. Another thing might be good for an intercultural work environment, is the good discipline from foreigners. Good discipline from foreigners might be a good thing we can get from them. Moreover, taking know how or new technologies and experiences from foreigners are considered some of the success factors as well.

I: What are the barriers confronted by differences in culture in international companies?

R: The barriers, first the foreigners' disciplines in my company. They do not look for the truth, and they are not reasonable. Second, the foreigners manage our organization by their own system. For example, in Japan, they have steps or rules for the salary's system, but in Thailand we do not have the same system. In other words, they try to put their systems in our organization. However, you may not understand what I said, so I will give you another example. When you are

25 years old, you may start to think of getting married, and having your small family. When you are 30-40 you have kids who study in the university, and you will pay a lot for your family, so during this period, you get a very high salary. Later, your kids will finish their studies, and you will not spend a lot of money, so your salary will not be high the same as before, and sometimes it is lower than before. So, I'm talking with you about this issue, because probably the salary's system in Japan might not be suitable with the Thais. I said to the Japanese, that I got married too late and I have had a kid when I was 34 years, and now I'm almost 50 but my kid is still studying in a secondary school. I said to the Japanese, that they cannot make their culture a standard, and they should apply what is appropriate or suitable to the Thais' culture. Moreover, you know? What I suffer from the Japanese system, is that they let us (Thais) follow a system called "SOP", these letters stand for (Standard Operating Procedures). In my opinion, this system blocks our thinking, because we must follow "SOP" on everything, we cannot create and we cannot think out of this "SOP". I know that it is a wonderful system, because it standardized the system, but it is not suitable for the Thais, because the Thais like to be out of any control. We can find the way to make us work effectively together, if we can solve these problems, but the Japanese want the Thais just to follow what is written in their rules and make the Thais work like robots. On the other hand, I can say that there is nothing completely bad and vice versa. So, besides the good things, there might be bad things. The good thing in the Japanese system, is that they try to standardize everything, but it is inflexible. Speaking of myself and what I face in the organization nowadays, I can say that I made a system for my duties, or I and everyone in my department use the SOP. So, if someone resigns and another one comes over, he/she can work easily, which is very good for our organization. However, the problem is when you work for an organization which is not sincere with the employees; this might be a big problem. For example, when you are

working until 50 years, they might ask you to do an early retirement because they do not want to pay a big salary for elderly Thais. Another thing is considered a barrier, you know, now we get an order from Japan to let our organization all over the world follow the CSR system to be global. However, our company got this order, and we did not make it. We have problems with the labors. You know? It is because our managing director does not listen to anyone, he always thinks by himself, and when I ask for the reason, he cannot answer me. This makes many problems in our company. Also, what I see is that the Japanese like to appear wonderful, and any mistake they hide it for not making people see how much they are bad. It is not only for not making people see them bad, but also for not making the head quarter knows anything bad on them. This is a very bad habit in our top management. You know? When I first came to work in this company, I appreciated the Japanese, but when I worked with them for 12 years, I found that they are not clear. I'm really sad to know about this.

I: How can you design a training that can be mixed in different ways according to individual needs?

R: The training which is suitable for an intercultural team, in my opinion, first, you should separate the training course, because when we have training mixed to all Thais and Japanese, we let the translator translates from Thai language to Japanese language. But you know? To be honest a few Japanese have trainings because they are thinking that it is unnecessary for them, they think that they know more than the Thais. Furthermore, I used to provide training which is mixed for the Thais and Japanese and it is about how to have QC. Also, I designed for them walk rally program, and what I wanted from them is to have a good relationship with each other, but I did not succeed. The Japanese came just for 5-10 minutes, and then they are gone. They did not appreciate what I did; they were laughing and looking at me and the Thais, as silly people without seeing the output or the result from this training. As a result, I was very sad. I can say to you that, I really have no idea about training people from different cultures, especially for Japanese because they never feel pleased from the Thais. The Japanese consider the Thais, low level, low education, and everything they believe that they are better than the Thais.

I: What else shall I bear in mind in building intercultural teams as far as you concerned?

R: I just want to send a message to the Japanese. I want to say, that when they want their people come to work in Thailand, they should choose the right one, or "Put the right man in the right job". It is not just let the Japanese come to work in Thailand, and give them the power in order to control the Thais, without having any experience. For example, they sent one of the Japanese to be a producer manager, and he has not any experience in management. So, how he can control the employees? Moreover, I want to say to you, that when we have a meeting, if the managing director ordered something; then, someone argued or discussed with him, the MD is thinking that the one who is talking disobeys him. So, this is not a right way to build an intercultural team. You should not think that "Boss is Boss". The Japanese do not accept to work as a team, and they just follow their bosses, but never accept anything from the Thais. This behavior makes us always have problems in our organization. Additionally, the Japanese always look at the Thais as people who are very low, they consider that the Europeans are the first level, the second level is the Japanese, and the lowest levels are the Thais. This is may be bias, but you can ask other people and you might get the same knowledge. You know? This makes me eager to compete with them. I want to say to all the Thais to struggle and make foreigners accept us more than now. I want to say to all the Thais to develop themselves, for not making the others think that we are lower than others. But you know? Nowadays, the Thais work on the sufficient economy, which make us not fighting, not competitive, and not even thinking. We just work for taking salaries, we are not thinking about our future, so how can we survive? Our country maybe will have foreigners, if we are sleeping and not doing anything, "just let it go". Therefore, I always say that I want to make CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) to develop ourselves, to be steadfast and proud in our country.

Appendix B

Sample for Data Analysis for one of the participants of the Study

R2 = Respondent 2

L = Line number

C = Categories

CE = Category in Educating foreigners the others' cultures

CM1 = Category in Managers' characteristics

CT = Category in Team Building

CB = Category in Barriers

CC = Category in Communication issues

CM2 = Category in Management issues

CF = Category in Foreigners' cultures

CA = Category in Adaptability

CS = Category in Successful Intercultural Environment

R2, L. 69- 77, L. 84- 99, L. 180- 188, L. 225- 227, educating foreigners the others' cultures

In my opinion, people who live and work together, should respect each other and respect the others' cultures. But you know? In general, when we live in another country or another place, we should respect their own culture. For instance, if we work in Thailand, we should respect the Thais' culture, or if we work in Japan, we should respect the Japanese culture. Another important thing you should know is, that you should learn everything about the others' cultures (R2, L. 69- 77, CE).

You should learn about the Thais' culture or the culture of the country you are working and living, in order to know what you can do and what you can not do. Additionally, if the foreigner does not want to learn about the Thais' culture, so the Thais may teach foreigners, and tell them about the Thais' culture. You know? My boss used to ask me about the King, he was really surprised and wonder why the Thais love the king so much? And why the Thais wear yellow T-shirts every Monday in 2008? I said to him, that the King always helps us on everything, and whatever will happen, he will be next to all of us and solve any problem appears in Thailand. So, we can teach foreigners these kinds of knowledge, and you know the result? The Japanese followed us and wear the yellow T-shirt, which means that they can adapt themselves to the Thais' culture (R2, L. 84- 99, CE).

What we want from foreigners is to look at our environment, see what is possible and what is impossible to exist. I understand that in their country (Japan) they can say exactly what time they will reach their offices, because of the mass transportation system in Japan is wonderful. On the other hand, in Thailand we face a lot of traffic jam. So, we should be flexible and ask for reasons before we punish the employees (R2, L. 180-188, CE).

I said to the Japanese, that they cannot make their culture a standard, and they should apply what is appropriate or suitable to the Thais' culture (R2, L. 225-227, CE).

R2, L. 22- 28, L. 36- 45, L. 51- 54, L. 57- 66, managers' characteristics

I think that the competencies required for our managers must be a lot, because they are expected to drive our organizations. For example, a manager should have an open mind, world wide vision, accept others' thinking or opinions and do not follow the Japanese culture which says "Boss is Boss" with people in Thailand (R2, L. 22-28, CM1).

Moreover, I believe that managers, who can lead an organization, should be specialists in their work. Additionally, managers need to follow everything with the employees, and not just orders. Another important thing to drive an organization successfully is to know the level of all managers. Managers should know how to control their subordinates, have some knowledge about psychology, as well as to know how to apply this knowledge at work, to know how to deal with others, and to know how to plan for work (R2, L. 36-45, CM1).

The most important competencies are leadership skills, and HR. Managers should have human resource concepts in their minds, and the best thing is human resource development (R2, L. 51-54, CM1).

Also, when I said leadership competencies, I think I can cover all competencies required, because we can not specify which leadership style. So, any leader should have leadership competencies, in order to know how to lead and how to control and work effectively and efficiently with the subordinates. Also, leaders should have a strong background of their organizations, and a background of their subordinates, and possess strong skills to lead in the right direction and effectively (R2, L. 57-66, CM1).

R2, L. 136- 151, L. 156- 162, team Building

To build group cohesion in an intercultural team, I should let the employees have activities together. For example, last year I let them have a walk rally. All Japanese and all Thais went together, ate and stayed together for 2-3 days, and you know? In this period, they all had good relationships with each other. They shared the troubles, the happiness and everything, in order to make good things for our social, and to feel that they are one hand in the environment. For example, we went to a school in Chaiyaphum province, to give food for students, build new classrooms for them, and water the plants to grow vegetables for them, etc. We called this project “from heart to heart” this project made everyone; either Thais or Japanese felt that we did something valuable together. Also, this made the Japanese feel proud of themselves and that they can do a good thing for Thailand (R2, L. 136-151, CT).

I want to tell you something, you know? When you want to see a cohesive team in any workplace, you should think of something they can do out of work to let them stick together, because at work we are bosses and subordinates. Meanwhile, if we are out of our workplace, we will talk about things which make us know each other more (R2, L. 156-162, CT).

R2, L. 28- 34, L. 34- 36, L. 77- 84, L. 162- 166, L. 205- 211, L. 227- 239, L. 249- 271, L. 279- 289, L. 290- 295, L. 306- 315, barriers

In my point of view, the competencies of the Japanese managers are not excellent, and they are not better than the Thais. However, the Japanese have more chances than the Thais, because the Japanese are the owners of our organization. As such, they let the Japanese come and control the Thais in our organization, which is a big problem (R2, L. 28-34, CB).

Also, the Japanese never accept to be less than the Thais at work, but if they think for a little bit and open their minds, we can work together effectively (R2, L. 34-36, CB).

Moreover, when you have knowledge about the others' cultures, you should bear in mind that there are some things you cannot do it if you are staying in a foreign country. I'm saying so, because my boss is Japanese, and when he gets upset or mad at something, he used to kick everything in front of him. So, Japanese should learn about the Thais' culture, because this is not the Thais' behavior (R2, L. 77-84, CB).

Furthermore, we feel serious with the Japanese bosses because they like to do things straightforward, according to their rules and regulations. However, they should think of the environment in Thailand, it is not the same as Japan (R2, L. 162-166, CB).

The barriers, first the foreigners' disciplines in my company. They do not look for the truth, and they are not reasonable. Second, the foreigners manage our organization by their own system. For example, in Japan, they have steps or rules for the salary's system, but in Thailand we do not have the same system. In other words, they try to put their systems in our organization (R2, L. 205-211, CB).

Moreover, you know? What I suffer from the Japanese system, is that they let us (Thais) follow a system called "SOP", these letters stand for (Standard Operating Procedures). In my opinion, this system blocks our thinking, because we must follow "SOP" on everything, we cannot create and we cannot think out of this "SOP". I know that it is a wonderful system, because it standardized the system, but it is not suitable for the Thais, because the Thais like to be out of any control. We can find the way to make us work effectively together, if we can solve these problems, but the Japanese want the Thais just to follow what is written in their rules and make the Thais work like robots (R2, L. 227-239, CB).

The problem is when you work for an organization which is not sincere with the employees; this might be a big problem. For example, when you are working until 50 years, they might ask you to do an early retirement because they do not want to pay a big salary for elderly Thais. Another thing is considered a barrier, you know, now we get an order from Japan to let our organization all over the world follow the CSR system to be global. However, our company got this order, and we did not make it. We have problems with the labors. You know? It is because our managing director does not listen to anyone, he always thinks by himself, and when I ask for the reason, he cannot answer me. This makes many problems in our company. Also, what I see is that the Japanese like to appear wonderful, and any mistake they hide it for not making people see how much they are bad. It is not only for not making people see them bad, but also for not making the head quarter knows anything bad on them. This is a very bad habit in our top management. You know? When I first came to work in this company, I appreciated the Japanese, but when I worked with them for 12 years, I found that they are not clear. I'm really sad to know this (R2, L. 249-271, CB).

To be honesty, a few Japanese have trainings because they are thinking that it is unnecessary for them, they think that they know more than the Thais. Furthermore, I used to provide training which is mixed for the Thais and Japanese and it is about how to have QC. Also, I designed for them walk rally program, and what I wanted from them is to have a good relationship with each other, but I did not succeed. The Japanese came just for 5-10 minutes, and then they are gone. They did not appreciate what I did; they were laughing and looking at me and the Thais, as silly people without seeing the output or the result from this training

(R2, L. 279-289, CB).

As a result, I was very sad. I can say to you that, I really have no idea about training people from different cultures, especially for Japanese because they never feel pleased from the Thais. The Japanese consider the Thais, low level, low education, and everything they believe that they are better than the Thais (R2, L. 290-295, CB).

Moreover, I want to say to you, that when we have a meeting, if the managing director ordered something; then, someone argued or discussed with him, the MD is thinking that the one who is talking disobeys him. So, this is not a right way to build an intercultural team. You should not think that “Boss is Boss”. The Japanese do not accept to work as a team, and they just follow their bosses, but never accept anything from the Thais. This behavior makes us always have problems in our organization (R2, L. 306-315, CB).

R2, L. 151- 156, L. 274- 278, communication issues

We have another activity to make the Thais and the Japanese work in a cohesive team; such as, communication’s party. Every four months, Thais and Japanese make a party and invite their leaders from each department in our company to communicate together (R2, L. 151-156, CC).

The training which is suitable for an intercultural team, in my opinion, first, you should separate the training course, because when we have training mixed to all Thais and Japanese, we let the translator translates from Thai language to Japanese language (R2, L. 274-278, CC).

R2, L. 14- 22, L. 54- 57, L. 298- 303, management issues

If I’m going to talk about the Japanese competencies, although they are in the top management, their levels of competencies are very low. I think the Japanese who are working in the top management in our company, were chosen by their teams in Japan. For example, our financial director (FD) is very young and he has no experiences. When he worked in Japan, his position was just a supervisor and not in the top management like his position in Thailand (R2, L. 14-22, CM2).

I think in my company, the top management should develop themselves, as well as develop our organization to be more successful and gain more outcome (R2, L. 54-57, CM2).

I just want to send a message to the Japanese. I want to say, that when they want their people come to work in Thailand, they should choose the right one, or "Put the right man in the right job". It is not just let the Japanese come to work in Thailand, and give them the power in order to control the Thais, without having any experience (R2, L. 298-303, CM2).

R2, L. 9- 14, L. 315-320, L. 321-333, foreigners' cultures

Speaking of the Japanese culture, in my opinion, they just listen and perceive any order or command from their bosses only. In other words, when a Japanese leader orders something, the employee just follows and implements what he/she was told immediately. Thus, it seems like that the employees should block their thinking (R2, L. 9-14, CF).

The Japanese always look at the Thais as people who are very low, they consider that the Europeans are the first level, the second level is the Japanese, and the lowest levels are the Thais. This is may be bias, but you can ask other people and you might get the same knowledge (R2, L. 315-320, CF).

I want to say to all the Thais to struggle and make foreigners accept us more than now. I want to say to all the Thais to develop themselves, for not making the others think that we are lower than others. But you know? Nowadays, the Thais work on the sufficient economy, which make us not fighting, not competitive, and not even thinking. We just work for taking salaries, we are not thinking about our future, so how can we survive? Our country maybe will have foreigners, if we are sleeping and not doing anything, "just let it go". Therefore, I always say that I want to make CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) to develop ourselves, to be steadfast and proud in our country (R2, L. 321-333, CF).

R2, L. 99- 104, adaptability

Most importantly, there is something called CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) a way to adapt yourself with people from different background. For example, when I went to Japan, I knew what people like and dislike, and after that I knew that I should follow and adapt myself to the social there (R2, L. 99-104, CA).

R2, L. 107- 114, L. 114-125, L. 127-133, L. 193-201, successful intercultural environment

We can strengthen an organization, first, by taking technology and innovation from different countries, different nationalities and different cultures. Second, is to brainstorming, or we take a lot of technology and innovations, then we can discuss and brainstorm together. Third, we can take the result from the brainstorming sessions, and implement what have been discussed to strengthen our organization (R2, L. 107-114, CS).

We learned about the QC in our organization. As a result, all of us in the organization learnt from this system, how to analyze any problem we face.

Another system is called Kaizen, is a wonderful system for any organization. Also, some of the Japanese behavior are really great, such as alertness. The

Japanese never be quiet, they are always alert on everything. I will give you an example, if today they do something good, tomorrow they will make it better and better. They will not stop developing, and this is the greatest behavior on them. When we take this behavior from the Japanese and adopt it with the Thais, it will help us a lot in our organization (R2, L. 114-125, CS).

Our organization provides high salaries for everyone, even the Thais, they get high salaries compared to salaries in other companies, and I m sure about that. I will tell you about the salary system in my organization. There is a difference between salary and welfare. Besides the salary, they will look at your position, rent, how much you are working hard, for lunch, for night shifts and bonus (R2, L. 127-133, CS).

The success factors for an intercultural environment are, being reasonable, not only rules, not only regulations, but also everything should be reasonable. Another thing might be good for an intercultural work environment, is the good discipline from foreigners. Good discipline from foreigners might be a good thing we can get from them. Moreover, taking innovations or new technologies and experiences from foreigners are considered some of the success factors as well (R2, L. 193-201, CS).

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Brief Introduction to the Book

The sea of information about different cultures is insufficient to make people more effective, efficient, and motivated in their intercultural workplace. Management practices have to be integrated with cultural diversity to avoid barriers experienced by competing cultures. This book builds on the insights, experiences, visions, and researches of many people. Apparently, it is not always easy to understand and appreciate the actions of people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Hence, this book is designed to identify the competencies required for managers of intercultural consultancy services to optimize the effects of cultural diversity in Thai automotive companies; to investigate ways that allow diversity to work effectively; and to recognize barriers confronted by different cultures in international corporations. This book may be used in cross-cultural management courses for both graduate and undergraduate students. This book may also help in providing general knowledge to those who work or manage diversity in the workplace, with the aim of turning diversity into a competitive advantage.

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