Towards Culturally Appropriate Adult Education Methodologies for Bible Translators:
Comparing Central Asian and Western Educational Practices

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Towards Culturally Appropriate Adult Education Methodologies for Bible Translators: Comparing Central Asian and Western Educational Practices

The primary point of this paper is to call for an ethnographic research response to the challenge of social differences found in cross-cultural educational and training contexts. The **blended methodologies** proposed at the conclusion of this paper are not intended as some sort of all-encompassing "non-Western" teaching paradigm. Instead, this paper proposes that blended methodologies can be constructed for each cultural context, methodologies that fulfill our philosophically based training objectives while accommodating the social role expectations of our host culture. What follows, then, is not a recommendation of a set of methodologies, but rather, a case study illustrating the use of a particular ethnographic research approach, leading to contextualized training methodologies. For more on how to use this ethnographic research approach, see Appendix 1.

I. Training and Culture

Education and training are universal human activities, but few educational methods can be described as universal. It is necessary to say this because some Western adult educators and trainers have asserted that their methodologies are universally applicable. Malcolm Knowles claimed cross-cultural applicability of andragogy:

> The andragogical model can be applied, in whole or in part, to a wide variety of educational activities and programs in a wide variety of institutional settings. It appears not to be culture bound; it has been successfully applied in North American, Europe, Africa, Brazil, and Australia (Knowles 1984:417).

Jane Vella claims that her principles of adult education "transcend cultural differences" (Vella 1994:xv). In an unpublished article entitled "Learning that LASTS," Roland Walker suggests, "these principles [of adult education] are transcultural; that is, they can be used in whatever culture we work." ("Learning that LASTS" 2001:1). The term "transcultural" is synonymous with "universal"; thus Walker appears to be claiming that these principles of adult education are universally transferable regardless of culture. In practice, this is the attitude of many Western adult educators. For more on the question of whether Western educational paradigms are universally applicable, see Appendix 3.

A. Responses to Cross-Cultural Training Situations

That cultural differences exist in the training of mother tongue translators is not debated. The question is how to best respond to these differences in educational cultures. David Catterick (2007) offers three potential responses for expatriate teachers to a host culture's educational differences: non-accommodation responses, intervention responses, or modification responses. The **non-accommodation response** asserts that Western methods are based on sound research and decades of experience, that they represent the best current practice in adult education. While acknowledging some benefits of both the non-accommodation response, Catterick questions the unmodified exportation of Western teaching forms asking, "To what extent are these approaches simply the ones in vogue" (2007:127). Further, the non-accommodation response is a misnomer; teachers are not required to accommodate the culturally-based learning preferences of

the learners, but the learners are expected to adapt to the foreign teaching styles of expatriate trainers and teachers.

Like the non-accommodation response, the **intervention response** suggests that Western teaching approaches should remain unchanged. What is unique about this response is its recommendation of some sort of gradual adaptation. This can be accomplished by simple orientation/explanation of the new teaching methodologies (Catterick 2007:127). Such an orientation often explains the rationale behind the new methods as well as explaining how they work. Another form of intervention response designed by Robert Kohls is the Progression Model, which begins with traditional teaching methods and moves slowly towards more Western approaches. (Kohls 1995:55; 2001:190).

The **modification response** advocates altering teaching methodologies to better fit the cultural context of the learners, concluding that it is unreasonable to demand that host cultures conform completely to the educational styles and preferences of a non-native instructor. Often the methodologies adopted are a synthesis of the methods employed by the host culture and the visiting teacher's, methods that are neither wholly indigenous nor completely foreign.

B. Educational Philosophy and Culture

Western adult educators tend to embrace a non-accommodation response to educational differences because of a strong belief in the efficacy of their particular educational philosophies and methodologies. Discussions regarding the choice of educational methodologies are typically dominated by an emphasis on educational philosophy, since methodologies are largely outgrowths of educational philosophies. Little emphasis is placed on culture. When culture is discussed in relation to methodology, it is often seen as affecting methodologies indirectly, thought the fulcrum of educational philosophies (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1: Relationship between Culture and Education, Simple

Worldview

$\downarrow$

Epistemology

$\downarrow$

Educational Philosophy

$\downarrow$

Educational Methodology
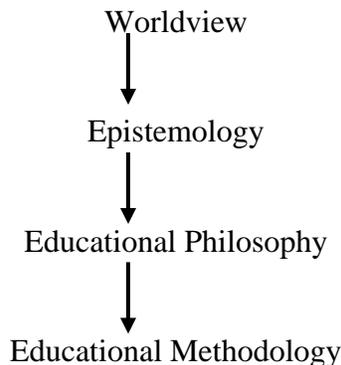
As seen in the diagram above, culture affects methodology by first influencing epistemological assumptions, from which educational philosophies are generated; educational philosophies then create methodologies appropriate to subject matter being addressed. Simply stated, the purpose of education determines the choice of the educational delivery system, and culture influences the process much earlier than the methodological stage. Thus, one cannot simply change the methodologies without being somewhat unfaithful to the educational philosophy. This paper suggests that other factors, in addition to educational philosophy, influence classroom practices, and that these factors must also be taken into consideration.

C. Culturally-Based Social Role Expectations in the Training Context

One factor should be considered is the significance of social role expectations. Social role expectations are generated by the larger culture but function both inside and outside any educational or training interaction. Dutch interculturalist, Geert Hofstede, suggested a short list of culturally base social role pairs.

Table 1: Human Institutions and Corresponding Role Pairs

Human Institutions and Corresponding Role Pairs	
Institution	**Role** Pairs
Family	Parent / Child
School	Teacher / Student
Job	Boss / Subordinate
Community	Authority / Member

(Hofstede:1986:302)

Hofstede goes on to note "teacher/student interaction is such an archetypal human phenomenon, and so deeply rooted in the culture of a society, *cross-cultural* learning situations are fundamentally problematic for both parties" (1986:303). Both the instructor and the learners bring expectations into the classroom regarding the rules for interaction between such social roles.

Neither the influence, that of educational philosophy or that of social role expectations,

Educational
Methodologies

Educational
Philosophy

Social Role
Expectations
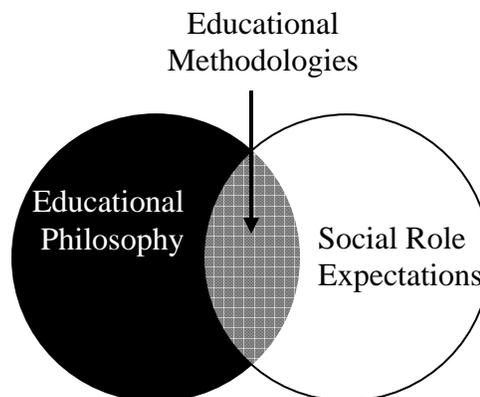
should be minimized. It is, in fact, the interplay between these two factors that determines the selection of the educational methods in any particular learning situation (see Figure 2 below). The choice of educational methodologies is influenced by both social role expectations and educational philosophical considerations. Cross-cultural miscommunication occurs, however, when the social role expectations of the instructor is different with those of the learner/s.

In an effort to better describe the variety in patterns of interactions between cultures in relation to social expectations, Hofstede proposed a series of cultural dimensions. This current study employs three of Hofstede's five cultural dimensions.

Power Distance Index (PDI) that is the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions (like the family) accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. This represents inequality (more versus less), but defined from below, not

from above. It suggests that a society's level of inequality is endorsed by the followers as much as by the leaders. Power and inequality, of course, are extremely fundamental facts of any society and anybody with some international experience will be aware that 'all societies are unequal, but some are more unequal than others'.

Individualism/Collectivism (ICI) [individualism] on the one side versus its opposite, collectivism, that is the degree to which individuals are integrated into groups. On the individualist side we find societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after him/herself and his/her immediate family. On the collectivist side, we find societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, often extended families (with uncles, aunts and grandparents) which continue protecting them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. The word 'collectivism' in this sense has no political meaning: it refers to the group, not to the state. Again, the issue addressed by this dimension is an extremely fundamental one, regarding all societies in the world.

Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI) deals with a society's tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity; it ultimately refers to man's search for Truth. It indicates to what extent a culture programs its members to feel either uncomfortable or comfortable in unstructured situations. Unstructured situations are novel, unknown, surprising, different from usual. Uncertainty avoiding cultures try to minimize the possibility of such situations by strict laws and rules, safety and security measures, and on the philosophical and religious level by a belief in absolute Truth; 'there can only be one Truth and we have it'. People in uncertainty avoiding countries are also more emotional, and motivated by inner nervous energy. The opposite type, uncertainty accepting cultures, are more tolerant of opinions different from what they are used to; they try to have as few rules as possible, and on the philosophical and religious level they are relativist and allow many currents to flow side by side. People within these cultures are more phlegmatic and contemplative, and not expected by their environment to express emotions (Hofstede 2006).

II. Comparison of Azerbaijani and U.S. Social Role Expectations

This paper includes the results of a survey of Azerbaijani and U.S. social role expectations related to training. This study is modeled after research conducted by Nelson, El Bakary, and Fathi (1996) based on the cultural dimensions originated by Hofstede. The survey was conducted in 2006 in three institutions of higher education, two in Azerbaijan, and one in the U.S. The results of the survey indicated, as expected, that American respondents maintained a low power distance, high individualism, and low uncertainty avoidance, while Central Asian respondents maintained a high power distance, low individualism, and high uncertainty avoidance (see Table 2 below).

Table 2: Comparison of U.S. and Azerbaijani Social Role Expectations

Azerbaijani Means Compared to U.S. Means			
Dimension	U.S. Means	Directionality	Azerbaijan Means
Power Distance (PDI)	23	Lower	36
Individualism (ICI)	38	Higher	26
Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI)	15	Lower	23

A. Educational Values Related to Power Distance

The ANOVA analysis of the power distance index (PDI) by nation indicated that Azerbaijani respondents tended towards a higher power distance and American respondents tended towards a lower power distance as seen in Table 3.

Table 3: Power Distance Index Mean by Nation

Nation	PDI Mean	P-Value
Azerbaijan	36	.000
U. S.	23	.000
R-Sq = 45.94%, D. F. = 2, Significance = 5.985, F = 64.85		

The specific results to questions measuring power distance provide more precise information as to educational values in each of the cultures examined see Table 4 below.

Table 4: Scores on Individual Questions Related to Power Distance Index

Items	Means (Larger means indicates greater power distance)		P Value
	Azerbaijan	U.S.	
Excellent teacher (larger PD) vs. hard work by the student (smaller PD) is key to successful learning*	3.69*	4.2*	.328*
Order (lager PD) vs. creativity (smaller PD) is valued in classroom	3.75	1.43	.000
Students cannot (larger PD) vs. can (smaller PD) publicly criticize teachers	7.88	5.96	.000
Older (larger PD) vs. younger (smaller PD) teachers are more respected	5.07	3.31	.000
Students expect teachers (larger PD) vs. teachers expect students (smaller PD) to direct learning	7.05	3.88	.000
An excellent teacher (larger PD) vs. two-way communication is the cause of effective learning	6.32	3.32	.000
Learning dependent on wisdom of instructor (larger PD) vs. universal facts obtainable from other sources (smaller PD)	5.89	4.94	.000

* The first item was excluded from the PDI Mean due to the P-Value being too high.

Azerbaijani students were more likely than American students to prefer order over creativity, to hold that students should not criticize their instructors publicly, to respect older teachers more than younger teachers, to expect teachers to direct learning rather than for students to direct learning, to view an excellent teacher rather than two-way communication as the cause of effective learning, and to view learning as dependent upon the wisdom of the teacher rather than dependent upon universal facts obtainable from objective sources other than the teacher.

B. Educational Values Related to Individualism/Collectivism

The ANOVA analysis of the individualism/collectivism index (ICI) by nation indicated, as predicted, that Azerbaijani respondents tended towards lower individualism and higher collectivism and American respondents tended towards higher individualism and lower collectivism as seen in Table 5.

Table 5: Individualism / Collectivism Index Mean by Nation

Nation	ICI Mean	P-Value
Azerbaijan	26.5	.000
U. S.	38	.000
R-Sq = 42.94%, D. F. = 2, Significance = 5.509, F = 64.85		

The results to questions measuring individualism and collectivism give more information regarding the educational values for each of the three countries; see Table 6 below.

Table 6: Scores on Individual Questions Related to Individualism/Collectivism Index

Items	Means (Larger means indicates greater individualism)		P Value
	Azerbaijan	**U.S.**	
Emphasis on tradition (collectivism) vs. emphasis on new (individualism)	5.929	6.216	.000
Learning is for the young (collectivism) vs. learning is for all ages (individualism)	5.661	9.059	.000
It is inappropriate (collectivism) vs. appropriate to disagree with the teacher (individualism)	2.786	7.157	.000
Teachers are (collectivism) vs. are not expected to treat some students better than others (individualism)	7.518	8.529	.008
Students speak in class only when called on by teacher (collectivism) vs. offer answers when teacher asks questions (individualism)	2.339	7.549	.000
Obtaining degree is more important (collectivism) vs. gaining competence (individualism)	5.964	4.608	.000

Azerbaijani students, in contrast to American students, preferred tradition over novelty, believed less in the idea that learning was for all ages rather than just for the young, believed strongly that it is inappropriate to disagree with an instructor, and also believed strongly that students should speak in class only when specifically called on by the teacher and should not offer comments when a teacher asks a question generally. On two items, Azerbaijanis students leaned more individualistically than expected. They believed strongly that teachers should not treat some students better than others, and that obtaining a degree and gaining competence were of equal importance.

C. Educational Values Related to Uncertainty Avoidance

The ANOVA analysis of the uncertainty avoidance index (UAI) by nation indicated, as predicted, that Azerbaijani respondents tended towards higher uncertainty avoidance and American respondents tended towards lower uncertainty avoidance as seen in Table 7.

Table 7: Uncertainty Avoidance Index Mean by Nation

Nation	UAI Mean	P-Value
Azerbaijan	23	.000
U. S.	15	.000

R-Sq = 40.58%,   D. F. = 2, Significance = 4.696, F = 51.9

The detailed results to items measuring uncertainty avoidance reveal more information as to the educational values for each of the respondents by country, see Table 8 below.

Table 8: Scores on Individual Questions Related to Uncertainty Avoidance Index

Items	Means (Larger means indicate greater uncertainty avoidance)		P Value
	Azerbaijan	U.S.	
Teachers should have all of the answers (stronger UA) vs. teacher can say "I don't know (weaker UA)	6.38	2.55	.000
Good teachers use academic (stronger UA) vs. ordinary language (weaker UA)	2.61	2.8	.747*
Students feel more comfortable in structured and formal (stronger UA) vs. unstructured and informal classrooms (weaker UA)	7.18	4.1	.000
Teachers and students are allowed to show (stronger UA) vs. expected to hide emotions and feelings in class (weaker UA)	2.41	5.82	.000
Intellectual disagreement with the instructor is (stronger UA) vs. is not (weaker UA) disrespectful	7.21	2.84	.000

* The second item was excluded from the UAI Mean due to the P-Value being too high.

In contrast to American respondents, Azerbaijani students held stronger beliefs that teachers should have all the answers and should not say "I don't know," and that students feel more comfortable in structured, formal classes than in unstructured informal classes. They believed that students should be allowed to express their emotions in an academic context, which also does not conform to the expected uncertainty avoidance cultural value.

As predicted, Azerbaijani students when compared to Western students exhibited a strong difference of opinion related to the educational/cultural values of power distance, individualism, and uncertainty avoidance. These differing cultural values significantly affect the delivery of adult education in the Central Asian context. It is essential for adult educators working in cross-cultural contexts to consider such cultural issues to be optimally effective in their educational efforts. In the chapter that follows, I will make recommendations on how to proceed with culturally appropriate adult education methods in a Central Asian context in light of these findings.

III. Recommendations from Research

The recommendations made in this section are context specific. They should not be taken as methods that can work in any non-Western context or even most Asian contexts. Instead, consider the process by which these methodologies were chosen. These methods were chosen by first, examining the educational and training social expectations of the host culture, and then experimenting with ways of synthesizing those cultural role expectations with the educational goals of Western adult educational philosophies. What follows, then, is not a recommendation of a set of methodologies, but rather, a case study illustrating the use of a particular ethnographic research approach. For more on using this research approach, see Appendix 1.

A number of themes emerge from the research of Azerbaijani university students that can lead to concrete recommendations for successful interactions between Western educators and Central Asian students. The Central Asian students who participated in the survey expressed considerable differences in values from the American students. In Hofstede's cultural dimensions, the power distance index, individualism/collectivism index, and uncertainty avoidance indexes, provide a framework for the recommendations that follow.

A. High Power Distance

Azerbaijani students participating in the survey indicated that they prefer a higher level of social distance between teachers and students than do American students. Consequently, Western trainers and educators should adopt a more formal approach when interacting with Central Asian students. Azerbaijani students prefer older instructors, which is not always an option for cross-cultural educators. However, ensuring that an instructor is well qualified is essential to classroom success in a Central Asian setting.

American students indicate a willingness to criticize the instructor and believe that two-way communication is the key to classroom success. Evan Bell, a cross-cultural educator who has worked in Russian and Central Asian institutions of higher education since 1993, questions the appropriateness of interactive methods in the Central Asian context. He believes that the perception of the instructor as expert is not a bad arrangement: "We too cavalierly dismiss [Soviet approaches] thinking that these are just these too-sober Russians. We ran over a lot of really good, established Soviet educational methods" (interview, 09 December 2006).

Bell noted that when Russians and Central Asians participated in classroom discussions, they would wander from the discussion topic into what he termed "kitchen chatter," discussion that had little relevance to the topic at hand. Instead, he recommended that Westerners move more towards the Central Asian "philosophy that the professor knows, that he is an expert, and that you would do well to listen to him" (interview, 09 December 2006).

It is quite possible that some classroom dialogue can be successfully implemented in Central Asian contexts. This conclusion is similar to that of Alia Mohammed, that discussion can be used effectively as long as the instructor directs the discussion and retains a strong social position (for more from Alia Mohammed, see in Appendix 5, *Active Learning Across Cultures*). Therefore, I recommend that expatriate educators working in Central Asia maintain a high social role in keeping with the cultural preferences of Central Asian learners. Maintaining a high social role is not synonymous with a lecture-only approach, nor are instructors to show a lack of concern or disrespect for the preferences of the learners with whom they are working. Instead, practicing a culturally sensitive approach shows great respect for the cultural values of the learners. The practical application of this recommendation will be more fully explained in below and in Appendix 6.

This does not mean that all non-Western learners will respond unfavorably towards the low-power distance approach of many Western methods. In fact, such methods are often good matches in several Pacific island cultures where egalitarianism is a cultural norm. Instead, cross-cultural trainers should investigate the educational preferences of target culture (see Appendix 1).

B. Low Individualism / High Collectivism

While Americans consistently score as the most individualistic culture in the world in dozens of studies using Hofstede's model, Azerbaijanis display a decidedly more collectivist

outlook. As such, they are less likely to respond well to self-directed learning, believing that it is the instructor's task to design and direct the learning experience. This response is illustrated well by the example of Russian students participating in a seminar in which they were asked to state their learning goals during the seminar. In the student evaluations at the end of the seminar, the participants strongly criticized being asked what they wished to learn, stating that such a task was the job of the instructor (interview, Bartels 8 June 2006). The simple selection of a field of study or perhaps the choice of classes may be the outer limit of self-direction with which Central Asians students feel comfortable. The Soviet system was very rigid as are most current educational options in the region; the introduction of self-direction does not necessarily create the same sense of liberation in Central Asian students that it does in European and American students. Thus, it is recommended that instructors, rather than students, design the course objectives and learning activities themselves, quietly assessing the needs of the students in other ways and adjusting learning activities and the learning environment to best benefit the preferences of the learners. Some adult educators insist that self-directed learning activities, in which students have significant input into the material to be learned and the methodologies used to learn it, are the only path to developing individuals into self-directed, lifelong learners. In the survey, respondents indicated that they already placed high value on the idea of learning as a lifelong process, an attitude that makes the job of any adult educator much easier. Self-direction skills can be taught using other methodologies that do not so flagrantly violate the cultural values of Central Asian learners.

C. Uncertainty Avoidance

Azerbaijani students consistently demonstrated stronger uncertainty avoidance than their American counterparts. The irony related to this dimension is that the very methods used to create a sense of safety in one culture often create a sense of uncertainty in the other, and vice versa. For American students, an instructor admitting a lack of knowledge was reassuring, but the opposite was true for Azerbaijani students. Bell observed that when Western instructors used a dialogue-based methodology with Russian and Central Asian students, the students began to doubt the validity and value of the material being taught (2006). This is a most dysfunctional outcome indeed. It is recommended, therefore, that Westerners retain highly structured courses, with teacher established objectives, and strong timetables. An emphasis on structure is not antithetical to teaching problem-solving skills, higher-level thinking skills, or self-direction. It is further recommended that instructors are experts in the subjects they are teaching and that they conduct themselves as such.

Many adult educators will criticize such recommendations arguing that such methodologies are oppressive, as Freire suggested. However, it must be remembered that educational methodologies do not oppress people; people oppress people. For centuries, many instructors have used traditional teaching methods in a non-oppressive manner. The same can be realized in the current Central Asian context.

Above all else, the data suggests a strong social position for the instructor as essential to training and educational success in the Central Asian context. Consequently, it is highly recommended that Western instructors avoid the temptation to treat their students as equals or to recast the student/teacher relationship as that of fellow learners. While such approaches give an instructor in the West a human quality, they communicate teacher incompetence to Central Asian students and distract significantly from the training or educational task. The following section on leadership style seeks to describe a more culturally appropriate role relationship between

Central Asian learners and expatriate instructors. It is recommended that readers investigate the culturally based leadership styles of their host cultures.

D. Leadership Style within a High Power Distance / High Collectivist Culture

In describing educational leadership, Lingenfelter and Lingenfelter use cultural dimensions that roughly correspond to Hofstede's: For high/low power distance, the Lingenfelters use + or – Role; for collectivism and individualism they use + or – Group, respectively (see Figure 8 below).

Figure 8: Four Prototype Teacher Roles

Four Prototype Teacher Roles		
Teacher as Authority Role: expert Method: lecture Knowledge: deposit	+ R O L E	**Teacher as Patron/Parent** Role: patron, helper Method: story, lecture Knowledge: secret
- GROUP		GROUP +
Role: friend, mentor Method: interactive Knowledge: free, open **Teacher as Facilitator**	- R O L E	Role: drill sergeant Method: busywork Knowledge: betrayal **Teacher as Outsider**

+ Role = high power distance; - Role = low power distance; + Group = collectivism; - Group = individualism

(Lingenfelter & Lingenfelter 2003:76)

When the teacher student interaction is defined as + Role and + Group as it is in Central Asia, the teacher is seen as a patron or helper using story and lecture; the teacher is honored by the students who maintain an emotion of dependency towards the teacher. This is in contrast to the scenario of + Role and – Group, where the teacher is viewed only as a feared expert who is correct and uses lecture exclusively (see Figure 9 below).

Figure 9: Four Prototype Learner Roles

Four Prototype Learner Roles		
Learner as Obedient Focus: knowledge Teacher is correct Emotion: deposit	+ R O L E	*Learner as Client/Child* Focus: relationship Teacher is honored Emotion: dependency
- GROUP		GROUP +
Focus: personal interest Teacher is effective or not Emotion: enthusiasm or criticism **Learner as Free Thinker**	- R O L E	Focus: getting put Teacher is enemy Emotion: hatred **Learner as Rebel**

+ Role = high power distance; - Role = low power distance; + Group = collectivism; - Group = individualism

(Lingenfelter & Lingenfelter 2003:76)

Both styles exist in the Central Asian context, but students respond more to the former, where the teacher's relationship with students is similar to a patron/client relationship (Lingenfelter & Lingenfelter 2003:75-78).

Research on effective leadership styles among Russians and Central Asians indicates that a strong yet inspiring leader is desired but rarely seen. In a study of Russian, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, and Georgian manufacturing employees, respondents indicated the highest preference for a combination of contingent reward, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and charisma. This form of leadership emphasizes both the "achievement of a higher collective purpose, of common mission and vision" and subordinates receiving benefits for accomplishing tasks. This leadership style retains a high power distance for the leader and seeks to "motivate followers to make self-sacrifices, commit to difficult objectives, and achieve more than was initially expected" (Ardichvili & Gasparishvili 2001:62,67). This strong leader model can be employed by trainers and instructors and is probably a more effective model for a teacher/leader in the Central Asian educational context than are other models.

IV. A Synthesis of Western and Central Asian Methodologies

Traditional methodologies should be employed for more concrete information for which the methodologies are relatively static in most cultures. On Marinetti and Dunn's *Spectrum of Adaptation Strategies*, these methods would require only superficial adaptation: translation and localization. However, for more complicated knowledge, skills, and attitudes, Marinetti and Dunn, and Edmundson recommend more rigorous adaptation that takes specific cultural perspectives into consideration when adapting the materials for the intended audience (Marinetti & Dunn 2002; Edmundson 2007). The methodologies that follow conform to this level of adaptation, modularization (see figure 10 below).

Figure 10: Spectrum of Adaptation Strategies

Spectrum of Adaptation Strategies				
Adaptation strategy	Translate	Localize	Modularize	Originate
Content type	Simple information/ knowledge/news	Low level, cognitive "hard skills"; simple knowledge/ concepts	Some soft skills; complex knowledge; regulatory/financial information; business strategy– most business skills	Most "softer skills"; attitudes & beliefs— many complex management skills
Content examples	Product knowledge; company procedures	Application software; most e-skilling	Project management, presentation skills, marketing strategy	Negotiation skills, motivation, teamwork, conflict resolution
Content adaptation— what people learn	Translation only	Translation + context/examples as required	Translation + context/examples and some modular content	Significant proportion unique per culture
Instructional Strategy adaptation— how people learn	None	Some trivial changes	Required at key points; re-ordering, re-presentation, alternative media etc.	Significant proportion unique per culture; may require alternative course architectures

Stephen Brookfield makes the important point that no one methodology or set of methodologies lead to higher-level thinking skills. Rather, he has emphasized the need to choose methods based on their appropriateness to the learners and their social/ educational context (1987:233). Thus, it is better to recommend a range of methods that not only promote higher-level thinking skills but also fit better into the cultural context of the target learners.

In keeping with the modification response model, I propose a set of methodologies that are neither fully Western, nor fully Central Asian. Rather, the methodologies I propose synthesize the better elements from the constructivist school of thought with Central Asian social and cultural expectations to form a new set of blended methodologies. The proposed "blended" methodologies are intended to combine the strengths of both the imported Western methodologies and the local Central Asian cultural values.

A. Adapting Western Methodologies

Western educational paradigms seek to promote problem-solving abilities and critical thinking skills; they also seek to provide learners with the tools needed to be lifelong, self-directed learners. Western educational paradigms seek to accomplish this through methodologies that are learner-directed, dialogue-based, and emphasize an egalitarian interaction between the learner and the instructor, with the instructor serving more as a facilitator than an instructor. These methodologies are not the only path to these goals. I suggest these objectives can be reached using methodologies and social interactions that are less offensive to the cultural preferences of Central Asian learners.

B. Blended Methodologies

The methods suggested below seek to synthesize Western methods with Central Asian cultural values– they do not push to the extremes of either society's educational paradigm. For a more detailed discussion of the methodologies listed below, see Appendix 6. Instead, they take a middle ground that can fulfill the core objectives of Western educators and the social expectations of Central Asians (see Figure 12 below).

Figure 12: Methodological Compromise Continuum

Methodological Compromise Continuum			
	Western methods	**BLENDED METHODS**	traditional methods
methodologies	self-directed learning; egalitarian teacher/student interactions; dialogue-based methodologies;	Socratic methods; written dialogue; comparison/contrast assignments; projects; academic simulations; battle of wits;	lecture; memorization; student cooperation outside of class – what Westerners call cheating;
philosophy	constructivist ⟶	constructivist	instructivist
Hofstede's cultural dimensions	Low Power Distance; Individualist;	High Power Distance; Collectivist;	High Power Distance; Collectivist;

	Low Uncertainty Avoidance	High Uncertainty Avoidance ◄———	High Uncertainty Avoidance

C. Ethnomethodology

Finally, cross-cultural educators should heed Holliday's call for ethnographic research in the classroom, which he calls ethnomethodology (1994). This process should begin with an investigation of the cultural norms of the host country, which examines material similar to Hofstede's work. Instructors can also gain a better understanding of the educational preferences in their host culture by conducting qualitative interviews with cultural contacts asking cultural contacts what characteristics make an instructor excellent. Cross-cultural educators should ask locals for the names of excellent teachers in the host culture and should arrange to observe those teachers. Several cross-cultural educators have suggested teaching collaboratively with host educators as a means to learning to teach effectively in the host culture (George 1995; Hixson 2003). A variety of methods can be used to discover the best approaches to learning in a host culture. For more on an ethnographic research approach for cross-cultural training contexts, see Appendix 1.

Appendix 1: Cross-Cultural Adaptation Strategies

1. Research

a. review of literature

A review of the literature will often produce a number of works related to education in your national context if not your specific ethnic context. Use Hofstede's cultural dimensions, but don't stop there. These dimensions are organized by country and sub-cultures within a country may not conform to Hofstede's observations by country since his research was conducted in capitals and/or large cities.

b. primary ethnographic research (not as hard as it sounds)

- Use Hofstede's dimensions as a grid to evaluate educational preferences.

- Interview cultural insiders and ask them who are the gifted teachers in that culture and why they are considered good teachers. Observe that teacher in action.

- Teach some subject co-operatively with one of the "good teachers" in the culture.
  or
- Solicit his/her help with designing activities. Expatriate teachers/trainers should explain the kinds of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that need to be taught and ask the local teacher for the best way to deliver such content.

2. Examine Role/Relationships between adult learners and teachers.

This does not mean that one has to teach in the same fashion as the local instructors, but it will provide a window into the expected social interaction between this archetypal role pairing of student/teacher.

3. Methodological Adaptation Strategies

The chart below recommends different adaptation strategies based on the kind of content being taught. It moves left from the lowest level of adaptation strategy (translation) to the right towards the highest level of adaptation strategy (origination with cultural contact). The adaptation strategy chosen is dependent on the nature of the content. More concrete skills employ less complicated methodologies, while more abstract knowledge, skills, and attitudes require more complicated methodologies and also require more attention to culture in relation to the teaching methodologies chosen.

Spectrum of Adaptation Strategies				
Adaptation strategy	Translate	Localize	Modularize	Originate
Content type	Simple information/ knowledge/news	Low level, cognitive "hard skills"; simple knowledge/ concepts	Some soft skills; complex knowledge; regulatory/financial information; business strategy– most business skills	Most "softer skills"; attitudes & beliefs— many complex management skills
Content examples	Product knowledge; company procedures	Application software; most e-skilling	Project management, presentation skills, marketing strategy	Negotiation skills, motivation, teamwork, conflict resolution
Content adaptation— what people learn	Translation only	Translation + context/examples as required	Translation + context/examples and some modular content	Significant proportion unique per culture
Instructional Strategy adaptation— how people learn	None	Some trivial changes	Required at key points; re-ordering, re-presentation, alternative media etc.	Significant proportion unique per culture; may require alternative course architectures

(Marinetti & Dunn 2002; Edmundson 2007:269)

Adrian Holiday recommends an "ethnomethodology," where the cross-cultural trainer/ educator constantly evaluates the learning culture of the students and the effectiveness of the methodologies being employed.

4. Evaluation

It is essential to obtain authentic feedback on how learners are reacting to the learning activities in which they are engaged. This is a particularly tricky thing to obtain in face-saving cultures where expatriates are frequently told what they want to hear but have no means of catching the cultural subtleties involved. One must find cultural insiders, local or expatriate, who are capable of discovering what learners are really thinking about the educational activities being employed.

Appendix 2: Questionnaire

Please include the following information:

Age_____ Gender_____ Marital Status_____ Numbers of Children_____

Level of Previous Education Received_____

First Language Spoken_____ Primary Language Spoken_____

Other Languages Spoken_____ Occupation_____

Instructions: Read the two statements. Circle the number on the continuum that corresponds closes to your opinion.

1.
Successful learning   1—2 –3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10   Successful learning
is dependent upon   is dependent upon
having an excellent   hard work by the
instructor.   student.

2.
A good instructor   1—2 –3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10   A good instructor
uses a few,   uses a variety of
well-established   creative teaching
teaching methods.   methods.

3.
Students may   1—2 –3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10   Students should
contradict or   never contradict
criticize the   or criticize the
instructor publicly.   instructor publicly.

4.
A good instructor   1—2 –3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10   A good instructor
inspires students   outlines or directs
to outline or direct   student learning.
his/her own learning.

5.
Students prefer   1—2 –3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10   Students prefer
younger instructors   older instructors
more than older   more than younger
instructors.   instructors.

6.
Successful learning   1—2 –3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10   Successful learning
is dependent upon   is dependent upon
having an excellent   the amount of two-way
instructor.   communication in the class.

7.
An instructor   1—2 –3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10   Students learn
transfers his/her   universal **facts** which
wisdom to his/her   can be obtained from sources
students.   other than the instructor.

8.
An good instructor   1—2 –3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10   A good instructor
will admit when   has the answer to
he/she does not know   any question asked
the answer to a question.   by students.

9.
An good instructor   1—2 –3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10   A good instructor
uses ordinary, plain   uses academic
language to explain   language while
complicated subjects.   teaching.

10.
Classes should be   1—2 –3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10   Classes are more
formal and structured   effective when informal,
with precise objectives   with less structure, negotiable
and strict timetables.   objectives and loose timetables.

11.
The instructor and   1—2 –3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10   The instructor and students
students should hide   may show their emotions
their emotions in an   in class.
academic context.

12.
Learning should   1—2 –3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10   Learning should focus on the new,
focus on tradition,   on innovation rather than the
on proven ideas.   tired ideas of the past.

13.
One is never too old 1—2 –3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10   Learning is for
to learn; one should be   the young; adults
learning throughout   should not be thought
his or her life.   of as students.

14.

| Intellectual disagreement with the instructor is disrespectful. | 1—2 –3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10 | Intellectual disagreement with the instructor is a stimulating academic exercise. |

15.

| It is acceptable for an instructor to treat some students better than others. | 1—2 –3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10 | An instructor should always be impartial to students. |

16.

| Students speak in class only when called on by the instructor. | 1—2 –3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10 | Students offer answers when the teacher asks a question. |

17.

| It is more important to obtain a degree or; certificate than it is to acquire competence. | 1—2 –3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10 | It is more important to attain competence than acquiring a degree or certificate. |

18.

| Students admire instructors who are friendly. | 1—2 –3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10 | Students admire instructors who are intelligent. |

19.

| Instructors should openly praise students. | 1—2 –3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10 | Instructors should avoid openly praising students. |

20.

| Students compete with each other academically. | 1—2 –3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10 | Students should cooperate and help one another academically. |

21.

| Students choose courses because of interest even if they do not lead to lucrative careers. | 1—2 –3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10 | Students choose courses because they will lead to lucrative careers even if the courses are not very interesting. |

22.

| Students want other students to notice them; they want to stand out. | 1—2 –3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10 | Students should not try to draw attention to themselves. |

Appendix 3: Are Western Adult Educational Methodologies Universally Applicable?

Many have argued that Western adult education practices are universally applicable because they are based on psychological research. The problem with this argument is that the majority of these psychological studies have been conducted in North America and Western Europe (Jarvis, Holford, and Griffin 2003:85; Brookfield in Brockett and Hiemstra 1991:154). It is reasonable to conclude that these studies reveal how people in Western cultures learn best, but such research should not be overextended to conclude that such methodologies are universally acceptable.

These studies are also questionable because the analytical constructs of educational psychology are themselves Western in orientation. Hofstede and Hofstede call into question the applicability of Western psychological practices into non-Western contexts.

> [Cross-cultural studies imply] that traditional psychology is as little a universal science as traditional economics: it is a product of Western thinking, caught in individualist assumptions. When these are replaced by more collectivist assumptions, another psychology emerges that differs in important respects. For example, individualist psychology is obviously universalist, opposing the "ego" to any "other." In collectivist psychology the ego is inseparable from its social context. People in collectivist societies make particularist distinctions: the in-group, which includes ego, is opposed [to out-groups] (2005:108-109).

If Hofstede's conclusions are correct, it is an overgeneralization to apply the findings of educational psychological studies conducted in North America or Western Europe, to non-Western audiences. Using Western psychological constructs to assess Western respondents reveals little about how Central Asians think about education.

In defense of universal applicability, other international adult educators cite anecdotal evidence regarding the cross-cultural effectiveness of some exported educational methods (see Appendix 4, *Why Do Western Adult Education Methods Sometimes Work*). They assume that these successes are due to the superior quality of their educational methods. Accounts such as these are rarely accompanied by disciplined, systematic research to discover the reasons for such success.

Experts from several disciplines have long held that education and educational methods are defined by the cultural context in which they exist. This view is held by educational anthropologists, by educators with extensive international experience, and by cross-cultural communication experts. Researchers from these various fields reach similar conclusions regarding the limitations of exporting educational methodologies.

A. Education and Anthropology

The field of anthropology has sought to record and explain the vast differences and similarities that exist between cultures. Because of the great diversity between cultures, the similarities are all the more striking. As Brown notes, "When the kaleidoscope of [differences in] world cultures becomes normal [to us], then fixed points, the universals, stand out as curiosities" (1991:88). Similarities that appear to pervade all or most cultures are referred to as cultural universals. (The term, cultural universals, stands in contrast to biological or psychological universals though this does not preclude either a biological or psychological

genesis of some cultural universals.) Because some Western adult educators claim that their particular educational methodologies are universally applicable, it is necessary to discuss the nature of cultural universals.

B. Cultural Universals

Plato is often credited as the originator of the ideas of universals in Western thought with his "forms" (Brown 1991:54). Certainly, the idea of universals has been part of anthropological discussions for some time. In 1945, George Peter Murdock developed a list of cultural universals that has been widely quoted. Our interest in universals is related to education and specifically to the cross-cultural application of educational methodologies among adult learners. According to Murdock, education is a cultural universal. All cultures educate; yet, there is great variety in the practice of education from culture to culture.

C. The Nature of Cultural Universals as Applied to Education

While education is a universal, educational methods are not universal or "transcultural." One can reach this conclusion due to the nature of universals. Murdock maintained that universals are of classification, not of content. He thought it "highly doubtful [that] any specific element of behavior was truly universal" (quoted in Brown 1991:70). Universals are categorical, not specific, because of the great diversity between cultures. For example, funeral rites are universal, but the nature of these rites in various cultures differs radically. Similarly, the ways that education is carried out varies around the world. An educational practice being widespread does not make it universal or even near universal.

Brown lists several cultural universals that could be considered educational methodologies.   For example, children and adults in all cultures learn by watching others and imitating them; often this takes the form of apprenticeship. In all or most cultures, both children and adults perfect what they learn through practice. Practice unto perfection is therefore a cultural universal. Similarly, Brown concludes that all cultures "learn some things by trial and error" (Brown 1991:137). Certainly, one can make a case for storytelling as a universal teaching tool. Robert Le Vine also speaks of "guided participation" as a universal method of facilitating learning (Barfield 1997:144).

While many anthropologists agree that the items mentioned above are cultural universals, I question whether they can accurately be thought of as educational methodologies. These items are categories of educational methodologies, not educational methodologies in and of themselves. While all or most cultures have some form of guided participation, these forms differ from each other so greatly as to be often unrecognizable to cultural outsiders. Storytelling as an educational tool is a universal practice, but such storytelling in a preliterate African village differs greatly from storytelling in a London primary school. If the educational storytelling methods common to preliterate Africans were imported without modification into the London primary school, students and teachers would likely have great difficulty interpreting the meaning of the event; they would most certainly not learn the lesson intended by the African teacher.

Appendix 4: Why Do Western Adult Education Methods Sometimes Work?

Many adult educators have given examples from their research and experiences of Western methodologies not working well in cross-cultural contexts. Nevertheless, there are numerous examples of these methodologies working successfully in non-Western contexts, supporting the idea that such methodologies can be successfully exported with little or no modification. The question that arises from these contradictory responses cannot be answered simplistically either by arguing that Western methods are universally applicable, or by arguing that only indigenous methodologies can be effective. Instead, a more complex, realistic view of these culturally based responses is necessary. Non-Western learners typically respond in one of three ways to foreign educational practices: acceptance, tolerance, or rejection.

A. Acceptance

There are a number of reasons that Western educational methods are sometimes accepted in non-Western contexts. The first, and most interesting, explanation as to why Western methods work in some non-Western context is that they are culturally appropriate to those contexts. This might, at first glance, appear to be a contradiction of my thesis, but it is not. My thesis states that these methods, left unmodified, are not culturally appropriate in the Central Asian context. These methods do work in many cultural contexts, but not for the reasons that Western adult educators cite. They are not accepted in non-Western cultures because they "transcend culture" (Vella 1994:xv); instead, these methods find acceptance among non-Western learners due to specific cultural reasons. For instance, if a culture maintains a low power distance and is collectivist oriented, (see Chapter 3 for a fuller explanation of Hofstede's dimensions) members of that culture would likely respond quite well to almost any form of dialogue-based education and egalitarian learner/teacher interaction. High power distance, collectivist cultures can be quite comfortable in novel or less structured learning situations if they maintain low uncertainty avoidance. So, some aspects of these Western models might be very acceptable in some non-Western settings due to specific cultural factors, but this does not mean that Western methodologies are well received or effective regardless of cultural context.

Success of Western methods in some cross-cultural settings may be temporary. Holliday, working in the Egyptian context, described what he terms, "the myth of expatriate success," in which the novelty of the methods and the status of the expatriate teacher created a temporary acceptance, but according to his research, the methods retained "a deeper social inappropriateness" (1994:170). Based on extensive ethnographic research, he concluded, "Imported teaching styles…appear to succeed in the short run, although it appears that there is reason to doubt their effectiveness both in the short and long term" (1996:101). So, Western teaching methodologies may work well for a limited period of time but not work well in the long run due to mismatches between the culture of origin and the target culture.

B. Tolerance

It may appear to expatriate teachers that learners are accepting Western methods when, in reality, the learners feel negatively towards the methods and are simply tolerating these approaches out of respect for the expatriate teacher. The Western educator in a non-Western context may have great difficulty differentiating between when learners are truly responding positively to methodologies and when they are telling the instructor what he or she wishes to hear. This is very common in face-saving cultures where members of the culture are as

interested in ensuring that others do not loose face as they are in preserving their own dignity. Holliday offers an excellent example of this from the Egyptian context:

> The 'success' of this lecturer's approach was largely a myth maintained by the novelty, likeability and respect afforded him…by his students. This is reminiscent of the way in which [a] hospitable Egyptian lecturer gave her expatriate colleague information that would please him, rather than upsetting him with the reality of the situation (1994:150).

The risk is that foreign teachers, unaware of the subtleties of face-saving systems, might misinterpret learners' preservation of the teacher's dignity as true acceptance of these methodologies. Unwittingly, the foreign teacher may set up such a scenario by describing the great benefits of their new methodologies and by promoting the idea that they have worked well in cultures all over the world, and thus, should work well here. In some cultures, learners tend to take such comments from the teacher as a cue regarding the kind of response they are expected to give. To avoid this all-too-common error, expatriate instructors must be sensitive to the evaluation of a trusted and forthright cultural insider who can more accurately perceive the social dynamics of the situation. Better still would be the practice of disciplined ethnographic research to determine the true acceptability and effectiveness of Western methodologies.

C. Rejection

Western adult educators tend to classify the rejection of their methodologies in two ways. The first explanation is that non-Western learners hold an unnecessary commitment to traditional teaching methods, possibly motivated by a desire to maintain the status quo. Another frequently offered explanation is simple misunderstanding of the methods by the learners. It is assumed that given enough time and explanation regarding the superiority of these educational approaches, the non-Western learners will most likely find them as rewarding as do the Western practitioners who introduced them.

These explanations sometimes take culture into account, at least superficially, when explaining the rejection of Western education. What is neglected, however, is the idea that it might be more effective to find ways of respecting and validating the local culture, rather than seeking ways to alter it. It is usually more considerate of learners to seek culturally sensitive methodologies than it is to impose culture change upon them.

D. Anecdotal vs. Scientific Evidence

Both sides of this debate offer examples of when Western educational methods did or did not work, but such anecdotal evidence is not enough to answer this complicated question. Rather, disciplined social science research can go much further in answering the questions of appropriateness and effectiveness. This study seeks to contribute constructively to this dialogue by offering comparisons of learning preferences between Central Asian and American adult learners. In Appendix 5, I seek to demonstrate the Western cultural origins of the adult education theories of Knowles, Freire, and Vella. This is followed by a history of adult education in Central Asia. By juxtaposing these two traditions, I hope to demonstrate the degree of difference between these two educational worldviews. I follow with primary comparative research of Central Asian and American educational cultures and recommendations based on both the primary and secondary research.

Appendix 5: Are Modern Adult Educational Theories Inherently Western?

A. Theorists of Modern Adult Education

The term "adult education" encompasses a wide variety of activities including formal, non-formal, and informal educational opportunities. It becomes problematic, therefore, to single out one particular model of adult education as normative. Andragogy is the most well known of any approach to adult education in the Western world and is often used as a synonym for adult education; many authors use the term "adult education," when referring to andragogy. Andragogy, however, refers to a particular approach to adult education that sees adult learners as developmentally distinct from preadult learners and consequently requiring educational methodologies that accommodate their unique experiences and stage of life.

In 1883 Alexander Kapp, a German teacher, originated the term andragogy as a way of describing adult learning: "andragogy (*andr*- meaning 'man') could be contrasted with pedagogy (*paid*- meaning 'child' and *agogos* meaning 'leading'): (Davenport quoted in Smith 1999:1). Adult education as a field separate from children's education took root in France, Holland, and Yugoslavia in the early twentieth century. American educators began to recognize adult education as a separate field with the publication of Eduard C. Lindeman's *The Meaning of Adult Education* in 1926 (Knowles, Elwood, & Swanson 1998:37).

Malcolm Knowles

Adult education as a field of study continued to grow over the next several decades, but it was Malcolm Knowles who popularized the concept of andragogy with his groundbreaking book *The Modern Practice of Adult Education* (1980). Andragogy is based upon five assumptions about the adult learner:
1. Self-concept: As a person matures his self-concept moves from being a dependent personality toward being a self-directed human being
2. Experience: As a person matures he accumulates a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource for learning. The primary techniques in education are experiential techniques – laboratory experiments, discussion, problem-solving cases, simulation exercises.
3. Readiness to learn. As a person matures his readiness to learn becomes oriented increasingly to the developmental tasks of his social roles.
4. Orientation to learning. As a person matures his time perspective changes from one of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application, and accordingly his orientation toward learning shifts from one of subject-centeredness to one of problem-centeredness. (Knowles 1980:43-45)
5. Motivation to learn: As a person matures the motivation to learn is internal (Knowles & Associates 1984:9-12).

Many have criticized Knowles' theory from a variety to perspectives. Brookfield (1986), Cross (1981), Hanson (1996), Smith (1999), and Tennant (1988) question the underlying premise of whether a dichotomy between adult learning and childhood learning actually exists. Rosenblum and Darkenwald compared achievement and satisfaction between two groups; one group planned their own learning, and the other group had their course planned for them. They found no difference in either achievement or satisfaction (referenced in Merriam and Caffarella 1999:277). Courtenay, Arnold, and Kim conducted a similar study concluding, "participation in

planning does not appear to affect learning gain or satisfaction" (quoted in Merriam and Caffarella 1999:277). These considerations, however, are outside the scope of this study, which is limited to the cross-cultural appropriateness of such teaching methodologies.

Paolo Freire

Another figure that has greatly influenced adult education is Brazilian educator, Paolo Freire. In the late 1950s, Freire developed an approach to literacy education among adult learners in which the text was drawn from the thoughts, experiences, and everyday lives of the learners. For Freire, literacy education among adult learners was a small part of a larger agenda to raise the consciousness of oppressed peoples with the ultimate goal of effecting radical societal change. While not all educators agree with Freire's politics, his approach to literacy education and adult education has been widely influential.

Freire stressed a learner-centered approach that is both active and reflective. He criticized what he called "banking" or passive learning that is teacher-controlled and monologue-oriented. Instead of a banking approach, Freire suggested an active form of learning that incorporates "problem-posing" and "generative themes." Problem-posing education encourages students to examine the problems in their own lives and to orient their skill acquisition around the solving of those problems. Learners are also encouraged, in Freire's system, to employ generative themes: provocative ideas, experiences, and words from everyday life as a motivation for learning.

Freire also emphasized the need for praxis, reflection leading to action. Here he insisted that dialogue was not concerned simply with the obtaining of new facts but with making a difference in the world (Smith 2005:1). Freire concluded not only that dialogue is the best approach to education, but also the only form of education that can facilitate higher level thinking skills: "Only dialogue, which requires critical thinking, is also capable of generating critical thinking. Without dialogue, there is no communication, and without communication there can be no true education" (1970:81).

Freire asserts that students must be the subjects of their own learning. The teacher and learner are viewed as equals: "In this kind of approach, the instructor is a facilitator and a mutual learner, rather than a keeper and dispenser of wisdom and knowledge" (Lane and Walter 1999:1). He concludes that dialogue in education is impossible without a reduction in the status role of the teacher and that a high status role for the teacher is not possible without resulting in the oppression of the learners (Freire 1970:71).

Is Freire's Theory of Adult Education Western?

Some have defended the cross-cultural exportation of Western adult education approaches by holding up Freire as an example of a non-Westerner who embraced, indeed originated, many aspects of adult education theory. The argument goes: "Freire was a Brazilian, a non-Westerner; his ideas are not Western, hence his ideas about adult education theory cannot be characterized as part of a Western worldview." This line of reasoning is faulty in several ways. Most notably, Freire's theory is Western in that it is based in Marxist thought.

Though Marx had little to say about the theory and practice of education, demonstrating that Freire's ideas about education spring from Marxist thought can be achieved several ways. A cursory reading of Freire shows that he is not concerned about better educational practices as much as he is interested in political issues. His ideas about education developed directly from his Marxist worldview, and Marxism is a Western framework. Consider that in "Pedagogy of

the Oppressed" all of the theorists or philosophers he quotes, with the exception of Mao Tse Dung, are Westerners or themselves Marxists. Thus, Western thinkers, more than any others, influenced Freire.

Also, multiple Marxist thinkers came to conclusions quite similar to Freire's independent of one another. In the early days of the Soviet Union, the Bolsheviks instituted what they described as "Socialist education" at all levels (Kimberlin 1977:165). The methodologies adopted by the Soviet educational system of the late 1920's and early 1930s closely resembled many of the ideas that Freire espoused decades later (see Chapter 4, *Experimental Teaching Methods in Central Asia*). The reason for the similarities in educational philosophies and practices between Freire and the early Soviet educational planners was their common source in Marxism.

In the same way, Gramsci, the Italian Marxist philosopher, and Freire both came to strikingly similar ideas about education independent of one another:

> Gramsci particularly promoted a spirit of equality in adult education. He believed that the relationship between the educator and student should be 'active and reciprocal', whereby 'every teacher is always a pupil and every pupil always a teacher' (Behan 2007:1).

Some might argue that Freire simply borrowed ideas from Gramsci thus accounting for the similarities in their ideas about education, but the majority of Freire's innovations came prior to his reading of Gramsci: "Paulo Freire wrote that during his time in exile: 'I read Gramsci and I discovered that I had been greatly influenced by Gramsci long before I had read him'" (Behan 2007:1). On three occasions, educators in different countries at different times came to quite similar ideas about education independent of one another. Their primary connection was their common devotion to the writings of Karl Marx. Marxist thought is the primary source for Freire's approach to adult education, and Marxist thought is Western.

Finally, Freire being Brazilian does not make his ideas Brazilian. To conclude such would be similar to finding a Saudi Arabian democracy activist and concluding that democracy is a cultural value in Saudi Arabia. Freire's ideas are first Western in that they spring from a Western worldview, a Marxist worldview, and Marxism is not a Brazilian invention.

Jane Vella

Jane Vella further popularized the ideas of her "long-term mentors" Freire and Knowles through her many books, the most well known of which is *Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach* (1994). In this popular text, Vella identifies twelve principles of adult education and provides numerous real-world examples of each principle.

1. Needs assessment: participation of the learners in naming what is to be learned
2. Safety in the environment and the process
3. Sound relationships between teacher and learner for learning and development
4. Careful attention to sequence of content and reinforcement
5. Praxis: action with reflection or learning by doing
6. Respect for learners as subjects of their own learning
7. Cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects: ideas, feelings, actions
8. Immediacy of the learning
9. Clear roles and role development
10. Teamwork: using small groups

11. Engagement of the learners in what they are learning
12. Accountability: how do they know they know (Vella 1994:3-22).

Vella borrows most of her ideas from Knowles and Freire and combines them with years of experience to create a good set of stories as well as an interesting book related to modern adult education.

The foundational concepts of Vella's approach are learner centeredness, active learning, problem solving, cooperative learning, and self-directedness (Walker 2001). Without giving much explanation, Vella claims "most of these principles apply across cultures" (1994:3). To support her claims, she tells stories from her experiences in cross-cultural development work. While admitting that cultural sensitivity is necessary, she claims that imposed cultural change is essential to the success of the modern adult education paradigm:

> We must be aware what occurs, however, when the hierarchal relationship is *not* changed. Dialogue is defeated; adult learning is impeded. Part of my job in this book is to contrast patterns, demonstrating how inefficient the hierarchal pattern is when we are attempting to teach adults. If we are not sensitive to the cultural perspectives and value systems of the people we teach, though, we will not succeed in designing and effecting dialogue with them (1994:22).

What is noteworthy in Vella's statements is that while recommending respect for indigenous cultures and values, she advocates strongly for the disruption and alteration of these values. In demanding changes to indigenous approaches to education, she never offers recommendations as to how her "principles" could be adapted or modified to better fit other cultures. She seems to be calling for cultural sensitivity in the midst of imposing culture change.

B. Western Cultural Foundations of Modern Adult Education

Much of modern adult educational theory as expressed by Knowles, Freire, Vella, and others is an outgrowth of European and North American cultures, some of which may not work well in non-Western educational settings. Let me reiterate that the author is an advocate for and practitioner of Western adult methods in the Western context. The focus of this study calls into question the appropriateness of the unaltered exportation of these Western methodologies to non-Western contexts, specifically, Central Asia. In determining whether particular aspects of modern adult education systems are bound by culture, it is necessary to employ an analytical framework.

In this study I use Dutch interculturalist, Geert Hofstede's, multi-dimensional model of cultural values, which he originated as the result of a study of the culturally based differences in business and education between fifty-three different countries or country groupings (1986; 2001; 2005). His analytical framework includes the following dichotomies: individualism versus collectivism, large versus small power distance, and strong versus weak uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede 1986). I will examine how the theories of adult education forwarded by Knowles, Freire, and Vella function in relationship to Hofstede's culturally based educational values.

Individualistic Orientation of Andragogy

One of the more apparent cultural trappings of modern adult education is individualism. To find evidence of an individualistic orientation, one has to look no further than the use of self-oriented terms that are so prominent in adult education literature: self-concept, self-direction, self-design, self-evaluation, self-development, self-discovery, self-actualization, etc. Other terms

that suggest an individualistic orientation include learner-centeredness and learner direction. As Merriam and Caffarella observe, "More recent critics of andragogy have pointed out that in its slavish focus on the individual learner, the sociohistorical context in which learning takes place is virtually ignored" (1999:275).

Learner-centeredness as one manifestation of the individualistic orientation is criticized by some as ignoring the wider social context of what happens in the classroom. Some adult educators are abandoning the term:

> We feel the term 'learner-centeredness' is misleading, since it implies that the learner is the sole focus of the learning process. Education is, by its very nature, a compromise between the individual and society. Rather *learning*-centered[ness] implies taking into account the needs and expectations of all the parties involved (Hutchison and Waters quoted in Holliday 1994:175).

Even some adult educators who embrace andragogy are beginning to lean more towards the use of the term learning-centered rather than learner-centered because of the need to emphasize both content and the social context of learning.

Andragogy inherits its individualistic orientation from humanistic psychology: "[Andragogy] is culturally bound - it arises out of a particular (humanist) discourse about the self which is largely North American in its expression" (Smith 1999:2). Malcolm Knowles himself best enumerates the connections between andragogy and humanist psychology by referencing several humanist psychologists but especially Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow. Knowles describes Maslow as accurately seeing "the goal of learning to be self-actualization" (Knowles, Elwood, & Swanson 1998:15) and self-actualization is an individualistic concept.

The degree to which humanistic psychology influenced Malcolm Knowles' thinking should not be minimized. He credits Carl Rogers with originating the concept of a student-centered approach to education in Rogers' five basic hypotheses:

1. We cannot teach another person directly, we can only facilitate his learning.
2. A person learns significantly only those things, which he perceives as being involved in the maintenance of, or enhancement of, the structure of self.
3. Experience, which would involve a change in the organization of self, tends to be resisted.
4. The structure and organization of self appear to become more rigid under threat and to relax its boundaries when completely free from threat.
5. The education situation which most effectively promotes significant learning is one in which (a) threat to the self of the learner is reduced to a minimum, and (b) differentiated perception of the field is facilitated (Rogers quoted in Knowles, Elwood, & Swanson 1998:51).

Knowles demonstrates a strong faith in the relevance of humanistic psychology to the field of adult education: "Increasing evidence is appearing in the psychological literature that complete self-development is a universal human need and … is a condition for mental health" (Knowles 1980:28). Pearson and Podeschi conclude that Knowles is even more individualistically oriented than Maslow:

> Maslow's focus is on the individual; he does not have the same degree of faith in individual freedom as Knowles. Ironically, Knowles' priority of social efficiency – as

well as his ignoring of societal structures – foster a mainstream conformity rooted in autonomous *individualism* (1997:6).

Knowles takes the idea further by defining adulthood as "the point at which individuals perceive themselves to be essentially self-directing" (1980:46). Since andragogy is based upon humanistic psychology, and humanistic psychology is unequivocally individualistic, it is reasonable to conclude that andragogy is individualistically oriented.

Individualism of Andragogy in Cross-Cultural Interactions
　　　The question remains whether the individualistic orientation of modern adult education is compatible with all cross-cultural educational values. Hofstede offers the following definition of individualism and collectivism:

> Individualist cultures assume that any person looks primarily after his/her own interest and the interest of his/her immediate family. Collectivist cultures assume that any person belongs to one or more tight "in-groups," from which he/she cannot detach him/herself. The "in-group" (whether extended family, clan, or organization) protects the interest of its members, but in turn expects their permanent loyalty. A collectivist society is tightly integrated; an individualist society is loosely integrated (Hofstede 1986:307).

Hofstede sees the individualist/collectivist mindsets as a central issue affecting cross-cultural educational interactions. He hypothesizes that the use of collectivist oriented teaching methodologies in individualistic cultures is inherently problematic and that individualistically oriented teaching methodologies are not well received in collectivist cultures. If Hofstede's theory is correct, then some aspects of modern adult education theory may not be successful when employed in some non-Western cultural contexts.
　　　Knowles all but admits that the individualistic nature of andragogy is a vestige of Western culture: "adults in the United States in particular have a self-concept of being independent. It is having the freedom to choose their learning strategy that is critical" Knowles, Elwood, & Swanson 1998:139). Daniel Pratt enthusiastically used Knowles' paradigm for several years while teaching in Hong Kong; his experiences with Chinese learners led him to question "the assumption of universality that runs through the andragogical discourse" (Pratt "Andragogy – Adopting a Dominant View", n.d.). Pratt examined the idea of self-concept in Chinese culture:

> The Chinese construction of self and location of personal identity appears to be derived primarily from cultural, social, and political spheres of influence with an emphasis on continuity of family, societal roles, the supremacy of hierarchical relationships, compliance with authority, and the maintenance of stability. The resulting self finds an identity that is externally ascribed, subordinated to the collective, seeks fulfillment through the performance of duty, and would have little meaningful existence apart from ordained roles and patterns of affiliation. If this is true, the Chinese self is, largely, an externally ascribed, highly malleable, and socially constructed entity (1991:302).

Pratt went on to describe how the self-oriented, or individualistically oriented aspects of the andragogical model frequently resulted in confusion among Chinese students:

> Attempting to get (Chinese) adult students to express their opinions and feelings, choose among learning assignments, participate in self-evaluation, or challenge the stated

position of those in authority usually meets with some resistance. What lies beneath these patterns is far more than simple reticence or courtesy. These behaviors are deeply rooted in a culture and society that is profoundly different from those that expect students to be outspoken and autonomous (1991:304).

Pratt concludes that adult education in any part of the world is tied to the culture of origin, and that cross-cultural adult educators should adapt their methodologies to the preferences of the target culture.

Hofstede reaches a conclusion similar to Pratt's. In describing self-actualization, the highest value in Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Hofstede offers the following commentary:

It goes without saying that this [self-actualization] can only be the supreme motivation in an individualistic society. In a collectivist culture what will be actualized is the interest and honor of the in-group, which may very well ask for self-effacement from many of the in-group members. Harmony and consensus are more attractive ultimate goals for such societies than individual self-actualization (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005:108).

Hofstede claims that individualism and collectivism create very different attitudes towards education including the purpose of education. Individualists see education as teaching students "not so much how to do as how to learn," while collectivist education "stresses [an] adaptation to the skills and virtues necessary to be an acceptable group member" (Hofstede 2001:235). According to Hofstede, individualism/collectivism create significantly different approaches to education both philosophically and practically.

In an article entitled *Westernizers and Slavophiles in Russian Pedagogy*, Gagaev suggests that collectivism is an essential component of Russian culture and a key difference between Russian and Western educational paradigms.

The methodological foundations of European oriented pedagogical conceptions consist of the postulate of the human being as an explicitly expressed individuality…. The most important theses for the Slavophile conceptions will be those that view the human being as collective substantial personality. (2002:65).

The collectivist conceptions of education that are native to Russia carried over into Soviet times and beyond and have had a predictable effect on Central Asian educational thought and practice (see Chapters 4 & 5).

Some adult educators have suggested that self-direction, as a methodology, can be adapted to collectivist cultures by emphasizing the group rather than the individual. Seiichiro Miura, a Japanese adult educator, suggests the following.

One thing I might mention is the use of groups in adult education practice. I recognize the heavy emphasis in the United States on the self-directed learner. But from looking at human nature I suggest it is not easy for some to be self-directed. In Japan, we would organize a self-directed group, kind of a mixture between group study [*sic*]. Subtle group pressure and a Japanese sensitivity to groups promote a kind of invisible network forcing you to be there, to participate even when you may be reluctant to attend. Thus, you sacrifice your individual desire to the group. I call this interdependent learning rather than independent learning. I will introduce the idea of the learning contract but it will be utilized within a group setting. I will need to introduce it slowly and find the ways it can work (Brockett & Hiemstra 1991:158).

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Being a member of a collectivist culture makes Miura's remarks all the more powerful. However, the idea of a "self-directed group," while it does address well the problem of how to use an individualistic idea in a collectivist context, does not address the issues of high power distance and uncertainty avoidance. Further, a 1999 study indicated that Russian students disliked group work though they did indicate a strong interest in other interactive methods (2001:26). Gray also indicated a poor response to group work by Tajik students (C. Gray, interview, 20 April 2006), so it remains unclear how well a "self-directed group" methodology would work in a Central Asian context, though it is very worthy of consideration.

Adult Education Role Redefinition: Student / Teacher Interaction

A common feature of several approaches to adult education is the leveling of the learner/teacher roles and a relaxing of their rules for interaction. This concept views the teacher and the student as "co-learners" where the teacher is no longer in a position of authority but is merely one of many "resources" available in the learner's quest for self-actualization. In this arrangement, the teacher is called upon at the discretion of the learner and is limitedly responsible for directing the learning interaction. Knowles speaks of a "redefinition of the role of the teacher as a facilitator of self-directed learning and a resource to self-directed learners" (Knowles 1980:19). For Knowles pedagogy is "education from above" while andragogy is "education of equals" (Jarvis quoted in Smith 1999:2). In describing the democratic organization of the andragogical approach, Knowles quotes Eduard Lindeman: "It is difficult to discover who is learning the most, the teacher or the students. This two-way learning is also reflected in the management of adult-education enterprises. Shared learning is duplicated by shared authority" (Knowles 1980:68). This approach to learning is very appealing to Europeans and North Americans for the very reason that it is an outgrowth of Western culture. The more democratic or egalitarian the learning structure, the more appealing it tends to be to the Western mindset.

Jane Vella, in her synthesis of Knowles and Freire, refers to adult learners as the subjects of their own learning. She emphasizes the need for the teacher to establish friendships with students through respect, affirmation, and listening. In support of her idea, she recalls a conversation with Paulo Freire in which he said, "Only the student can name the moment of the death of the professor" (Vella 1994:140). Vella describes this statement as illustrating the "clear role of the 'professor' and the transformation of that role demanded by this effort at problem-based learning." In cultures where teachers are accorded a high level of respect, statements calling for the metaphorical "death of the professor" are antithetical to traditional educational roles. In such cultures, professors are considered worthy of respect due to their efforts at study and the seriousness with which they approach their professions.

Paolo Freire's approach to adult education also contains a reorientation of learner-teacher roles. While many would rightly contend that Freire's transformational approach to education differs significantly from Malcolm Knowles' individualistically oriented andragogy, on the point of teacher/learner roles, they agree. Though for very different reasons, both Knowles and Freire called for a leveling of student and teacher relationship. Freire described the new interaction this way:

> Through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with students-teachers. The teacher is no longer merely the one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible….

In this process, arguments based on "authority" are no longer valid; in order to function, authority must be *on the side of* freedom not against. Here, no one teaches another, nor is anyone self-taught. Men teach each other, mediated by the world (Freire 1970:67).

Freire's model viewed the lowering of the power distance between students and teacher as essential to successful (and just) interactions between adult educators and adult learners.

Freire's approach to education did not spring from the same source as Knowles. Freire was concerned with social transformation through education, not in the personal development of the learner as an end unto itself. As such, Freire's model sees traditional educational roles as oppressive and as tools of hegemony. While Freire insisted that oppressors perpetuated their domination through top-down educational approaches, he fails to explain how the oppressors themselves were able to thrive while being subjected to those same, "oppressive" educational methodologies.

Vella assumes that a lowering of the role of the teacher is essential to success when teaching adults. Terming this "respect for learners" Vella describes learners as being competent to make decisions about many other aspects of their lives and thus competent to make decisions as "subjects of their own learning" (1994:12). Vella, however, is not in favor of full student control. She suggests that teachers will have to make some decisions about learning activities and organization. Still, she advises caution so as to not strip adult learners of their motivation.

Cross-Cultural Implications for Adult Education Role Redefinition

The role of the teacher is a central concern when interacting in cross-cultural contexts and is the factor most often cited when examining such interactions. Several theorists who have examined education in cross-cultural contexts have identified learner-teacher role definition as a key issue in successful cross-cultural teaching (George 1995; Hofstede 1986; Lingenfelter and Lingenfelter 2003; McCargar 1993; Nelson, El Bakary, & Fathi 1996; Pratt 1999b; Shamim 1996). Lingenfelter and Lingenfelter note that education "always occurs in a much larger cultural context. To be effective, [cross-cultural] teachers must learn how that context shapes their role, their students' role and the dynamics of teaching and learning" (2003:72). Pratt recommends several criteria for such analysis including the nature of a teacher's authority and the nature of the teacher's relationship with learners (Pratt 1999b).

Hofstede uses the idea of low or high power distance to describe the relationship between learners and instructors. Cultures with low power distance between learners and teachers would tend to share authority or grant more authority to the learner. Conversely, high power distance cultures concentrate most of the authority and responsibility for quality teaching in the teacher; learners in such an arrangement are expected to follow the lead of and show respect to the instructor. Hofstede concludes that role definition issues between learners and teachers are the most important factors affecting cross-cultural education exchanges:

As teacher/student interaction is such an archetypal human phenomenon, and so deeply rooted in the culture of a society, *cross-cultural* learning situations are fundamentally problematic for both parties. The problems can lie in the differences in expected patterns of teacher/student interaction (1986:303).

Hofstede views such cultural "values" as not simply the way things tend to be done but also as the preferred way of doing things within a culture. In his opinion, it is contingent upon the

expatriate adult educator to conform to the role expectations of the host culture if he/she wishes to be effective.

In Nelson's application of Hofstede's model, she compares American and Egyptian college students' attitudes in several areas including teacher/learner roles. Her research indicates that Egyptian students were "more likely to prefer teachers who are directive and authoritarian. Egyptians tend not to criticize or contradict their teachers" (1996:70). Nelson sees this arrangement as an outgrowth of hierarchal structures so prevalent in the larger Egyptian historical/cultural context.

L. Robert Kohls recommends the following pattern of conduct for adult educators working in Korea:

> Trainers should maintain an essentially formal relationship with the trainees, resisting their egalitarian impulses toward informality to reduce the risk of losing the trainees' respect. It also calls for formal attire and general demeanor that communicates authority (Kohls 2001:187-188).

Kohls concludes that those involved in training Korean adult learners should adapt their methodologies to more closely resemble Korean learning expectations (Kohls 2001:188).

In Pratt's (1991) comparison of American and Chinese adult learners' approaches to education, he also finds that student/teacher roles were different between the two groups. He describes the American andragogical teacher/student interaction as facilitation in which authority and control are shared. Pratt characterizes this approach as a recognizable outgrowth of American cultural values: "appropriate relationships between learner and teacher are determined by what will promote learner autonomy and the existential self." (Pratt 1991:304). He contrasts the American philosophy with the Chinese approach to such relationships.

> Adult educators in China have quite different conceptions of teachers and the relationship between teacher and learner. The most prevalent conceptions of teaching depict teachers as transmitters of knowledge, role models, and the centerpiece of the educational process (Pratt 1991:304).

Pratt criticizes the exportation of egalitarian approaches of adult education that ignore the larger cultural contexts, and he recommends that those participating in educational export consider the cultural "underpinnings" of each nation involved (1991:307).

Uncertainty Avoidance

A third point of analysis to consider in cross-cultural educational settings is the level of uncertainty avoidance. Hofstede defines uncertainty avoidance as "the extent to which people within a culture are made nervous by situations which they perceive as unstructured, unclear, or unpredictable" (1986:308). Western educational structures tend to have weak uncertainty avoidance; as a result, they feel comfortable in unstructured learning environments and are often rewarded for their innovation in problem solving. In Western adult education, teachers admit not knowing the answer to questions, use plain language, seek the input of students, and view intellectual disagreement from students as part of the learning process rather than a challenge to authority. This is not the case, however, in other societies that possess strong uncertainty avoidance. Non-Western students feel more comfortable in learning contexts that are structured and are rewarded for accuracy in problem solving. In such cultures, teachers are expected to know the answers and not to admit a lack of knowledge; teachers use more academic language,

openly display favoritism, and view intellectual disagreement from students as insubordination (Hofstede 1986:314).

Modern adult education advocates methodologies that lean more towards weak uncertainty avoidance orientations. Knowles promotes self-design of learning activities by learners. In this kind of a learning environment, the teacher asks what the learners wish to learn within the course and in what ways they wish to learn it. The instructor and the student then negotiate a learning contract. Such a scenario can create a sense of discomfort in students from societies with strong uncertainty avoidance. In a seminar in Russia, one American adult educator conducted a needs assessment at the beginning of a one-day seminar asking students to explain what they wanted to learn during the seminar. At the end of the seminar, students were questioned about what they liked and disliked about the seminar; the students voiced complaints about the needs assessment:

> This wasn't the way that a workshop or training seminar should be organized. The workshop leaders were the specialists, had the knowledge and background, and should not presume that the participants would know what these should be. Workshop leaders were to provide the topics and then work through them (Eric Bartels, interview, 8 June 2006).

This example demonstrates the cultural disconnect between the methods of the well-meaning American adult educator and the tacit educational philosophy of the Russian adult learners. Students from non-Western societies often misinterpret the meaning of a needs assessment or of self-designed education; they often view the instructor's questions regarding subject matter selection as an indication that he/she is unprepared or unqualified to teach.

In societies with weak uncertainty avoidance, students gain confidence from the informality of their instructors and the affirmation they receive. Vella and Freire hold a reoriented view of the teacher where the teacher does not have all of the answers and seeks to create a sense of egalitarianism between teacher and the learners. For Vella, the confidence (or safety) of the learners is largely a product of the teacher's affirmation of the students. Wlodkowski and Ginsberg describe the Western view of certainty or safety: "the integrity of each person is valued in ways that welcome the worth and expression of one's true self without fear of threat or blame. In such an atmosphere, people know they are respected because they feel safe, capable, and accepted" (1996:62).

In cultures with strong uncertainty avoidance, however, confidence is gained from a belief in the intellectual abilities of the instructor. Kohls describes how Korean adult learners maintain a high level of uncertainty avoidance by relying on the competence of the instructor:

> The single most important thing for trainers to understand is that they will be perceived by the Koreans as experts. [Koreans hold an] attitude of respect and reverence [towards] teachers. This attitude carries over to trainers and includes the expectation that the trainer is all-knowing and will be able to answer any question put to him or her. Failing to do so – which is perfectly acceptable in the American educational context – will mean a significant loss of face and is to be avoided (Kohls 2001:187).

Nelson, El Bakary, and Fathi's comparison of American and Egyptian students found that Egyptian students were more likely than Americans to expect teachers to know all of the answers and to use academic language in the classroom:

Egyptian students are disturbed and confused when they feel that their teacher is uncertain about something and that this uncertainty upsets the image of the knowledgeable teacher. Once this happens, students may doubt their teacher's competence, diminishing student motivation and interest in the class (Nelson, El Bakary, & Fathi 1996:71).

For adult learners in societies with strong uncertainty avoidance, safety is not derived from informality, egalitarianism, or an understanding that the teacher will respect the students' ideas. Rather, it originates from a belief in the competence of the instructor, an instructor who is not a co-learner but a director of the learning process. The competence of the instructor is likely undermined by efforts to classify himself as a "fellow learner" with the students. Freire's idea of a "teacher-student" and "students-teachers" is largely incompatible in cultures with strong uncertainty avoidance.

Uncertainty avoidance as a point of comparison leaves some questions unanswered. Some have suggested that cultures with strong uncertainty avoidance do not react well to dialogue-based learning or to active learning methods. This is probably not the case; this issue will be discussed at greater length below.

C. Cross-Cultural Relevance of Other Aspects of Adult Education Theory
Successful Cross-Cultural Transfer of Western Adult Learning Theory

The point of this study is not to conclude that no Western adult education methodologies can be successfully transferred across cultures. Certainly, there is much anecdotal evidence that suggests that adult learners in other cultures have reacted positively to Western adult education methodologies in some contexts. Adrian Holliday, in a study of Egyptian university students, determined that Western methods worked very well in large classrooms. The surprising information was that these same methods did not work well in smaller classroom structures in the same university due to the fact that the students had a very particular, indigenous idea of how small classroom structures should be organized. Thus, they responded unfavorably to expatriate introduction of Western teaching methods into the small classroom structure. Based on this research, Holliday recommends that the Western methods be scrutinized as to their cultural appropriateness:

Imported teaching styles…appear to succeed in the short run, although it appears from the evidence I have presented that there is reason to doubt their effectiveness both in the short and long term. This does not mean that expatriate lecturers and imported teaching styles should not be employed, but that their role should be looked at critically (1996:101).

In this example, the same methods that were successful in one setting did not work well in another setting. This led Holliday to question the underlying principle of educational export. His conclusion was not the exclusion of "imported teaching styles" but the careful examination of these methods in light of the host cultures' view of education and the specific, appropriate classroom context.

In other examples, non-Westerners have had quite positive reactions to Western adult education. An outstanding example (see page 1) of this is the experience of a group of British physicians who taught numerous workshops on the concept of general practice to Uzbek medical specialists. This program used very Western methodologies and was well received by the Uzbek

doctors. The educational delivery system included problem-based learning, small group discussion, self-directed learning and an emphasis on fulfilling patients' unmet needs and doctors' educational needs (Sadikkhodjayeva 2004:103). The Uzbek doctors who were trained in this program were so enthusiastic about the teaching methods that they published books describing these very teaching methodologies. In this example, Western teaching methodologies appear to have worked well with little cultural dissonance hindering the educational delivery.

Western adult educational methodologies have failed in many situations (Asgedom 1989; Bell 2006; Burton & Robinson 1999; Fike and Phillips 1993; George 1995; Hixson 2003; Holliday 1994; Holliday 1996; Nelson, El Bakary, & Fathi 1996; Pratt 1991; Shamim 1996), so why did they work in the Uzbek context. Let us reconsider Knowles' view of experience in education: "As a person matures he accumulates a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource for learning" (1980:43). In the example of the British and Uzbek doctors, a leveling of the role between students and teachers was possible and indeed preferable due to the experience of the learners in relation to the experience of the teachers. The Uzbek doctors were not entry-level, pre-medical students at a university; they were degreed specialists who were already respected in their fields. It would have been less productive and even inappropriate for the British doctors to treat the Uzbek doctors as if their previous training and experience were irrelevant or invalid.

The success of Western methods with this group of doctors in Uzbekistan does not indicate that Western methods will succeed with most Uzbek or other non-Western adult learners. In fact, the very thing that guaranteed the success of these methods in this context negates their effectiveness in most other Central Asian contexts: status. The status of the Uzbek specialists required that they be treated as colleagues – when they were treated in this manner, they thrived as learners. Central Asian concepts of status, however, usually demand that instructors be treated with respect while the learner assumes a lower status role. Western adult educators maintain that all adult learners are worthy of this level of respect and that learners should be treated in an egalitarian fashion; Central Asian

Experience in Adult Learning

While some aspects of modern adult education theory are difficult to export to non-Western cultures, other aspects appear to be less problematic. The connection between experience and learning is an adult education concept that has gained wide acceptance. Malcolm Knowles describes experience as an essential component of adult education (1980:43). He is not the only theorist to reach this conclusion; there is wide consensus among educators of adults that experience plays a key role in the learning process (Bateson 1994; Boud and Walker 1990; Dewey 1938; Jarvis 1987; Kolb 1984; and Usher, Bryant, and Johnson 1997). While these theorist offer differing perspectives regarding the way experience affects adult learning, they all agree to its centrality in the process. Merriam and Caffarella provide an excellent description of the nature of experience and learning:

Central to all of these writers is the notion that learning from experience involves adults' connecting what they have learned from current experiences to those in the past as well as to possible future situations. Therefore, learning from experience is cyclical in nature; whatever we learn from one experience is then applied to new experiences (1999:246).

Experience, Adult Education and Culture

John Dewey said, "all education comes through experience" (quoted in Merriam and Caffarella 1999:223). That human beings learn through experience is a widely accepted concept. Brown's list of cultural universals includes 'practice unto perfection' and 'learning by trial and error' as two educational universals (1991:137); these two universal human tendencies could be classified as learning through experience. Learning through experience as a universal or near-universal human trait is not disputed. It is more complicated, however, to find culturally appropriate ways of using experience in adult education. Verbitskaia, a Russian educational theorist, embraces Knowles' idea of educating adults based on life experience: "Apparently, it is not educational content as much as life experience that conditions the real meaning of knowledge to be acquired, serving as a valuable asset to the individual [learner] (2004:76).

Critical Thinking Skills

Not a few Western educators hold to the idea that Western educational methods facilitate higher level thinking skills and non-Western methods tend not to promote such skills.

> It has been suggested by some advocates of international education and scholarly exchanges that one of the most useful contributions American professors bring to the cross-cultural teaching assignment is a set of techniques for advancing students' higher level thinking processes and critical problem-solving. In this encouragement of critical thinking, American teachers I observed had advantages over host professors who often were wedded to traditional teaching methods (George 1995:166).

Discussions related to teaching higher level thinking skills typically follow Freire's lead, "Only dialogue, which requires critical thinking, is also capable of generating critical thinking. Without dialogue, there is no communication and without communication there can be no true education" (1970:81).

It is, however, counterintuitive to suggest that only Western education promotes higher-level thinking. Cultures do not produce great thinkers without higher-level thinking skills – most of the masters of both Western and non-Western nations were taught in traditional educational systems. Western adult education methods are relatively new, not seeing widespread use until the 1970s. While adult educators argue rightly that dialogue-based education has been around for thousands of years in schools of philosophy and in master/apprentice relationships, it is clear that most great thinkers and inventors of the last millennium have been educated in a very traditional manner.

Similarly, technical advancement and innovation do not spring unexpectedly from individuals who do not have the trained capacity to think critically. Nations do not achieve space travel without higher level thinking skills. Yet, the Soviet Union, China, and the U.S. achieved this with very traditional educational systems. It is reasonable to conclude that traditional teaching methods can produce higher-level thinkers.

It is more accurate to say is that Western teaching methods can more quickly and more efficiently produce higher-level thinking skills. However, this does not prove that this can be achieved only through discussions, debates, and simulations. In *Developing Critical Thinkers*, Stephen Brookfield emphasizes that there are numerous methodologies that promote higher-level thinking.

> There is not a standard model for facilitating critical thinking. Indeed, anyone who is critically alert will be immediately skeptical of standardized models that purport to be

replicable in all possible situations. Different approaches will be called for depending on the characteristics of the particular audience and the demands of the context within which the critical thinking is being developed. A degree of ambiguity should be expected as a constant feature of attempts to encourage critical thinking, given the complexities of the variables present. The personalities of facilitators and learners, the contrasting expectations that people bring to any attempt to develop critical thinking, the range of abilities and past experiences evident in any group, and the particular institutional constraints concerned all affect significantly the extent to which any one model can be applied in a critical thinking effort (1987:233).

Here, Brookfield emphasizes the pre-existing educational context, expectations, and personalities of the learners and instructors – in short, the educational culture impacts the selection of methods. Most importantly, he concludes that the claim that any one method or set of methods is the exclusive method(s) for achieving higher-level thinking is unsupportable.

Active Learning Across Cultures

A strong question remains as to whether or not active teaching methods and dialogue-based education are usable in non-Western cultures. The reactions to this question in the literature are mixed. In 1999, I. A. Butenko surveyed 282 Russian university students asking whether they preferred a directive or an interactive model of education. The majority of respondents indicated they preferred "informal discussion, more seminars, fewer lectures, optional attendance, encouragement of initiative, and regular monitoring throughout the semester"; respondents embraced all of the interactive education options offered in the study except group work (2001:26-30).

Taking the opposite perspective, Fauzia Shamim insists, "learners do not always passively accept innovation" (1996:111). In this study Shamim relates her own efforts to introduce active, dialogue-based instructional technology into a graduate-level linguistics course in Pakistan. Student response was negative. In protest, the students staged a boycott of her class, refused to do assignments, and requested that Shamim use a traditional lecture approach (1996:108). She concluded that a "mismatch [existed] between the local culture and the culture of the imported methodology as reflected in the project" (1996:111). [1 (see endnote)]

Much of the literature related to applying Western teaching methodologies in non-Western contexts falls predictably into one of the two categories mentioned above; imported Western teaching styles are either enthusiastically accepted as universally appropriate or are wholly rejected as culturally unsuitable. In contrast to these two perspectives, Alia Mohammed in her 2004 thesis reached a third conclusion. She surveyed Muslim university students studying in the U.S. who had been educated in traditional Islamic educational structures as children. As such, the respondents were previously accustomed to more teacher-dominated educational institutions based on rote learning but were later exposed to interactive teaching methods in the American university system. Using Jarvis' continuum of didactic, Socratic, and facilitative methods (Jarvis 1985), Mohammed found that respondents felt most comfortable with the Socratic method of teaching: "Even though many participants expressed that they prefer more student-centered approaches to learning, the teachers' input is strongly preferred in the learning process" (Mohammed 2004:51). This research may indicate that in some cultures, active and even interactive methods can be successfully employed if the instructor remains in a strong, directive role.

Adrian Holliday advances a slightly different perspective that similarly supports active learning and learning through dialogue but also advocates a strong social position for the instructor in non-Western contexts. He opposes the unaltered importation of British, Australian, and North American teaching methodologies suggesting, "an appropriate methodology needs to be culture-sensitive" (1994:160). In an effort to balance the principles of dialogue-based education with non-Western cultural contexts, Holliday recommends that a more "task-based paradigm" be employed in which "the student communicates with the text…the student puts her or himself in the position of the receiver of the text, in communication with the producer of the text" (1994:171-172). He maintains that in this sort of arrangement the strong social role of the instructor can be maintained while implementing more interactive learning strategies.

The central concept in Holliday's approach is the need for ethnographic research conducted by teachers in cross-cultural educational contexts: "culture-sensitivity needs to be realized through ethnographic action research. It is something that has to be worked through in the situation in which teaching and learning have to take place" (1994:160-161). Holliday maintains that while active and interactive teaching strategies may be usable in non-Western contexts, the answer to this question comes only through ethnographic examination of specific non-Western contexts.

Some aspects of modern adult education theory are rooted in Western culture; methodologies that promote individualism, low power distance between students and teachers, and weak uncertainty avoidance are at odds with many non-Western educational cultures and practices. The place of experience in adult education does appear to be universally accepted and some aspects of active and interactive teaching methods may be usable in non-Western cultures with adaptation. In short, no adult education approach can be seen as universally applicable without modification; all educational methodologies carry cultural baggage. As Daniel Pratt eloquently concludes:

> Adult education within any country is not simply a neutral body of knowledge and procedures. It is as much political as it is educational; there are significant cultural and ideological differences between [East and West], which must be considered when exporting (or importing) educational practices and materials (1991:307).

I have advanced the opinion that many of the methodologies advocated by adult educators are outgrowths of Western culture and are often at odds with non-Western educational methods and with Central Asia's educational culture in particular. It should be noted once more that the author is an advocate for and practitioner of Western adult methods in the Western context. This study questions the appropriateness of the unmodified exportation of these Western methodologies to non-Western contexts, specifically, Central Asia. I have sought to clarify many of the social interactions between expatriate instructors and Central Asian learners through an examination of the history of adult education in Central Asia (contact me for this information at tim_hatcher@sil.org) and through primary research based on Hofstede's cultural dimensions. Yet, the purpose of this study is not simply to question the appropriateness of Western methods in the Central Asian context; it is also the purpose of this thesis to propose a set of educational methods that might better fit the Central Asian cultural context, while still leaving room for methodological experimentation.

Traditional Teaching Methodologies

Western adult educators frequently use the term *traditional* to describe a set of methodologies that include lecture, memorization with understanding, and examinations. Andrea Edmundson advocates a modification response in which methodologies are chosen based on the nature of the material being learned, calling this the Cultural Adaptation Process (CAP) Model. For more concrete information, Edmundson recommends using more traditional learning methodologies, and for more complicated skills, more complicated methodologies should be adopted (2007:267). These recommendations are both practical and responsive. For more memorization and repetition-oriented material, traditional methods are appropriate. For example, if one is learning the International Phonetic Alphabet or a non-living language like Latin or Old English, the choice of memorization as a methodology is logical, practical, and culturally appropriate.

Appendix 6: Explanation of Blended Methodologies for the Central Asian Context

Lecture

Lecture can be an effective and culturally appropriate means of delivering information in the right context. Care must be taken, though, not to rely too heavily on lecture, to employ other methodologies that will ensure that application of the material and other higher-level thinking skills are developing in relation to the material being covered.

> After considering the major problems with lecturing as the sole or primary pedagogical practice, it may be concluded that alternative teaching strategies interwoven with lecturing provide a much more effective composite strategy. Planning for effective lecturing involves both preparing to use lectures effectively and planning to supplement them with more participatory techniques (George1995:71).

There are several occasions, according to George, when lecturing is appropriate including, when content is not accessible in other forms and when covering large amounts of material in a short period (1995:72). Western educators should remember that in many parts of the world, Central Asia included, lectures are not regarded with the same level of disdain as they often are in the West.

One key to making lectures effective in a cross-cultural setting is the use of *advanced organizers*, which are devices given to students prior to the lecture to help conceptualize the material from a big-picture perspective. Examples of advanced organizers can include 1) written organizers such as outlines, timelines, or maps; 2) thematic organizers such as primary topics; or 3) model organizers where detailed examples of a desired end product are given as a guide (George 1995:24). Kohls noted that using this sort of approach is necessary in Asian educational settings due to the prevalence of deductive reasoning; inductive reasoning is more common in Western education. Kohls described how professors from Asian countries often begin lectures by writing the main points to be covered on the board prior to the lecture (1995:52).

George cited the experiment of a Western professor teaching in Thailand. He used three different styles of presentation. In the first case, he presented a lecture with no written materials. In his second trial, he provided a framework outline prior to the lecture. Third, he provided detailed notes prior to the lecture. After each case, he assessed the quality of the students' notes and gave mini-quizzes. The best results on the quizzes came from the second case where student were given a framework outline prior to the lecture (1995:23-25). Advanced organizers are much more than a simple outline; they are designed to help students focus on the larger picture, which caters more to deductive reasoning styles.

Storytelling

Lingenfelter and Lingenfelter note that in high power distance / high collectivism cultures (+ Role / + Group), professors and use many stories to illustrate the material they are teaching (2003:76). Stories can be a form of advanced organizer or can be used to illustrate a larger point. Gray describes a Central Asian language teacher who used exceptionally vivid imagery to communicate concepts to students (interview, 20 April 2006). Certainly, in the Central Asian context, stories, poetry, and proverbs are potent cultural expressions that may be employed to great advantage by expatriate educators.

A Synthesis of Western and Central Asian Methodologies

The traditional methodologies listed above should be employed for more concrete information for which the methodologies are relatively static in most cultures. On Marinetti and Dunn's *Spectrum of Adaptation Strategies*, these methods would require only superficial adaptation: translation and localization. However, for more complicated knowledge, skills, and attitudes, Marinetti and Dunn, and Edmundson recommend more rigorous adaptation that takes specific cultural perspectives into consideration when adapting the materials for the intended audience (Marinetti & Dunn 2002; Edmundson 2007). The methodologies that follow conform to this level of adaptation, modularization.

Stephen Brookfield makes the important point that no one methodology or set of methodologies lead to higher-level thinking skills. Rather, he has emphasized the need to choose methods based on their appropriateness to the learners and their social/ educational context (1987:233). Thus, it is better to recommend a range of methods that not only promote higher-level thinking skills but also fit better into the cultural context of the target learners.

In keeping with the modification response model, I propose a set of methodologies that are neither fully Western, nor fully Central Asian. Rather, the methodologies I propose synthesize the better elements from the constructivist school of thought with Central Asian social and cultural expectations to form a new set of blended methodologies (see Figure 10).

Figure 10: Methodological Continuum

Methodological Compromise Continuum			
	Western methods	**BLENDED METHODS**	traditional methods
methodologies	self-directed learning; egalitarian teacher/student interactions; dialogue-based methodologies;		lecture; memorization; student cooperation outside of class – what Westerners call cheating;
philosophy	constructivist $\longrightarrow$		instructivist
Hofstede's cultural dimensions	Low Power Distance; Individualist; Low Uncertainty Avoidance	$\longleftarrow$	High Power Distance; Collectivist; High Uncertainty Avoidance

The proposed "blended" methodologies, which will fall into the middle of the continuum in Figure 10 above, are intended to combine the strengths of both the imported Western methodologies and the local Central Asian cultural values.

Adapting Western Methodologies

Western educational paradigms seek to promote problem-solving abilities and critical thinking skills; they also seek to provide learners with the tools needed to be lifelong, self-directed learners. Western educational paradigms seek to accomplish this through methodologies that are learner-directed, dialogue-based, and emphasize an egalitarian interaction between the learner and the instructor, with the instructor serving more as a facilitator than an instructor. These methodologies are not the only path to these goals. I suggest that these objectives can be reached using methodologies and social interactions that are less offensive to the cultural preconceptions of Central Asian learners.

Dialogue in the Central Asian Context

In the survey items directly related to dialogue, Central Asian learners indicated that an excellent teacher was the key to effective learning rather than two-way learning and that students should speak in class only when called upon by the teacher. These findings and other qualitative descriptions of Central Asian reticence to participate in classroom discussion are not indications that dialogue cannot be used as an educational tool but rather that it should be modified.

In-class discussion is a useful and desirable teaching method when accompanied by a strong social role for the instructor. In Alia Mohammed's (2004) survey of Muslim background students studying in American universities, respondents were asked to rate their preferences for styles of learning using Peter Jarvis' continuum of didactic, Socratic, and facilitative. These terms are defined below:

1. Didactic – the instructor controls most of the direction and content through a lecture format. Learners are expected to acquire and retain knowledge primarily through memorization.

2. Socratic – the instructor uses questions to take the learner through a prepared and logical sequence of content acquisition. Learners are expected to respond to the questions.
3. Facilitative – the instructor creates an educational environment in which learning can occur. A variety of instructional techniques can be used. Learners are expected to assume increasing responsibility for specific content determination and acquisition. (Sisco 1997:1).

The Muslim background students had been educated previously in a didactic educational environment but were currently in a university system that practiced a facilitative approach. The respondents in this study did not desire to return to the methods of their previous educational setting, nor did they indicate a preference for the facilitative approach used by their current university. Instead, they preferred a system that incorporated dialogue but in which the instructor retained a directive role in the learning process (Mohammed 1994:160). From a Hofstedian perspective, this sort of approach not only appeals to the cultural value of a high power distance between the teacher and the learner, but also the learners derive a sense of security from the structure of the course and the input of the instructor.

Practically, it is not always easy for expatriate educators to lead discussions with collectivist-oriented learners:

A typical complaint from teachers is that students do not speak up in class, even when the teacher puts a question to the class. For the student who conceives of him- or herself as part of a group, it is illogical to speak up without being sanctioned by the group to do so. If the teacher wants students to speak up, he or she should address particular students personally (Hofstede 2001:235).

Teacher directed, Socratic classroom interactions are not the only options for realizing a culturally sensitive approach to dialogue in the Central Asian context; written dialogue is also a useful strategy.

Written Dialogue

Adrian Holliday studied the cross-cultural interaction between Western educational styles in a non-Western setting, i.e. Egyptian university students studying to be secondary school English teachers. The studies involved seventy classes over the period of three years. Holliday came to the conclusion that though the Western methods were initially accepted and apparently effective, they retained "a deeper social inappropriateness."

In an effort to create what he termed a "culture-sensitive approach," Holliday sought to combine the interactive nature of Western methodologies with the social expectations of the Egyptian classroom. He proposed that many of the ideas in Western paradigms are valid, specifically the idea of using student experience in the classroom and focusing on the learner/learning (1994:167). However, he counters the idea that these goals have to be achieved through oral interaction, arguing that this "type of classroom interaction is not likely to be acceptable in some social situations where the local protocols of teacher-student relations do not allow for it" (Holliday 1994:170). Instead, he recommends a communicative approach in which "the student communicates with the text . . . that the student puts her or himself in the position of the receiver of the text, in communication with the text. Individual students are communicating with rich text, what they are doing is communicative" (Holliday 1994:171-172). While

Holliday's recommendations are designed for ESL classrooms, they have implications for any cross-cultural classroom where social interactions differ from Western educational cultures.

In many of the places where Western instructors feel a classroom discussion would fit perfectly, a written assignment is likely more appropriate in light of the social context. Written assignments are also an excellent way to create a dialogue between the learners and the ideas without requiring them to participate in heavy amounts of verbal discussions that create social tension. As Jeff House puts it, "Writing is dialogue" (2006). There is a whole range of potential writing activities for adult learners that can facilitate higher level thinking skills and yet retain expected social roles.

The simplest form of this is to employ typical classroom discussion questions, but instead of requiring verbal feedback, allow the students to respond in writing. Open-ended questions or problem-posing questions can also use written rather than verbal feedback. Many aspects of discussion-based learning can be accomplished through having the learner to respond in writing rather than verbally. This simple change still requires learners to think through issues, but it does not force them to act in a manner that is contrary to culturally defined roles. The written answers can be used in a number of ways. Students can keep their answers to themselves, compare them with the answers given in the literature, lecture, or by the instructor after the fact, share them with a classmate, or hand them in to the instructor. Caution should be exercised to ensure that students do not feel threatened by sharing answers with others or the instructor. Grading based on participation rather than content may provide an increased sense of safety to students. It is also vital for the instructor to continue to present herself/himself in a strong social role, perhaps taking a participatory role in the discussions.

Other Forms of Written Dialogue

Another way of employing Holliday's idea of textual communication to facilitate higher level thinking skills is the essay. Higher education has a long tradition of calling upon students to enter into the scholarly discourse that has gone on for centuries. Students draft their first papers in an effort to emulate scholarly discourse and can eventually contribute constructively to that dialogue.

It can be argued that such written assignments are also not culturally appropriate. Certainly, such written assignments are not as common in Soviet and post-Soviet educational systems as they are in the Western tradition. Also, it can be well argued that asking students to express opinions in writing, to "contribute to the scholarly discourse" is a violation of the values of high power distance and uncertainty avoidance. Indeed, for students to express their own opinion in writing is a daunting task in many cultures, and to commit one's opinion to paper appears to be an unwarranted assertion of student authority. It is thus the responsibility of the instructor to define the nature of the assignment. No one in the West takes student writing as being of the same level or import as professional scholarly literature. In such writing assignments, Western educators do not ask students to be experts, but to discover how experts think, to develop towards becoming experts. Also, placing a lower weight on early writing assignments and greater weight on later writing assignments is one method for potentially reducing the stress experienced by students when turning in their early writing assignments.

Nevertheless, it cannot be ignored that such writing assignments are less than indigenous. Some cross-cultural educators have documented the difficulties that some non-Westerners have encountered with Western writing styles and have felt that these difficulties were as rooted in culture as they were in unfamiliarity with Western writing style (Angelova & Riazantseva 1998).

Writing assignments may not necessarily resonate strongly with Central Asians, but they do achieve the Western learning objectives of pushing learners to interact meaningfully with information and they are likely to be less shocking to Central Asian sensibilities than egalitarian classroom discussions.

Many cross-cultural educators working in Central Asia and other parts of the world have noted the lack of cooperation by students on out-of-class assignments, and since most writing assignments are given as homework, this becomes a major factor. It is thus recommended that if this methodology is attempted that such assignments be conducted during class or during a lab, at least initially, with students required to hand in the assignments prior to leaving.

Comparison/Contrast Assignments

Higher level thinking skills for non-Western students are often difficult because their past educational experiences have taught them that such activities are the sole domain of teachers and experts, not of students. Thus, a way must be found of engaging students in higher level thinking activities without directly contradicting their cultural norms. Comparison/contrast assignments may be one of the better ways of achieving both higher-level thinking by the students while allowing them to maintain a high power distance in the classroom.

According to Bloom's Taxonomy, the three higher-level thinking skill sets are analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (see Figure 11 below). Comparison/contrast activities

Figure 11: Bloom's Taxonomy
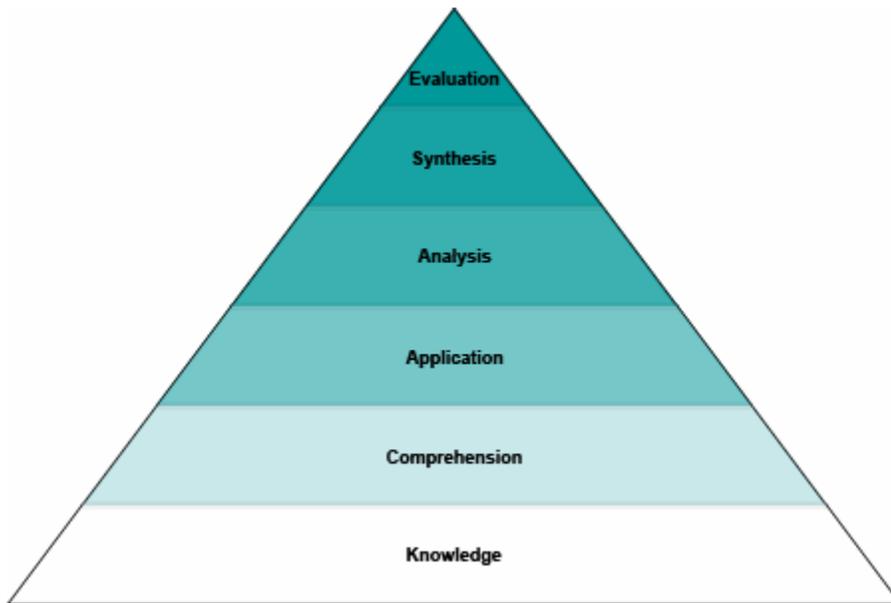
(Pacific Northwest National Laboratories 2005)

have been used in teaching both analysis and evaluation, since comparing and contrasting requires one to first analyze the material to be compared; no comparison can be made of unanalyzed materials. In comparison/ contrast activities, two or more topics must be taken apart, and their components are then compared. The mere identification of the "parts" of a topic amounts to low-level analysis. Comparing and contrasting takes that analysis to a higher level.

What occurs frequently, often without the students' knowledge or intent, is evaluation. Once they have compared and contrasted various ideas, they tend to reflexively make a judgment as to which idea is more valid. They may not state this evaluation publicly, but it is still occurring. One example of this is comparing and contrasting two or more translated texts, translated using different approaches. By comparing/contrasting the sample texts, the learner can better understand the strengths of one particular approach to translation over another.

Projects and Simulations

Projects and simulations can be handled in a culturally sensitive manner, with a strong social role for the instructor, and thus obtain the maximum benefit for the learners. These kinds of assignments are desirable because they push students to apply what they learn at a higher level. These sorts of assignments are similar to the culminating assignments used in universities and in the People's Universities. Providing a high level of structure to projects and simulations, taking time to explain the objectives and procedures in advance, can accommodate high uncertainty avoidance. Some have noted that non-Western students tend to avoid work outside of class, but this can be remedied.

Caution must also be exercised so as to retain the social position of the instructor. This can be accomplished by designing the learning activity such that it allows for and requires periodic instructor input. This sort of periodic input can serve both as a monitoring/evaluation

strategy by the teacher as well as being used to reinforce the instructor's social role and to give the learners an increased sense of safety through instructor involvement.

An Adaptation of The Battle of Wits

In pre-nineteenth century Central Asia, an interesting recreational event existed at the local teahouse called the *askiya* or "battle of wits." The owner of the tearoom announced in advance that a local wit or a visitor from a neighboring town would recite poetry or engage in an intellectual competition. Those who attended the event saw it as a great source of entertainment, knowledge, and cultural identification (Medlin, Carpenter, and Cave 1965: 59). An expatriate adult educator could reintroduce this cultural form to Central Asian learners as a learning activity. By focusing on the "intellectual competition" aspect, learners could engage in various forms of debate. Care should be taken to avoid a situation where students could loose face. Perhaps, students could debate against a fictional "wit," who reads only pre-prepared answers. This would prevent learners from having to actually go head-to-head with one another as much. After time, students could be transitioned into more typical debate, using the "battle of wits" motif as a cultural connection for the practice.

Also, during the Jadidist movement (see Chapter 4), much use was made of the dramatic arts. The writing (and perhaps the performance) of plays could assist learners in their creative writing abilities.

Blended Methodologies

The methods suggested above seek to synthesize Western methods with Central Asian cultural values– they do not push to the extremes of either society's educational paradigm. Instead, they take a middle ground that can fulfill the core objectives of Western educators and the social expectations of Central Asians (see Figure 12 below).

Figure 12: Methodological Compromise Continuum

Methodological Compromise Continuum			
	Western methods	**BLENDED METHODS**	traditional methods
methodologies	self-directed learning; egalitarian teacher/student interactions; dialogue-based methodologies;	Socratic methods; written dialogue; comparison/contrast assignments; projects; academic simulations; battle of wits;	lecture; memorization; student cooperation outside of class – what Westerners call cheating;
philosophy	constructivist	constructivist	instructivist
Hofstede's cultural dimensions	Low Power Distance; Individualist; Low Uncertainty Avoidance	High Power Distance; Collectivist; High Uncertainty Avoidance	High Power Distance; Collectivist; High Uncertainty Avoidance

Ethnomethodology

Finally, cross-cultural educators should heed Holliday's call for ethnographic research in the classroom, which he calls ethnomethodology (1994). This process should begin with an investigation of the cultural norms of the host country, which examines material similar to Hofstede's work. Instructors can also gain a better understanding of the educational preferences in their host culture by conducting qualitative interviews with cultural contacts asking cultural contacts what characteristics make an instructor excellent. Cross-cultural educators should ask locals for the names of excellent teachers in the host culture and should arrange to observe those teachers. Several cross-cultural educators have suggested teaching collaboratively with host educators as a means to learning to teach effectively in the host culture (George 1995; Hixson 2003). A variety of methods can be used to discover the best approaches to learning in a host culture.

Endnotes

from Appendix 5

     1. Though Fauzia Shamim may have changed her position regarding the idea of such methodologies being "mismatched" with the cultural values of Pakistani students, the 1996 example remains a powerful demonstration of the level to which Pakistani students found such methodologies at odds with their culturally based ideas of what education should be. The question of this thesis is not whether or not culture change can be imposed upon adult learners. Imposed culture change is not uncommon, and it is usually considered "effective" by those doing the imposing.

     The question of this thesis, however, is whether such an arrangement is most efficient and truly effective. If learners are spending significant amounts of energy on figuring learning foreign methodologies, then they are not focusing as much energy on mastering the desired knowledge, skills and attitudes. This is not an efficient use of learners' cognitive resources. Adrian Holliday conducted research in a cultural setting where Western methodologies would not seem to fit based on a simple cultural analysis before the fact, but in practice were being used without complaint. However, after extensive research, Holliday discovered that a "deeper social inappropriateness" existed (1994:170). Holliday concluded that "there is reason to doubt their effectiveness both in the short and long term" (1996:101). As disciplined research has shown and continues to show, "when the culture of the school is different from the culture of the learner, students experience less satisfaction, tend to learn less and often fail. In contrast, when teachers adjust their teaching to the cultures of the learners, student satisfaction and learning increase (Nelson, El Bakary, Fathi 1996:57).

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