Social difficulty in a foreign culture: an empirical analysis of culture shock
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Introduction

THIS CHAPTER deals with cross-cultural contact in international educational exchange. In particular, theory and research pertaining to the social difficulties of overseas students will be reviewed, and an original experiment described. Although international education is only one of many forms of cross-cultural contact, it is a very important meeting ground. What distinguishes overseas study from other kinds of interchange is its relatively benign character, although there have always been political overtones associated with exchange schemes (Bochner, 1979); in the nature of its participants, who have generally been young and members of the elite; and its implicit values, encouraging the students to transcend cultural and national boundaries, or at least make an attempt to do so in the interests of creating a scholarly or scientific network to further the expansion of knowledge in their particular area of expertise (Useem, Useem and McCarthy, 1979).

Like most other instances of contact, educational exchange has an ancient tradition. People preoccupied with contemporary race relations tend to ignore that since the dawn of time, individuals brought up in one culture have travelled to other lands, there to trade, teach, learn, convert, succour, settle or conquer. Cross-cultural education is no exception. As Brickman (1965) has shown, the idea of studying abroad is as old as recorded history.

The highly visible foreign scholar, constituting 10 per cent or more of the student population on many campuses throughout the western world (Bochner and Wicks, 1972), suggests to the casual observer that international education is a modern phenomenon, characteristic particularly of the post-colonial era. This is not so. Thus during the reign of the Emperor Asoka the Great of India (273–232 B.C.), the University of Taxila became a major international institution, attracting students from all over Asia Minor, and requiring its graduates to travel abroad following the completion of their courses. In China the emperors
of the T'ang Dynasty (620–907) fostered international education. Alexander the Great provided for a kind of Rhodes Scholarship in his will. The early Roman emperors encouraged foreign teachers to come to Rome. In the Middle Ages the European university, essentially an international institution of higher learning, came into existence. In modern times, particularly in the period after the Second World War to the present, governments and foundations have supported a huge movement of students and scholars across cultural boundaries (e.g. Bochner and Wicks, 1972; Fulbright, 1976; Klineberg, 1970a, b, 1976), but the phenomenon is not new, nor are the psychological problems associated with it.

Similarly, migration has an ancient tradition, of which perhaps the most dramatic example is the settling of the so-called New World by immigrants from Europe and Asia within the space of three or four centuries. International trade and technical assistance have also long been part of the world scene. The novel *Shogun* (Clavell, 1975), set in the first Elizabethan era, raises issues identical to those being debated today, such as the effect of multinational corporations, the diffusion of innovations, modernization, and industrialization (e.g. Kumar, 1979).

Psychology, being a young science, is a relative newcomer to the commentary on cross-cultural contact. However, it has made up for its belated and piecemeal entry by a burgeoning research output, much of which has been reviewed elsewhere in this volume. The general theme running through the psychological literature is that life was not meant to be easy for the sojourner in foreign lands. This view of the matter was established by the early writers, many of whom concentrated on the more noxious aspects of cross-cultural contact. Perhaps the best-known pioneer in this area was Stonequist (1937), who published an influential book called *The Marginal Man*, dealing with the problems encountered by persons caught between two cultural systems, not belonging to or accepted by either group.

The next wave of empirical research dealing with the difficulties of the cross-cultural sojourner was stimulated by the post-Second World War boom in student exchanges. The most important studies were undoubtedly those supported by the Social Science Research Council, and published by the University of Minnesota Press, inquiring into the adjustment problems of foreign students in the United States (Bennett, Passin and McKnight, 1958; Lambert and Bressler, 1956; Morris, 1960; Scott, 1956; Selltiz et al., 1963; Sewell and Davidsen, 1961).

At about the same time, two new concepts were introduced into the literature, both with negative connotations for the psychological welfare of the sojourner. The first was the notion of culture shock (Oberg, 1960), or the idea that entering a new culture is potentially a confusing and disorienting experience. This concept has been widely used (and misused) to "explain" the difficulties of the cross-cultural sojourner, and we shall return to it later in the present chapter. The second concept was the notion of the U-curve of adjustment, or the idea
that cross-cultural sojourners progress through three main phases: an initial stage of elation and optimism, followed by a period of frustration, depression and confusion, which then slowly turns into feelings of confidence and satisfaction (Coelho, 1958; Deutsch and Won, 1963; Du Bois, 1956; Gullahorn and Gullahorn, 1963; Jacobson, 1963; Lysgaard, 1955; Selltiz and Cook, 1962; Sewell, Morris and Davidsen, 1954).

Another major research effort came about due to problems encountered by the Peace Corps movement in the 1960s. Thousands of young American volunteer workers went abroad to teach and provide medical, technical and welfare assistance to the less fortunate peoples of the world. A condition of the Peace Corps programme was that the volunteers had to adopt a lifestyle similar to that of the indigenous folk among whom they were working. Not surprisingly, many of these young Americans found the experience bewildering, and quite a few succumbed and had to be repatriated. When these problems became evident the Peace Corps asked for professional advice, and many psychologists, usually with a clinical background, became involved in research and therapy (Guthrie, 1975; Guthrie and Zektick, 1967; Harris, 1973; Smith, 1966; Textor, 1966). This programme also marks the first major attempt to prepare people for work and study in other cultures. Whereas most of the previous research was concerned with describing the difficulties of the sojourner, developing theories to account for these difficulties, and testing hypotheses about the determinants of these stresses, the Peace Corps psychologists had a practical problem on their hands: how to alleviate the stress being experienced by many of their current volunteers, and how to inoculate future Peace Corps workers against "culture shock".

A similar need arose in the private sector, with the increase in multinational trade during the post-war reconstruction period. Companies found that their overseas operations were being hampered because their staff were not coping with unfamiliar social and business practices (Fayerweather, 1959; Skinner, 1968; Triandis, 1967; Wilson, 1961). Experts engaged in technical assistance, and military personnel, experienced similar problems (Boxer, 1969; Brislin, 1979). Applied social psychologists responded by devising various cross-cultural training and orientation programmes, of which a very good example are the culture assimilators produced at the University of Illinois (Fiedler, Mitchell and Triandis, 1971; Foa and Chemers, 1967; Triandis, 1975). An excellent review of cross-cultural training methods has recently been published by Brislin and Pedersen (1976).

In summary, the sojourn literature has a distinct clinical flavour. The problems of the sojourner tend to be conceptualized within a medical model. Sojourners who experience difficulties are considered to have suffered a breakdown in their normal healthy psychological functioning, and require therapy and counselling. For example, an influential recent book has the title Counseling Across Cultures (Pedersen, Lonner, and Draguns, 1976) reinforcing this view, and many clinically oriented psychologists have extended and applied traditional psycho-
therapeutic models and techniques to problems connected with adjusting to a new culture.

A contrary view has been proposed by Bochner, briefly touched on in Chapter 1, and more fully developed in a recent book (Bochner, 1981). This view states that the major task facing a sojourner is not to adjust to a new culture, but to learn its salient characteristics. In particular, if the sojourner is to work effectively in the new setting, and lead a relatively stress-free and fulfilling life, the person must acquire the social skills of the host culture, especially knowledge necessary to negotiate everyday social encounters with members of the receiving society. Several consequences flow from adopting a culture learning model of the cross-cultural sojourn:

(1) Failures and problems experienced by the sojourner need not be regarded as symptoms of some underlying pathology, but rather due to a lack of the necessary cultural skills and knowledge. Consequently, remedial action does not involve seeking out conflicts, “making the unconscious conscious”, giving reassurance, systematic desensitization, or any of the other techniques that have been applied to this area. Rather, remedial action involves imparting appropriate knowledge and skills, and this may be achieved by using standard social skills training methods such as instruction, modelling, role-playing, video-feedback and homework (Argyle, 1979).

(2) “Adjusting” a person to a culture has connotations of cultural chauvinism, implying that the newcomer should abandon the culture of origin in favour of embracing the values and customs of the host society. On the other hand, learning a second culture has no such ethnocentric overtones. There are many examples in life when it becomes necessary to learn a practice even if one does not approve of it, and then abandon the custom when circumstances have changed. Americans will find that they have to stand much closer to an Arab during interaction in the Middle East than they would with fellow-Americans at home. Japanese must learn to have more eye-contact with westerners during conversation than is customary in their own culture. Australians in Great Britain of necessity have to learn to drink warm beer, a habit they discard as soon as they depart. An English gentleman in Japan will learn to push and shove his way onto the Tokyo subway, but resume his normal queuing practice after returning home. The possession of a particular skill by itself carries no value judgement — the act attracts notice only when the appropriate skill is not available, or the skill is used in inappropriate circumstances.

In summary, there is a good deal of truth in the assertion that life was not meant to be easy for the cross-cultural sojourner. However, there is little utility in thinking of sojourners as mentally confused people needing therapy and “adjustment”. Rather, sojourners lack certain vital skills and knowledge, and can therefore be thought of as selectively ignorant, and in need of education and
training, particularly in relation to everyday social encounters with members of the host culture, in the homes, market-place, factories, offices and playing fields of the receiving society.

To date, the social skills model has been developed and used primarily in connection with the problem of intra-cultural social inadequacy. The present chapter extends this model to account for the social incompetence of the cross-cultural sojourner. The next section will briefly review the social skills model as it has been developed at Oxford University for work within English society. Then the model will be extended to include cross-cultural social inadequacy. The final part of this chapter describes an experiment that was generated by the extension of the social skills model to the sojourning foreign student.

Social skills, inadequacy and cross-cultural competence

It was Argyle and Kendon (1967) who first suggested that it may be useful to construe the behaviour of people interacting with each other, as a mutually organized, skilled performance. Inter-personal difficulties occur when this performance breaks down, falters, or indeed cannot be successfully initiated in the first place. The model has implicit in it several reasons for, and explanations of, unsatisfactory inter-personal encounters, amongst them the following: (a) the individual's goals may be inappropriate or unattainable in the given situation; (b) the individual may fail to perceive or attend to some of the messages and behaviours being emitted by the other person; (c) some of the other person's behaviour and messages may be misinterpreted, or given the wrong attribution (Jones, 1976); (d) the individual may not know how to respond adequately, or make responses which in the circumstances are judged as inappropriate or inadequate by the other person.

Although the social skills model is not without its problems (Pendleton and Furnham, 1980; Yardley, 1979), it has stimulated a great deal of research (for recent reviews see Argyle, 1979; Gambrill, 1977). In particular, a considerable amount of work has gone into the assessment and treatment of social inadequacy (Sundberg, Snowden and Reynolds, 1978; Trower, Bryant and Argyle, 1978). Socially inadequate individuals are people who have failed to learn a wide range of inter-personal skills, due to poor child—parent and peer group relationships, and because of other forms of social and physical deprivation. Such individuals are incompetent in, or incapable of, certain verbal exchanges; they are unable to accurately interpret or perform non-verbal signals; they have not mastered the social conventions of the society at large, and may also be unaware of many of the rules of social behaviour pertaining to their own particular subgroup. Thus it could be said that socially inadequate individuals are often like strangers in their own land and culture. Some of the specific behaviours which the socially incompetent perform unsatisfactorily, include expressing attitudes, feelings and emotions; adopting the appropriate proxemic posture; understanding the gaze
patterns of the people they are interacting with; carrying out ritualized routines such as greetings, leave-taking, self-disclosure, making or refusing requests; and asserting themselves. All of these elements of social interaction have been shown to vary across cultures (Furnham, 1979; Hall, 1959; Hall and Beil-Warner, 1978; Leff, 1977).

Turning this argument around, it follows that people who are new to a culture or subculture will not have been socialized in the rules and routines of behaviour pertaining to that society, and will therefore at least initially be socially unskilled in their new environment. Individuals in this predicament include foreign students, visiting academics, businessmen and diplomats. Many of these people tend to be highly skilled in the verbal and non-verbal facets of interaction of their own society, and find their inadequacy in the new culture particularly frustrating and embarrassing. Ordinary everyday situations such as attending parties, making contact with the opposite sex, ordering meals, shopping, even using the bathroom, all activities which hitherto presented no problems, suddenly become major obstacles.

The social skills model as it is being extended here has clear implications for the understanding and management of cross-cultural incompetence. The theoretical guidelines for remedial action are quite clear: First, it is necessary to identify the specific social situations which trouble that particular sojourner, and then give the individual specific training in those skills that are lacking. This raises the more fundamental question whether such knowledge can be imparted in the first place. After all, it is possible that social skills, like virtue, do not readily lend themselves to being taught. Fortunately, the evidence, based on intracultural studies, i.e. where the subjects are incompetent in their culture of origin, generally supports the efficacy of remedial training. For example (Argyle, 1979), at least seven social skills are capable of being developed in lacking individuals. They are:

1. Perceptive skills: co-ordinating verbal and non-verbal behaviour, encouraging the speaker, and giving appropriate feedback.
2. Expressive skills: speaking loudly and clearly, with the appropriate emotional tone in the voice.
3. Conversation skills: appropriate timing, speaker exchanges, topics, and self-disclosure.
4. Assertiveness: standing up for one’s own rights without aggression or undue passivity.
5. Emotional expression: the expression of a full range of appropriate emotions in various situations.
6. Anxiety management: coping with social anxiety during moments of stress, such as in decision-making, or when being the focus of attention.
7. Affiliative skills: being able to express feelings of warmth, affection, and sexuality where appropriate.
Other research (e.g. Pendleton and Furnham, 1980; Trower, Bryant and Argyle, 1978) also supports the feasibility of the social skills training method for same-culture or subculture clients, and there is no reason to suppose that the procedure would not work with persons from one society learning the social customs of another, quite different, culture. However, this proposition still awaits empirical verification.

Cross-cultural misunderstanding, social skills and culture shock

Earlier we listed two advantages of construing the foreign sojourn as a culture-learning problem rather than employing psycho-dynamic explanations: the first was that no value-judgements were being made about the relative merit of the two societies; the second was that the culture-learning model had obvious implications for remedial action. This latter element of the model was the topic of the preceding section, where the problem was spelled out as consisting of a deficit in specifiable social skills, skills that are known to be capable of being taught to receptive individuals.

A third advantage in analysing cross-cultural misunderstanding from the perspective of the culture-learning/social skills model is that it leads to quite precise operational definitions of the concept, as will be shown in the next section by comparing the social skills approach with the culture shock formulations. Labels such as culture shock, culture fatigue or culture strain (Guthrie, 1966) are rather loose, tend to refer to hypothetical intrapsychic events which have not been subjected to independent, objective verification, and yet are often used as explanatory principles (Bochner, Lin and McLeod, 1980). In contrast, the social skills model stays very close to its data, and its conclusions rest on information about how particular groups experience specific situations in particular host societies. The generality of the model is achieved by relating such empirical outcomes to the underlying principle that smooth social interaction requires a basic, mutual understanding by the participants of the rules, roles and goals of the social episode they are engaged in (Harre, 1977).

Culture shock

The term “culture shock”, like that of jet lag, is now part of the popular vocabulary. It was initially introduced by Oberg (1960), and referred to the distress experienced by the sojourner as a result of losing all the familiar signs and symbols of social interaction.

These signs or cues include the thousand and one ways in which we orient ourselves to the situations of daily life: when to shake hands and what to say when we meet people, when and how to give tips, how to give orders to servants, how to make purchases, when to accept and when to refuse invi-
tions, when to take statements seriously and when not. Now these cues which may be words, gestures, facial expressions, customs, or norms are acquired by all of us in the course of growing up and are as much a part of our culture as the language we speak or the beliefs we accept. All of us depend for our peace of mind and our efficiency on hundreds of these cues, most of which we do not carry on the level of conscious awareness (p. 177).

In a largely anecdotal article Oberg mentions at least six aspects of culture shock:

1. strain due to the effort required to make necessary psychological adaptations;
2. a sense of loss and feelings of deprivation in regard to friends, status, profession and possessions;
3. being rejected by and/or rejecting members of the new culture;
4. confusion in role, role expectations, values, feelings and self-identity;
5. surprise, anxiety, even disgust and indignation after becoming aware of cultural differences;
6. feelings of impotence due to not being able to cope with the new environment.

Other writers have added their own interpretations to the condition. Hall (1959) defined culture shock as the removal or distortion of many of the familiar cues of one's environment, and their substitution by other cues which are strange. Smalley (1963) proposed four stages of culture shock, a formulation that appears to be a combination of the culture shock notion with the U-curve of adjustment hypothesis. The four phases are:

1. fascination with the new culture, yet being faced with various barriers preventing social interaction with host nationals;
2. hostility and frustration with aspects of the new culture, and a possible emphasis on the superiority of the original culture;
3. improvement and adjustment with an expression of humour and decreased tension;
4. biculturalism where the sojourner develops a full understanding of host cultural norms.

Smalley (1963) emphasized the importance of language differences in culture shock. However this view neglects the important role played by non-verbal communication (Argyle, 1975).

Byrnes (1965) talked of role shock, referring to unsuccessful relationships with co-national and equal-status peers, as well as with higher-status host nationals. Guthrie (1966) used the term culture fatigue to describe the continuous minute adjustments required for day-to-day living in a foreign culture.

Cleveland, Mangone and Adams (1960), in an anecdotal report of Americans abroad, describe some of their problems in China and Japan:
There is the protocol of where to sit, when to leave, how long to carry on the small talk before the real subject of conversation is broached — matters which certainly arise in American social intercourse, but in a more muted and subtle way. To Americans there seems to be an exaggerated insincere obsequiousness in other societies, the bowing and scraping, the flowery introductions and leave-takings, the endless formal handshaking (p. 37).

Numerous writers have noted the shock and surprise that travellers experience when they become aware of ethnic or colour differences, especially if they come from racially homogeneous or segregated societies. Tajfel and Dawson (1965) performed a content analysis of essays written by seventy-three foreign students in Britain. They found that the variables affecting adaptation to British society include skin colour, country of origin, language, social structure and previous experience with British behaviour patterns. Racial prejudice and discrimination featured prominently in the essays of the students. Many had been badly prepared by misleading information from expatriates or by information services. They had particular difficulty in obtaining and negotiating lodgings, starting and maintaining opposite-sex relationships, and securing employment.

Carey (1956) described the social adaptation of colonial students in Britain, paying attention also to the reactions of host nationals to the visitors. Because of their excessively optimistic expectations these students often became disappointed, a feeling which was exacerbated by accommodation problems and British prejudice.

To a great extent, colonial students in London find that their contacts with British people are restricted to relationships of a "formal" kind. Various organizations try to introduce them to Londoners, but with relatively little success. In the formal context of official introductions both groups tend to regard each other as stereotypes, and the relationships that ensue are generally not what the students desire (p. 164).

Carey noted that the British make only the roughest of distinctions between the various groups of colonial students, a finding similar to that reported by Hodgkin (1972) in Australia, where overseas students from the many diverse cultures of South-East Asia tend to be placed together in one category, the "Asian", by members of the host culture.

Singh (1963) interviewed over 300 Indian students in Britain, asking them about their friends, their relations with the opposite sex, their leisure time activities and their adjustment, He found that nearly half of the sample experienced difficulties that they had not anticipated. These related mainly to loneliness, home-sickness, lack of training in looking after themselves, food difficulties, and worries about domestic problems back home. Nearly half the students had academic problems, mainly due to language problems, particularly in oral expression, the higher standard of British universities, and difficulties in teacher—student relationships. Academic difficulties were significantly negatively cor-
related with adjustment. Adjustment was related to place of residence (students had more difficulty at Oxbridge than provincial universities), social class (upper-class students were better adjusted than middle-class students), duration of stay (a U-shaped curve of up to 3 years, with high adjustment in the initial and last phases and comparatively low adjustment in the middle), and social skills (there was a positive correlation between social skill and adjustment). Singh concluded:

... the survey has shown that it may be misleading to consider the Indian students as an undifferentiated group. Their problems of adjustment to different spheres of life — social, personal and academic — depended on various factors such as social class, age, personality traits, level of study, type of university, and duration of stay in this country. It is important to emphasize this point since most of the previous studies of foreign students have overlooked the differences between them (p. 117).

The bulk of the literature on international student experiences has concerned itself with the impact of Western culture on sojourners from the less-developed parts of the world. However, a few reports do exist that have looked at how students from the so-called Third World fare in a nation that is itself underdeveloped, and there are also some investigations of Western students in Third World countries. These studies have come up with results identical to those pertaining to Asian and African students in the West. Thus Zaidi (1975), in a survey of foreign Muslim students in Pakistan, reported widespread social isolation, with only a very few of these students having any personal relationships with local families. In a study of American students in Taiwan, Yeh et al. (1973) found that social relationships between the visitors and their hosts were seen by both groups as being superficial, limited and unsatisfactory.

After a very thorough review of the literature on coping with unfamiliar cultures, Taft (1977) offers a framework for analysing adaptation to new cultures. He identified four major aspects of the adaptation process, the first two involving dynamic processes and the second two involving the acquisition of competence in culturally appropriate behaviour and culturally defined roles and attitudes.

Though Taft does not refer to social skills per se, he clearly supports a skill-based explanation for cultural coping. He concludes:

Specifically it is suggested that the effect of all culture contact situations that evoke in individuals the need to cope with an unfamiliar culture can be analysed in terms of employment of new cognitive, dynamic and performance mechanisms by the participants and their development of new coping repertoires (p. 151).

In order to comprehend how and why certain problems arise, it is useful to consider the culture from which the visitor originates. Watson (1977) showed that it is necessary to study the social system of the migrant’s home country
in order to comprehend his or her adjustment difficulties. Such comparative studies, where the sending and receiving societies are contrasted, are relatively rare in the literature.

In summary, the extent and duration of what has been described as culture shock, is dependent on conditions that can be classified into three broad categories:

1. **Cultural differences.** The quality, quantity and duration of social difficulty appears to be a function of the differences between the foreigner's culture of origin and the receiving society (Glaser, 1979; Porter, 1972; Stewart, 1966). This difference is of course multidimensional and it is possible that the two cultures may be very similar on one factor (e.g. sex role relationships) and very different on others (e.g. non-verbal communication).

2. **Individual differences.** Large individual differences exist in the ability of people to cope with new environments. Demographic and personality variables such as age, sex, cognitive ability, socioeconomic class and education may all be relevant. It has often been said, for example, that younger, more intelligent and better-educated people should adjust faster to host cultural patterns than older, less intelligent and less-educated individuals. However, there is very little empirical evidence regarding the role of personality factors in culture learning (Taft, 1981).

3. **Sojourn experience.** The quality of learning a new culture is dependent on the experiences a person has in it, especially at the beginning of the visit. If sojourners are carefully introduced into a new society by close, sympathetic host culture friends, the evidence indicates that they may encounter fewer problems than if they are left to fend for themselves (Selltiz and Cook, 1962; Shattuck, 1965). Certain racial characteristics may also act either to the foreigner's advantage or disadvantage. Finally, the treatment that sojourners receive from the host culture is to some extent contingent on how they conduct themselves, particularly in the early stages of the visit.

There is little doubt that culture shock exists, and plays a major role in cross-cultural contact. The evidence indicates that when people move from one culture to another they frequently find the experience bewildering, confusing, depressing, anxiety-provoking, humiliating, embarrassing and generally stressful in nature. After a period the majority of the sojourners begin to cope with their new environment, and lead effective and satisfying lives. This in essence is the content of the culture shock/U-curve hypothesis, and in a descriptive sense quite accurate. The limitation of the "culture shock" formulation lies in its simplistic theoretical foundation, its non-specific nature and its lack of clear implications for remedial action, i.e. how to reduce culture shock.

To the extent that the culture shock hypothesis has a theoretical base, it is to suppose that the problems of the sojourner stem from the absence or distor-
tion of familiar cues. However, this hypothesis is much too broad, since the lack of familiarity could be within any one or all of the aspects of the new society, including its physical, technological, climatic, political, legal, educational and sociocultural fields. The hypothesis makes no differential predictions about the relative importance of these various areas. Therefore the culture shock hypothesis cannot be used to generate culture training schemes, since it would be necessary to teach a sojourner literally everything about a new culture in order to alleviate that person's culture shock; an impractical idea. A corollary is that it is strictly speaking not possible to conduct research on the determinants of culture shock, since it is conceived as the function of an infinite number of antecedent variables.

However, the ideas underlying the notion of culture shock are valuable, but they need to be formulated so as to lead to specific predictions, testable hypotheses, and soundly based training programmes. The evidence suggests that at the core of what has been labelled "culture shock" is the reaction of sojourners to problems encountered in their dealings with host members. It follows that a major if not critical determinant of second-culture coping, is the skill with which a sojourner can enter into a relationship with a host person, maintain that relationship, and draw it to a mutually satisfactory conclusion. This formulation overcomes many of the objections raised earlier in connection with the traditional culture shock hypothesis. The present approach states that culture shock occurs within a specific domain, namely in the social encounters, social situations, social episodes, or social transactions between sojourners and host nationals. The present approach generates specific and testable hypotheses regarding the main determinants of culture shock, namely the lack of requisite social skills with which to negotiate these situations. The present formulation also provides specific implications for research and remedial training, namely the need to identify which social situations, in which sojourner culture-host culture combination, are the most troublesome; and to devise training techniques to teach those specific skills. Once these cultural skills have been mastered it is assumed that the sojourner will be able to acquire the second culture with a minimum of "shock".

However, the social skills are seldom taught or acquired in formal training courses. They are acquired informally (or not at all), within behaviour settings that can vary from the benign and helpful to the vicious and hostile. The evidence, some of which was reviewed earlier, indicates that the quality of the sojourn experience is a vital factor in accelerating or inhibiting culture learning. However, the literature is vague with respect to the empirical ingredients that enter into the quality of the sojourn experience. The list is over-inclusive, and contains everything from the behaviour of landladies (Krutli, 1972), accommodation and food (Wicks, 1972), the availability of sexual outlets, loneliness and homesickness (Sunder Das, 1972), to the already mentioned experiences of discrimination (Lawson, 1972; Tajfel and Dawson, 1965) and status loss (Morris,
1960). On reflection, the “quality of the sojourn experience” variables are all linked to the kinds of social networks that the sojourners have been able or unable to establish. In the next section a social networks analysis of the sojourn experience will attempt to unify the scattered and disparate findings in this area, and suggest specific hypotheses about the determinants of some of the sojourn patterns reported in the literature. The chapter ends with the account of an experiment that arose out of the ideas being expressed here.

Social networks of sojourners

Klineberg (1970a, b) has noted that there is often limited personal contact between foreign students and host nationals. Richardson (1974) has shown that there is a difference in the friendship patterns of satisfied as opposed to dissatisfied British immigrants in Australia, the dissatisfied migrants having more compatriot and fewer host national friends. Sellitz and Cook (1962) found that sojourners who reported having at least one close friend who was a host member, experienced fewer difficulties than sojourners with no host culture friends. Shattuck (1965) reports that sojourners found personal, informal orientation much more effective than institutionally sponsored assistance. In a study carried out in Australia, Au (1969) found that the degree of personal contact between Chinese-Malaysian students and host nationals was positively related to the students’ attitude toward Australia.

Recently, Bochner and his co-workers (Bochner, Buker and McLeod, 1976; Bochner, McLeod and Lin, 1977; Bochner and Orr, 1979) have shown that sojourning overseas students tend to belong to three social networks:

1. A primary, monocultural network consisting of close friendships with other sojourning compatriots. The main function of the co-national network is to provide a setting in which the sojourners can rehearse and express their culture of origin.

2. A secondary, bicultural network, consisting of bonds between sojourners and significant host nationals such as academics, landladies, student advisers and government officials. The main function of this network is to instrumentally facilitate the academic and professional aspirations of the sojourner.

3. A third network is the foreign student’s multicultural circle of friends and acquaintances. The main function of this network is to provide companionship for recreational, non-culture and non-task oriented activities.

Social network theory has clear implications for the acquisition of the social skills of a second society: culture learning will be a positive function of the number of host culture friends an overseas student has, in particular the extent to which the student has been able to gain membership in suitable bicultural social networks. The advantage of this formulation is that it leads to testable hypotheses about the nature and effects of the “quality of the sojourn experi-
The main prediction is that sojourners with appropriate host culture friends will learn the skills of the second culture more easily than sojourners whose friends are all compatriots. If such a hypothesis is confirmed, the results contain obvious implications for remedial action, for example suggesting the creation of housing conditions that will increase the likelihood of the development of suitable bicultural bonds.

In the next section an experiment will be described in which the social skills and social network hypotheses were combined, and applied to an analysis of the coping behaviour of a large group of foreign students in Britain. A major purpose of the presentation is to provide a practical illustration of the kind of empirical work the model can generate. As the study is a cross-cultural extension of current work in the social psychology of stress, a brief review of theory and research in this area will precede the description of the experiment.

Stressful social situations

The distinctive feature of the social psychological approach is to view stress as emanating from the behaviour setting, i.e. that there exist stressful situations. This formulation owes its direction to the Person X Situation debate in social psychology (Endler and Magnusson, 1976), and to the pioneering work of Endler and Hunt (1968) in identifying commonly occurring social situations that elicit stress and anxiety. The emphasis on situational determinants of social anxiety has in turn stimulated research on developing means to reduce it, of which by far the most elaborated method is social skills training (Priestley et al., 1978; Trower, Bryant and Argyle, 1978).

Argyle, Furnham and Graham (1981) have proposed a method for studying everyday social situations, and have shown that such situational analyses can lead to improved inter-group relations. Considerable effort has gone into developing new and reliable scales for measuring anxiety and social difficulty, these scales being for the most part situation-based in that subjects are required to report their reactions to anxiety-provoking social encounters (Mellstrom, Zucker-man and Cicala, 1978; Spielberger, 1972).

Hodges and Felling (1970) asked 228 students to rate forty items selected a priori to measure eight different areas of potentially anxious aspects of college life. Factor analysis revealed factors labelled physical danger, pain and squeamishness, anxiety from classroom participation and speech, social and academic failure, and dating. The results showed that females tended to be more apprehensive than males in situations involving physical danger and pain, but that males are just as likely as females to indicate social anxiety in situations involving speech, social and academic failure, and dating. In a similar study of university students, Bryant and Trower (1974) asked 223 students to rate the degree of difficulty they felt in thirty specified situations. Situations demanding complex levels of interaction, often with members of the opposite sex, and where close
bonds had not been established, were most stressful. The dominant factor to arise out of a principal components analysis was a general factor of social difficulty roughly describable as actively seeking out relative strangers, particularly of the opposite sex.

A few studies have looked specifically at social difficulty in different cultures. Rim (1976) compared the social difficulty of groups of Israeli and British students. British students found it more difficult to approach others, take initiative in conversation, go to parties, meet people they did not know well, go out with or be in a group of people of the opposite sex, and get to know someone in depth. Israeli students on the other hand found it more difficult to go into pubs, make decisions affecting others, and go into restaurants and cafés. Furnham (in press) found that matched groups of European, Indian and African nurses in South Africa had a different pattern of social difficulty associated with everyday social situations.

Magnusson and Stattin (1978) compared responses to seventeen hypothetical anxiety-provoking situations in schoolchildren from Sweden, Japan and Hungary. They found both significant national and sex differences. Japanese and Hungarian pupils reported higher anxiety than Swedish pupils, and girls scored higher than boys in Sweden and Hungary, yet there were no Japanese sex differences. The situations were divided into three categories: ego threat, anticipation threat and inanimate threat, and the analysis revealed that apart from Japan—Hungary differences on ego threat and inanimate threat, all the other differences were significant. It was concluded that the cross-cultural description of anxious behaviour is enhanced by separating situational and reactional aspects, and by making a cross-cultural description of profiles of reactions across different kinds of anxiety-provoking situations.

Despite advances in the operationalization and measurement of anxiety, and of some cross-cultural comparisons, very little empirical work seems to have been done on everyday social situations involving people from different cultures, or “ethnic encounters” (Van der Kolk, 1978).

**The experiment: an empirical analysis of culture shock**

This study had two aims: the first was to map out empirically the nature and extent of social difficulties that various groups of foreign students experience in England. The second was to test two specific hypotheses:

1. That the degree of difficulty experienced by sojourners in negotiating specific everyday social situations in England, is related to differences between the sojourner’s culture and British society; the greater the disparity the more severe the difficulties encountered.
2. That the social relations of foreign students in Britain follow a pattern similar to that found in Australia and the United States, namely that the
students belong to two networks, a co-national network whose function is culture rehearsal, and an instrumental network consisting of bonds with "useful" host nationals.

The experiment is the first to combine the social skills model and its technology, with the culture learning model and its procedures.

Overview of method

Overseas students were given a questionnaire which contained forty statements describing various everyday social situations. The respondents indicated the amount of difficulty they experienced in each situation. A control group of British students were also given the questionnaire. The data were subjected to cluster and factor analyses, and comparisons were made between the two main groups (experimental and control), as well as between various subgroups within the foreign student contingent. These operations spoke to the first hypothesis.

The foreign students were also given a questionnaire in which they indicated who their best friends were; and a further instrument in which they listed their preferred companion for eleven specific activities. These data were used to speak to the second hypothesis.

Subjects

The experimental group

The subjects were all students at English Language schools in London, Oxford and Cambridge. The following criteria were used to include subjects in the study: The Ss were between 16 and 30 years of age; single; had completed secondary education; were from the upper and middle ranges of the socioeconomic spectrum, specifically from categories 1 to 4 on the Hall Jones scale (Oppenheim, 1973); at the time of testing had been in Britain between 1 and 5 months, and had not been to Britain on more than two earlier occasions; and had not stayed in Britain for more than 9 months on any previous visits. Approximately 400 foreign language students from fifty-one countries were tested. Of these, 150 students satisfied the inclusion criteria, and the data to be reported below are based on this selected group.

Subgroups within the experimental group

The 150 experimental subjects were divided into three subgroups, according to the geographic region from which they originated. The three regional groupings were northern Europe, southern Europe, and the East respectively, with equal numbers of males and females occurring in each of the three subgroups. There
is some precedent for grouping cultural groups by their physical location in the world (e.g. Berry and Annis, 1974; Boldt, 1978; Cattell, Breul and Hartman, 1951; Porter, 1972; Stewart, 1966) on the assumption that societies in physical proximity to each other are likely to have had similar linguistic, religious and cultural roots, and may therefore share many common characteristics. This assumption is of course not always warranted, and there are many examples that contradict it. Furthermore, because societies are multifaceted, two countries may be similar in some essential respects, and quite different in other significant areas. Some countries, although geographically literally poles apart, may be very similar due to a shared colonial heritage. Nevertheless, the groupings made in the present study have a degree of face validity, since the regions can be classified without too much strain along three crucial dimensions: religion, language and climate/ecology. Northern Europe tends to be Protestant, many of its languages are related and mutually intelligible, particularly in Scandinavia, and the climate has quite extreme and distinctive seasons, including a severe winter. Southern Europe tends to be Catholic, its major languages — French, Spanish and Italian — have common forms, and the climate is milder. The Eastern countries are non-Christian. The Near East tends to be Moslem, Arab-speaking, and arid. The Far East is not so easy to classify, since several major religions and linguistic traditions flourish there.

To supplement the classification based on *a priori* grounds, the grouping of subjects into the three categories: northern Europe, southern Europe, and the East was tested empirically, and the results of this analysis will be presented below.

*The control group*

Fifty British students at the Oxford Polytechnic served as the control group. They were matched with the experimental group on the basis of age, marital status, educational attainment, and socioeconomic status (S.E.S.). All subjects had spent at least the previous 10 years in England.

*Instruments*

*"Social situations questionnaire"*

*CONTENT AND DERIVATION*

The questionnaire consisted of forty statements referring to commonly occurring social situations that previous work had identified as being potentially stressful, not just for foreign students but for people in general. The list of situations was adapted from a scale developed by Trower, Bryant and Argyle (1978), and from interviews with over fifty foreign language students, not
subsequently appearing in the present study. In these pilot interviews, students from many different countries were asked to identify those commonly occurring social situations that they had found particularly difficult to negotiate in Britain.

ADMINISTERING THE SOCIAL SITUATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE

Subjects were instructed to read each item, and then indicate how much difficulty, if any, they experienced in these situations since arriving in England. It was stressed that their answers were to relate to their experiences in Britain, not their home country. “Having difficulty” was defined as feeling anxious, uncomfortable, frightened, embarrassed or uneasy. Subjects were asked to give their responses on a six-point scale: never experienced, no difficulty, slight difficulty, moderate difficulty, great difficulty, and extreme difficulty. The forty items are presented in Table 14.

The “Best Friends Check List”

The “Best Friends Check List” is presented in Table 15. The instructions stressed that the subjects should think of actual and not just hypothetical people presently residing in England. By using the pretext of preserving the anonymity of the subjects’ friends, it was possible to plausibly elicit the real matter of interest — the nationality of the friends. The check list was adapted from a similar instrument devised by Bochner, McLeod and Lin (1977). The best friends technique goes back at least to Dimock (1937), who asked adolescents to name the ten best friends in their club. Being a friend of a particular person, or having a particular person for a friend, has been used in many studies as an index of group membership (Cartwright and Zander, 1960), and the concept “friendly” occupies the 19th rank on Anderson’s (1968) likableness rating of 555 personality-trait words.

The “Companion Check List”

The “Companion Check List” is presented in Table 16. Subjects were asked to indicate who their preferred companion was for each one of the 11 activities. It was again emphasized that Ss should think of actual and not just hypothetical persons presently residing in England. Subjects were not to reveal the names of these companions, but merely to list their age, sex, nationality, and occupation. As in the case of the previous check list, the experimenters were interested mainly in the nationality of the companions.

The Booklet

The three instruments (the Social Situations Questionnaire, the Best Friends
TABLE 14  The Social Situations items

1. Making friends of your own age.
2. Shopping in a large supermarket.
4. Going to discotheques or dances.
6. Making close friends from other countries of your own age.
7. Going to a small private party with English people.
8. Going out with somebody who you are sexually attracted to.
9. Being with a group of people of your age, but of the opposite sex.
10. Going into restaurants or cafés.
11. Going into a room full of people.
13. Meeting strangers and being introduced to new people.
14. Being with people that you don't know very well.
15. Approaching others -- making the first move in starting up a friendship.
16. Making ordinary decisions (plans) affecting others (what to do in the evenings).
17. Getting to know people in depth (well, intimately).
18. Taking the initiative in keeping the conversation going.
19. People standing or sitting very close to you.
20. Talking about yourself and your feelings in a conversation.
22. Attending a formal dinner.
23. Complaining in public -- dealing with unsatisfactory service at a shop where you think you have been cheated or misled.
25. Appearing in front of an audience (acting, giving a speech).
27. Being the leader (chairman) of a small group.
28. Dealing with people of higher status than you.
29. Reprimanding a subordinate -- telling off someone below you for something that they have done wrong.
30. Going to a social occasion where there are many people of another national or cultural group to yourself.
31. Apologizing to a superior if you have done wrong.
32. Understanding jokes, humour and sarcasm.
33. Dealing with somebody who is cross and aggressive (abusive).
34. Buying special goods (medicines, books, electrical goods, etc.).
35. Using public and private toilet facilities.
36. Waiting in a Q [queue].
37. Getting very intimate with a person of the opposite sex.
38. Going into pubs.
40. Talking about serious matters (politics, religion) to people of your own age.
TABLE 15  The Best Friends Check List

Who are your three best friends in England? Could you please think of all the people whom you know in England, and from this group select the three persons who are your best friends. To preserve the anonymity of your friends, please do not give their names — just describe them using the categories provided in the table below. Remember that we would like you to think of three ACTUAL persons who are your best friends.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of my best friends</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lives Where? (College, Digs, Host Family)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Check List, and the Companion Check List, together with an instructions sheet, were stapled together to form a booklet. The booklet was labelled as originating from the Department of Experimental Psychology at Oxford University. The instructions sheet stressed the anonymity and confidentiality of the exercise. It also included a section containing several demographic questions, the answers to which provided the basis for selecting the subjects for inclusion in the study, and for classifying the foreign students into their national categories.

Procedure

Foreign students

All of the 400 foreign students were tested at their English language schools, during class-time. The booklet was distributed to the students by their own teachers, who were carefully instructed by the first author in how to administer the questionnaire. The teachers went through the questionnaire with their students line by line, making sure that all the subjects understood the task. Because of the care taken with administering the questionnaire, the procedure took about an hour to complete. At the end of the session both the teacher and the students were debriefed as to the purpose of the experiment.

The schools keep a record of their students' command of English, based on an objective language proficiency test. These data were used to include in the study only those students who had a reasonable grasp of English. This screening had the dual purpose of ensuring that the subjects would be able to follow the
Individuals seem to prefer the company of different sorts of people for different kinds of activities. Below is a list of some typical everyday activities. What kind of person do you prefer to do these things with in England? Think of an actual person who would be most appropriate as a companion for each activity, and then describe that person using the categories in the table. The list of activities has been arranged in alphabetical order.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/situation</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>SEX</th>
<th>NATIONALITY</th>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Seek help for an academic problem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Go to a disco or party</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Visit a doctor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Seek help for a language problem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Go to the movies (films)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Go out with a person of the opposite sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Seek help for a personal problem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Go into a pub</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Shopping</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Sightseeing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Attend a place of worship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

experimental task; and to rule out the possibility that any social difficulties these students might experience would be due to a total inability to communicate linguistically with their hosts. As it turned out, there was no shortage of subjects possessing a substantial grasp of English, since a great many of the students attending these schools do so in order to improve rather than acquire language skills.

*English students*

The control group of fifty English, Oxford Polytechnic students were tested
by the first author, again in their classrooms. These subjects completed only the "Social Situations Questionnaire", a task that took about 20 minutes, and were then debriefed as to the purpose of the experiment. The primary purpose of including these students in the study was to provide a baseline regarding the level of difficulty experienced by young host culture members in each of the 40 situations.

Results and Discussion

The results will be presented in three sections. In the first section, data will be discussed relating to the classification of the foreign students into three regional groupings. The second section contains various sets of results pertaining to social difficulty. The analyses had the following aims: to describe the nature and extent of social difficulties typically experienced by foreign students in Britain; to test the hypothesis that foreign students experienced greater social stress than comparable host nationals; and to test the hypothesis that the bigger the difference between the sojourner's culture and the host society, the greater the social difficulty experienced. The third section contains data relating to the social networks and preferred companion patterns of the foreign students, testing the hypothesis that the students would belong to two major networks, a compatriot "culture rehearsal" network, and a set of utilitarian bonds with useful host nationals.

Classifying the nationalities into three groups

The 150 foreign students in the study, on whom the data are based, came from twenty-nine different countries. The countries were classified by the authors into three groups, on a priori grounds according to similarities in religion, language and climate. The classification is shown in Table 17. For the sake of convenience, the three categories have been given the geographic labels of northern Europe, southern Europe and the East respectively. As Table 17 indicates, this is not literally true with respect to the countries placed in the southern European region, as the division includes several South American nations. However, all of the South American countries represented in the study have close historic links with southern Europe.

Students from countries in the three regions were deemed to be located on a continuum of cultural distance from British society, northern Europeans being considered as "near", southern Europeans as "intermediate", and subjects from the East being considered as being culturally "far" from their hosts. The aim of the present analysis was to provide empirical support for the theoretical classification presented in Table 17.

The 150 foreign students were clustered in terms of their scores on the forty items on the "Social Situations Questionnaire". Three clusters emerged from this
TABLE 17 Theoretical classification of countries along a continuum of cultural distance from British society

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Classification and Distance</th>
<th>Northern Europe (Near)</th>
<th>Southern Europe (Intermediate)</th>
<th>The East (Far)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>Argentinia</td>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>India</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holland</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Iran</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>Sardinia</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>Libya</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

analysis. Then each student was assigned two scores: either a 1, 2 or 3 depending on which cluster the subject fell into after the cluster analysis; and either a 1, 2 or 3 depending on whether the subject had been theoretically classified as culturally “near”, “intermediate” or “far” prior to the cluster analysis. The two sets of scores were then correlated. In effect, the three empirically derived clusters were correlated with the three hypothetical, theoretically derived clusters. A coefficient of +0.67 (p<0.001) was obtained, providing good empirical support for the rational basis of the classification, and justifying the use of these categories in subsequent analyses of the data.

Social difficulty

Several analyses of the data were performed. The results were initially submitted to a general analysis, more in the nature of an inspection, which revealed that the pattern in the data was consistent with the central hypotheses. Subsequently, more refined and sophisticated analyses were performed to verify the hypotheses, and to shed light on some of the subtler aspects of the findings.

Overall patterns in the data

The design of the study is presented in Table 18, and the subsequent results are based on the 200 subjects depicted in the table.

The 150 overseas students were placed into their respective regional groups. A mean difficulty score was computed for each student, consisting of the sum of the subject’s scores on all of the statements in the social situations questionnaire divided by 40, the number of items. Then, an average score was computed
for each of the three groupings (near, intermediate and far). The same operation was carried out with respect to the fifty control subjects, producing a mean score for that group. The four means were then ordered in terms of their magnitude, and these data are presented in Table 19. Since the larger the score the greater the difficulty, the order of mean difficulty in the four groups, from least to most, is “near”, “host”, “intermediate” and “far”. A multiple analysis of variance over the four groups revealed that the trend was significant ($f = 2.77; p<0.05$). These data provide initial confirmation that social difficulty is a positive function of culture distance. However, the location of the “host” group in the second rather than the lowest rank is not altogether consistent, and this discrepancy prompted an analysis based on comparing individual items across the four groups.

**TABLE 20** Planned contrasts: number of items* that were significant, at 0.05 or better, in the predicted direction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Host</th>
<th>Near</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Far</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Host</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Near</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Total number of items = 40.
mediate and far. Table 21 lists the number of items that produced a significant contrast at 0.05 or greater in a direction contrary to the hypothesis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Host</th>
<th>Near</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Far</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Host</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Near</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Far</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Total number of items = 40.

Leaving aside the host national group for the moment, these data clearly indicate that culture distance and social difficulty in the host culture are strongly related. Every one of the significant contrasts between the foreign groups is in the expected direction, and the number of significant contrasts increases with increasing culture distance. Thus thirty-one of the items discriminated between the near—intermediate groups, increasing to 33 in the near—far comparisons. Ten intermediate—far items significantly discriminated between these two groups, providing further justification for ordering the nationalities into three categories according to their theoretical distance from the host culture. Finally, an inspection of the array of significant comparisons indicates that only two statements (items 2 and 39, “shopping” and “worship” respectively), did not produce at least one significant contrast in the expected direction. This provides empirical support for the validity of the questionnaire as a measure of social difficulty.

Turning now to the host group data, these suggest that the English students were between the near and intermediate groups in the amount of social difficulty reported. Specifically, the data indicate that the host students experienced marginally more social difficulty than the near group, but significantly less difficulty than the intermediate and far groups respectively. These data are consistent with previous findings that British students, particularly undergraduates, have interpersonal problems over a wide spectrum of social situations (Bryant and Trower, 1974). However, previous research was unable adequately to interpret these findings, since an appropriate comparison point was lacking. With the availability of a cross-cultural reference point, a much clearer picture emerges. The present data confirm previous research that the social difficulties of students have two main determinants (Bochner, 1972). One component is related to their transition from the role of adolescent to that of becoming adult members of the community. Presumably this problem is inherent in the maturational process and therefore a universal aspect of growing up. The second component is peculiar to sojourning students, and relates to the difficulties
encountered in learning a second culture, the difficulty increasing with the divergence of the host society from the culture of the sojourner.

Social difficulty as a function of culture distance

The previous analysis provided general support for the existence of a positive relationship between culture distance and social difficulty, clearing the way for a more precise test of the hypothesis. The results to be presented now are based on data from the 150 foreign students, reflecting a $3 \times 2$ factorial design (3 levels of culture distance and 2 levels of sex) with 25 subjects in each cell.

Overview of analysis

The data were submitted to a factor analysis, which produced six factors. Factor scores were then calculated for each subject on each factor, resulting in the forty scores of each participant being reduced to six. Six two-way analyses of variance were then performed, testing the effect of the independent variables of culture distance and sex of subject on each of the six factors respectively.

FACTOR ANALYSIS

The data were submitted to a principal components and varimax factor analysis, revealing six factors with an eigen-value of 1.5 or more, together accounting for 44 per cent of the variance. The factors, their interpretation, and the items on which they loaded, are presented in Table 22. Similar factors have been found in previous studies of social skill deficit (Trower, Bryant and Argyle, 1978) providing further justification for regarding second-culture learning as a social skills problem.

The first factor, which accounted for nearly 18 per cent of the variance, covered two themes: formal situations where there is often a status difference; and situations where the person is in the focus of attention. Both of these involve some understanding of the rules, conventions and etiquette of the host culture.

The second factor, which accounted for approximately 8 per cent of the variance, involved managing or initiating friendships, and understanding others. Many students in the pilot stage reported on the coldness and stand-offishness of English people, and their loneliness at being deprived of close friends. The third factor, which we have labelled “public rituals”, is often anecdotally quoted as being a source of cross-cultural misunderstanding and difficulty (Mikes, 1966). Only two items loaded on this factor.

The fourth factor was concerned with initiating and maintaining contact, and involves self-presentation and self-disclosure, processes that have some degree of culture specificity. The fifth factor involved making public decisions. It is interesting to note the importance of shopping in this factor; students in the


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Variance</th>
<th>Eigen-value</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1      | Formal relations/focus of attention| 17.9%    | 7.16        | 25 Appearing in front of an audience  
28 Dealing with people of higher status than you  
27 Being the leader of a small group  
24 Seeing the doctor  
29 Reprimanding a subordinate  
22 Attending a formal dinner  
26 Being interviewed for something  
17 Getting to know people in depth  
23 Complaining in public |
| 2      | Managing intimate relationships    | 7.3%     | 2.93        | 32 Understanding jokes, humour, sarcasm  
18 Taking the initiative in keeping the conversation going  
15 Approaching others - starting up a friendship  
1 Making friends of your own age |
| 3      | Public rituals                     | 5.6%     | 2.25        | 36 Waiting in a queue  
35 Using public and private toilet facilities |
| 4      | Initiating contact/introductions   | 4.8%     | 1.92        | 11 Going into a room full of people  
13 Meeting strangers and being introduced to new people  
4 Going to discotheques or dances  
14 Being with people that you don’t know very well  
38 Going into pubs |
| 5      | Public decision-making             | 4.6%     | 1.85        | 2 Shopping in a large supermarket  
3 Going on public transport (trains, buses, tubes)  
16 Making ordinary decisions affecting others |
| 6      | Assertiveness                      | 3.9%     | 1.56        | 10 Going into restaurants or cafés  
21 Dealing with people staring at you  
33 Dealing with somebody who is cross and aggressive |

**Table 22: The six factors, their interpretation, and loadings.**
pilot stage often reporting confusion as to where and how to purchase certain goods, especially food and medicines. The sixth factor was clearly one of assertiveness in the face of rudeness or hostility. It is possible that the dress or racial characteristics of students from more exotic cultures may occasion public attention that the student is unable to cope with. Furnham (1979) has shown that assertiveness is a culturally specific variable.

ANALYSES OF VARIANCE

Six two-way analyses of variance were performed; one on each set of factor scores. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 23. Only three of the analyses produced a significant main effect. In each case the effect was due to the culture variable, and the differences were in the predicted direction. Thus the data confirmed that sojourners from more distant cultures had greater difficulty in negotiating social situations in the areas of formal relations, intimate relations and initiating contact respectively, than sojourners from cultures nearer to the host society. The only other significant effect was a culture by sex interaction on Factor 5, which is difficult to interpret.

The clearest, most unequivocal, and strongest trends were apparent on Factors 1 and 2, which together account for about a quarter of the variance, and load on 33 per cent of the items. All these items refer to personal interactions and relationships with other people, and the data therefore provide further support for the view that the social networks of the sojourner play a crucial role in acquiring the skills of a second culture.

THE MOST DIFFICULT SOCIAL SITUATIONS

The previous analyses were based on differences in social difficulty between various groups. It is possible that these comparisons may have obscured any items that all foreign students scored highly on. Consequently, a mean difficulty score for each item was computed, based on the responses of the 150 overseas students. The situations were then ranked according to the amount of difficulty reported. The ten most difficult situations are presented in Table 24, in their corresponding rank order. This procedure revealed several items that did not appear in the previous analyses, in particular the two statements that ranked highest “making British friends”, and “dealing with someone who is cross”. The list further confirms that the main area of difficulty of sojourners in Britain is in establishing and maintaining close intimate contact with host nationals.

Summary of social difficulty results

The following conclusions can be drawn from the data:

(1) The regional and geographic origins of sojourners can be used to indicate
TABLE 23  Mean factor score values\(^a\) and analyses of variance of the
factor scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor 1</td>
<td>Formal relations/focus of attention</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Near</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>12.40***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Far</td>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 2</td>
<td>Managing intimate relationships</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Near</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>10.93***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Far</td>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 3</td>
<td>Public rituals</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Near</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>0.73</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>0.36</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Far</td>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 4</td>
<td>Initiating contact/introductions</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Near</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>5.88**</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Sex</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Far</td>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 5</td>
<td>Public decision-making</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Near</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>0.21</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Far</td>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>3.52*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 6</td>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Near</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>0.77</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Far</td>
<td>Interaction</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) The higher the score the greater the difficulty.

\(^*\) p<0.001; \(^*\) p<0.01; \(^*\) p<0.05.
The ten most difficult social situations, in descending order of difficulty for foreign students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire item</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreign students</td>
<td>British students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Making British friends of your own age</td>
<td>2.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 Dealing with somebody who is cross, aggressive</td>
<td>2.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Approaching others – starting up a friendship</td>
<td>2.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Appearing in front of an audience (acting, speaking)</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Getting to know people in depth, intimately</td>
<td>2.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 Understanding jokes, humour, sarcasm</td>
<td>2.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Dealing with people staring at you</td>
<td>2.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Taking the initiative in keeping the conversation going</td>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Being with people that you don’t know very well</td>
<td>2.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Complaining in public – dealing with unsatisfactory service</td>
<td>2.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

the cultural distance of visitors from their hosts, at least in relation to Britain as the receiving society.

(2) The Social Situations Questionnaire developed for the present study is a valid measure of social difficulty.

(3) The difficulties of sojourners can be explained most parsimoniously in terms of the social skills model. At the same time, extending the model cross-culturally makes the results of intra-cultural studies of social skill deficit more interpretable, by providing a wider point of reference.

(4) The greater the disparity between the host society and the sojourner’s culture, the greater the degree of difficulty experienced in negotiating everyday social situations.

(5) Few sex differences in difficulty were found, further emphasizing the importance of the situation as a source of social stress.

(6) The most difficult social situations encountered by foreign students in Britain all revolved around establishing and maintaining personal relationships with host nationals.

The social networks of foreign students in Britain

One of the implications of the preceding analysis is that the sojourn experience may be critically influenced by the nature and quality of the social relations between visitors and their hosts. Very few studies can provide direct evidence regarding the actual social networks of foreign students. The present investigation did collect such data, which will now be discussed. All of the analyses, to be reported below, were based on responses of the 150 foreign students.
Friendship patterns

The data from the "Best Friends Check List" were analysed by tabulating the nationality of the best friends of the respondents into the following four categories: (a) co-national/co-language; (b) non-host, non-co-national; (c) host; and (d) no friends. The resulting frequencies were then expressed as percentages of total friends, and these data are presented in Table 25. The results indicate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-national/co-language</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-host, non-co-national</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No friends</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

that the most salient network is the compatriot one, followed by bonds with other, non-compatriot foreigners. Close links with British people accounted for only 18 per cent of the friendships reported. These data are consistent with similar studies conducted in the United States and Australia (Bochner, 1981). There is little doubt that the students who participated in the present study were socially isolated from the host society, in part due to their physical isolation in residential language schools. This creates a vicious circle, since the lack of English friends renders the host society relatively inaccessible, thereby reducing opportunities for learning the social skills of that culture, in turn resulting in even fewer intimate contact with British people.

Preferred culture of companion

Data from the "Companion Check List" were analysed by tabulating the nationality of the preferred companion of each respondent for each activity. Three categories were used: whether the preferred companion belonged to the co-national/co-language group; whether the companion was a host national; or whether the companion was a fellow-foreigner. The resulting frequencies were expressed as a percentage of the total number of companions for each activity, and are presented in Table 26. The main purpose of this procedure was to examine the quality of the relationships with host nationals. Consequently, the activities in Table 26 have been arranged in a descending order of preference for host national companions. Only in two of the activities do the students clearly prefer to have a host national companion. These activities are: seeking help for an academic problem, and seeking help for a language problem.
For the other nine activities, host nationals lag far behind co-nationals and other foreigners as desired companions. The two activities in which host nationals are sought out are both formal, utilitarian transactions that require a minimum of personal involvement.

Taken together, the data on the quality of the social relations of foreign students in Britain indicate that in general the sojourners have only very limited contact with host culture members, and the contacts that do become established, tend to be formal and utilitarian rather than personal in nature. The relatively high number of intimate contacts with non-compatriot fellow-foreigners reflects the cosmopolitan environment of the language school where these students spend their days, and the common predicament of being a foreigner in Britain, a condition which seems to transcend differences in language, customs, and religion.

**Conclusion**

There are many theoretical and practical advantages in regarding the “culture shock” phenomenon as a problem in culture learning. The present analysis, supported by empirical evidence, indicates that the stress experienced by sojourners is largely due to their lacking the requisite social skills with which to negotiate specific social situations. The situations which are particularly troublesome are the ones that involve personal and/or intimate contact with members of the host culture. Further evidence, based on an analysis of the social networks of the students, indicates that in fact the sojourners have very few host
Adrian Furnham and Stephen Bochner

Culture friends, and the limited contacts that they do have tend to be maintained for purely utilitarian reasons. Taken together, these data suggest that foreign students are not in a very good position to acquire the social skills appropriate to their new culture, since they are being denied the services of informal culture guides and trainers due to the paucity of their links with host members.

However, the distancing of the foreign student from the host culture may be a two-way process. There is no doubt that part of the problem is due to the insensitivity, indifference, and perhaps even hostility of host members towards the strangers in their midst. But there is some indication that the sojourners for their part tend to seek out host nationals only for utilitarian purposes, preferring to engage in more intimate activities with co-nationals and fellow-foreigners. To what extent these preferences stem from rebuffs experienced at the hands of host culture members, remains a topic for further research. The consequences for social skills acquisition, however, are clear-cut: by not performing everyday, informal activities in the presence of sympathetic English companions, these foreign students are cut off from an important source of culture training.

The most important practical implication of the social skills approach to "culture shock" is in providing a sound theoretical base for culture training, together with a proven technology. A three-stage culture training process is indicated, starting with the diagnosis of specific social skills deficits, followed by a training sequence, and ending with an evaluation of the degree of acquisition achieved. The "Social Situations Questionnaire" provides an appropriate general diagnostic instrument, capable of being used, or adapted for use, in many host cultures with many categories of visitors originating in almost any country in the world. Training programmes can be tailor-made to the specific deficits of particular visitors in particular cultures; or the programme can be made to cover the most commonly occurring situations in the target group, as revealed by empirical inquiry.

Apart from its versatility and adaptability, the social skills approach to culture learning has other advantages. Results may be obtained relatively quickly, compared with methods such as those employed by psychodynamically oriented therapists. Also, by emphasizing the acquisition of skills, the approach asserts that cross-cultural incompetence is due to inadequate or absent learning rather than being inherited or the manifestation of unresolved childhood conflicts. This construction of the problem takes away some of the stigma of being socially incompetent in a new culture, implying as it does opportunities for making up lost ground rather than genetic inferiority or psychopathology, in turn increasing the likelihood that persons will seek or accept remedial treatment.

The training technology is currently available, and being successfully used with various groups socially unskilled in the ways of their own culture. Curricula for cross-cultural training programmes are not generally available, and would
need to be carefully established, drawing heavily on the services of cultural anthropologists and bicultural individuals familiar with the respective host and visitor cultures. However, by linking the learning procedures to specific social situations in natural settings, many of the ambiguities that bedevil other, more loosely structured, orientation programmes can be avoided.

Finally, the success of the training programme, and the appropriateness of its contents, can be assessed by comparing the behaviour of the trainees before and after the course, in those social situations covered by the curriculum. The generality of the model renders social skills-based culture training procedures equally appropriate in many diverse situations, ranging from teaching foreign students how to cope with British culture, to British businessmen learning the social skills of Indonesian society.

According to Brislin (1979) there are five types of cross-cultural orientation programmes: self-awareness training, in which persons learn about the cultural bases of their own behaviour; cognitive training, in which people are given information about another culture; attribution training, which features the characteristic explanations of social behaviour from another culture’s standpoint; and behaviour modification and experimental learning exercises. To some extent, the social skills approach touches on aspects of all of these orientations, but always in the context of emphasizing that culture training should be directed towards the everyday, mundane social encounters of the popular culture. In this regard the approach differs from some other training programmes, with their predilection for the strange or exotic in the target culture, and their often superficial treatment of the inter-personal side of the sojourn.

Culture training is unlikely to succeed if it is portrayed as an initiation into the unfathomable mysteries of an alien and inscrutable society. It is far more effective to remind and reassure sojourners that they are engaged in learning to negotiate ordinary situations, very similar in function to those they would be dealing with in their own culture, even though the form may be somewhat different. It was Boas (1911) who first introduced the principle of the psychic unity of mankind to anthropology, an idea which has equal application to the field of culture learning, with its emphasis on the similarities that unite, rather than the differences that separate, human beings and their societies.

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