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Report on Practice

A Virtual Intercultural Training Method: Exchanges of Javanese, Mandarin Chinese, and Japanese Emic Concepts

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Abstract

In this paper, the authors, as “intercultural trainers-researchers,” aim to demonstrate how virtual intercultural contact can contribute to the development of intercultural competence. In this virtual training program, the teachers assume the role of trainer-researchers, working in collaboration with participants (i.e., students/trainees). The participants researched and exchanged emic analogous cultural concepts in the Javanese, Mandarin Chinese, and Japanese languages using a folk psychology approach mediated by English as a lingua franca. The participants (14 students) mainly discussed Javanese emic concepts, wrote research papers, and reflected upon their experiences in the online intercultural interviews. Results suggest that most of the research team members gained valuable insights into the subtle nuances of various Asian emic cultural concepts, which were evaluated based on what the students/trainees learned from the project. Implications for interculturality, cosmopolitanism, and global citizenship are suggested. The limitations of this unique virtual training paradigm are also considered.

Keywords: virtual intercultural training, emic concepts, online intercultural exchange

1. Introduction

Our world faces severe challenges, such as the rise of “Nationalists” and “Anti-Globalists” who oppose the progress made by globalization. Thus, it is essential for transculturality (Welsch, 1999) to be considered in which cultures are conceptualized beyond the traditional categories (i.e., national, cultural, and religious) and are instead characterized by internal differentiation and complexity. Moreover, the goal of transculturality should be external interconnectedness and hybridization rather than cultural isolation and separation. Intercultural mindsets (UNESCO, 2006), in this sense, are therefore combined with local affiliation and cosmopolitanism.¹

To remedy this situation, researchers should focus their efforts to help people develop greater empathy and awareness of intercultural issues and demonstrate this to their global neighbors. In the words of John Lennon, “and the world will live as one.” Indeed, this may be a romanticized and idealized situation, but research-practitioners who call themselves “interculturalists” make valiant efforts toward peace and understanding among citizens from different regional, cultural, national, and imposed gender categories. This then brings us to what is known as “intercultural training.”

Intercultural training is a standard method conducted mainly in applied communication, anthropology, sociology, and psychology (Landis & Bhawuk, 2020). It typically involves training a group of individuals to understand cultural differences and requires building rapport with the participants (Dalsky & Landis, 2013). One aim of intercultural training is to discover, understand, and share hidden aspects of subjective culture (Triandis, 1972) that are not likely to be observed in a short time period. However, such skills and the achievement of intercultural competency are demanding for the practitioners and trainers who are new to the field to acquire. Moreover, lengthy intercultural training programs are not possible in some situations due to the challenges imposed by international travel. These challenges are exacerbated as we are in a global crisis—a highly infectious viral pandemic is making face-to-face contact with others risky.

This study thus proposes an alternative — *virtual intercultural training*, which provides participants with opportunities to engage in authentic interaction with target cultural community members through telecollaboration. Furthermore, as we will discuss later, the intercultural exchanges of analogous emic cultural concepts (Berry, 1989; van de Vijver, 2010) are beneficial in building curiosity and sensitivity and essential for developing intercultural identities in individuals. Even an inexperienced trainer can employ this method due to the simple design and ease of implementation with students/trainees.

To be sure, we have argued thus far that cultural phenomena can only be appropriately and adequately investigated when researchers/trainers enter the field and engage with its inhabitants. Therefore, we propose an alternative to the traditional intercultural training research paradigm drawing on an “inclusive practitioner” paradigm (Hanks, 2019) and the principles of Team Learning (Stewart, Dalsky, & Tajino, 2019); namely, *virtual intercultural training*.

2. Pedagogical Framework: Virtual Intercultural Training

One key to unlocking the essential elements of “the other” in intercultural training is the investigation of language, a cultural artifact that allows values and ideologies to be passed on from generation to generation. According to the emerging field of cultural linguistics (Sharifian, 2017), language plays a critical theoretical role in showing a community’s uniqueness and lived experience in terms of cultural conceptualizations in categories, metaphors, and schemas. In other words, cultural linguistics is concerned with how people talk about the imaginary world rather than objective reality (Palmer, 1996). Linguistic and social interactions between space and time influence cultural cognition. Contact between speech communities constantly (re-)negotiate dynamic enactive cognitions across generations (Sharifian, 2017). Therefore, language shows how other groups perceive and define a cultural community.²

Based on this literature review, we are concerned with identifying the most suitable methods for conducting intercultural training research in an educational setting; namely, what are the most appropriate methods for conducting intercultural training research in a pedagogical environment? Although several studies have been conducted related to intercultural competence (Juan-Garau & Jacob, 2015; Smith & Segbers, 2018), to our knowledge, there are only two published studies that have used an online platform (Shafirova et al., 2020; Su et al., 2021). Therefore, there is a gap in methodological practice, and the present study intends to fill this void. In addition, our study is unique insofar as the researchers were not outsiders; they were practitioner-researchers learning with the participants (i.e., students/researchers) as part of a team.

One method involves the direct immersion of the researcher into the cultural community. In this paper, we present and interpret the results of an innovative intercultural training methodology that emancipates participants (students/trainees) as fellow researchers/trainers via “inclusive practitioner research” (Hanks, 2019). We emphasize the importance of interacting with the community members of interest with keen sensitivity and intercultural competence as teacher-researchers (or trainers-researchers). This revealed actual cultural syndromes (Triandis, 1972) in the community’s cultural, psychological consciousness through key emic analogous cultural concepts in various Asian native languages through communicating in English as a *lingua franca*.

This paper presents and analyses those interactions mentioned above as a unique online training method. The participants (students/trainees) were native to five cultural regions: Indonesia (Java), Japan, mainland China, and Taiwan. The research method involved using online intercultural exchanges/interviews with four teams of three students and one group of two students (a total of 14 students) with communication applications for smartphones, tablets, and computers; i.e., WeChat, LINE, WhatsApp, Messages, Skype, and FaceTime (Zoom was not yet available at the time).

The goal of the exchanges/interviews was to reflect on transcultural understanding (i.e., intercultural competence) through English-mediated discussions involving

translations of analogous emic concepts in the following three languages: Japanese, Mandarin Chinese, and Javanese. Students used Google Docs to write collaborative research papers assessed by the teachers for depth and sophistication of intercultural learning and understanding. Students also wrote reflection papers based on their lived experiences. The critical questions in this inclusive practitioner paradigm were: Could virtual intercultural training be used in interviews in English as a *lingua franca* of key emic cultural concepts with native speakers of various Asian languages? In addition, how would this lead to intercultural training goals (intercultural competence) as evidenced by research paper outcomes and reflection paper insights?

3. Learning Environment

3.1. Participants

A research team of three Javanese undergraduate students who were about 20 years old (two females and one male) who were psychology majors and their two Javanese psychology teachers (an associate professor; the third author) and a lecturer (the second author) at a large private Indonesian university on the Java Island in Indonesia participated in Online Intercultural Exchanges (OIEs) involving discussions and interviews for two semesters. The students were recruited based on their English ability and academic performance in the teachers' classes.

Their online exchange counterparts were nine first-year Master's students and two doctoral students (one Japanese female, one Taiwanese male, and nine mainland Chinese: six females and three males) from a large national research university in Japan who were enrolled in a graduate seminar course called "Intercultural Understanding Pedagogy." These students were members of a Foreign Language Acquisition Department, and they were in their mid-20s. They were studying various topics for their Master's degrees related to languages, such as plurilingualism, pragmatics, and corpus linguistics. None of them were being advised by the teacher directly. The US American teacher of this seminar (the first author) was an associate professor of social-cultural psychology.

The students in Japan received credit to fulfill part of the course requirements for a graduate seminar class. The Indonesians voluntarily participated in exchange for some merchandise from the Japanese university and "Virtual Intercultural Training Certificates of Completion" issued and signed by the teachers. All of the students consented to have their reflections shared anonymously in this research paper and to have their essays posted on a website dedicated to intercultural understanding through virtual intercultural training of emic cultural concepts called intercultural-wordsensei (n.d.): <https://interculturalwordsensei.org/>.

In addition, all of the students participated in virtual online intercultural training for the first time and had limited experience with intercultural communication and indigenous psychology. The teacher-researchers designed an overall procedure (see Figure 1) and assigned the student-participants in Japan to interview the students in Java in the online intercultural exchanges; then, the roles were reversed.

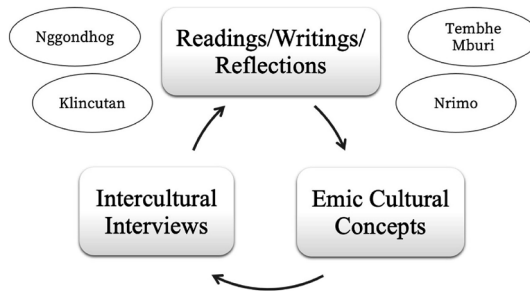


Figure 1 The Virtual Intercultural Training Method

3.2. Procedure

3.2.1. Readings

The graduate students based in Japan were required to read academic articles and book chapters assigned by their teacher for the course. Each student presented the content of one of the reading assignments and led a critical discussion during the first several weeks of the course. The students who were not presenting prepared at least two discussion questions in advance during the on-site seminar meetings. The students in Indonesia also read and discussed most of the readings.

First, works by Kern & Develotte (2018) and Lewis & O'Dowd (2016) were read, presented, and discussed to develop basic knowledge of the potential advantages and disadvantages of virtual intercultural training through multimodal online exchanges. Then, theoretical issues, descriptions, explanations, and examples of indigenous psychology (Kim et al., 2006), transculturality (Welsch, 1999), and cultural cosmopolitanism (Abe, 2016) were read, presented, and discussed. The class members discussed Nakano and Tanaka (2018) to become familiar with communication patterns in relationship formation with Indonesians. They also talked about the meanings of key emic Indonesian (Javanese) concepts from Widiyanto (2016). Through this process, the students familiarized themselves with and stimulated their interest in Indonesian culture.

3.2.2. Emic Cultural Concepts

Materials related to the key emic cultural concepts of *amae* in Japan (Dalsky, n.d.), Yamaguchi, 2004), and *sajiao* in China (Sundararajan, 2015) were read, presented, and discussed. These readings were assigned to compare and contrast the analogous emic concepts in Indonesian culture and inspire possible ways to approach these emic yet potentially phenomenological universals (see Niiya et al., 2006). Then, the students read about the development of psychology as an academic discipline in Indonesia (Muluk et al., 2018), which provided an indigenous view of the theories and methods used to research a region with diverse subcultures.

The features of the emic cultural concepts were elucidated and pursued through online intercultural exchanges of folk psychologies; in other words, commonsense understandings of the emic concepts (Bruner, 1990) using online tools and applications. Students wrote at least 2,500-word collaborative papers about the concepts. In some cases, the writings showed evidence of team members' mutual intercultural un-

derstanding, which was revealed in their reflections about their experience in the online intercultural exchanges.

3.2.3. Interviews

Below are some excerpts of the virtual exchanges of the emic concepts between the student-participants. The emic concepts were chosen through the preliminary online interaction of the participants. Specifically, the participants were asked to find emic concepts that could be compared and contrasted in two native languages using English as a medium of learning.³

1) *Nggondhog* (Javanese)

Chinese student A: Is *nggondhog* the same as disappointment?

Javanese student A (answer): It is not just about disappointment. It is composed of cranky, powerless, angry, and a bit of disappointment at the same time.

Chinese student B: When do people feel *nggondhog*?

Javanese student A (answer): For examples, when the student's performance is underestimated by the teacher though the student is working hard, or the teacher is tired of taking care of a bunch of naughty students and he can't give up due to the responsibility.

2) *Tembhe Mburi* (Javanese)

Chinese student C: What is the meaning of *tembhe mburi*?

Javanese student B (answer): It is future time after an action occurred (done) but it is not clear when, referring to the result of an action taken.

Chinese student D: Do people use this expression in daily conversation?

Javanese student B (answer): Yes, in both positive or negative situations. For example, parents tell their daughter: "If you work hard, persevere, and learn, in *tembhe mburi* you will succeed"; "Having someone made a mistake, in *tembhe mburi* he/she will regret; and, "You can't marry this man because he is a play-boy. If you don't listen to me, in *tembhe mburi* you will regret it."

3) *Klincutan* (Javanese)

Chinese student E: What is the difference between shame and *klincutan*?

Javanese student C (answer): *Klincutan* is the combination of feelings of shame, helplessness and guilt.

Chinese student F: In what kind of situation, do people feel *klincutan*?

Javanese student C (answer): People caught doing something bad which they know is bad and don't want to be found out.

4) *Nrimo* (Javanese)

Chinese student G: What kind of attitude is *nrimo*?

Javanese student C (answer): *Nrimo* is an attitude between gratitude and helplessness.

Chinese student H: When do people become *nrimo*?

Javanese student C (answer): People become *nrimo* when there is nothing someone can do to improve the current situation. They accept what happened or

what they have tried.

Chinese student I: Why will people be grateful, instead of complaining, for the undesirable situation?

Javanese student C (answer): Because Javanese people generally believe God has the authority to determine and the situation is given by God or the Universe.

4. Results

4.1. Writings

The concrete outcome of these Online Intercultural Exchanges was a collection of collaboratively-written academic research papers in English that compared/contrasted some of the key emic cultural psychology concepts in the Javanese, Mandarin Chinese, and Japanese languages posted on a web portal with the informed consent of the students called *interculturalwordsensei* (n.d.): <https://interculturalwordsensei.org/>.

The following are relevant excerpts from these writings that demonstrate trans-cultural understandings of English as a second or third language.

4.1.1. Nggondhog

The definition of *nggondhog* is a feeling of disappointment that cannot be expressed at the time of disappointment: “*a very disappointed feeling that cannot be expressed directly during the disappointing incident occurring.*” It is a complex feeling involving anger and powerlessness as well. An example could be a son who was asked by his mother to take care of his baby sister while cooking, but the baby kept crying no matter how hard the son tried, and then the son was criticized by his mother, so he felt *nggondhog*.

The Japanese word for *nggondhog* is *uppun* (鬱憤), and the Chinese phrase with a similar meaning is 哑巴吃黄连, 有苦说不出 (*unable to express one's discomfort, like a dumb person tasting bitter herbs; and to be compelled to suffer in silence*).

Analysis: The similarities among the three concepts are: 1) they are all negative emotions, and 2) the person who has these feelings would suppress them in their heart. The difference among the concepts lies in why they hide the emotions rather than express them. The Japanese word and the Chinese phrase indicated some specific reasons, like the inability to convey the feelings of being forced to tolerate. In contrast, the Indonesian word does not imply such reasons.

4.1.2. Tembhe mburi

Tembhe mburi means a future time after an action is done inferred by the speaker with assumptions of the result of the behavior “future time after an action occurred (done) but it is not clear when referring to the result of an action taken.”⁴ For example, the phrase could be used in such a sentence when a parent talks to their daughter: *If you work hard, persevere, learn, and study, in tembe mburi you will succeed.*

Similar words in Japanese are *itsuka* (いつか; someday⁵), *izure* (いずれ; when the time comes), and *osokare hayakare* (遅かれ早かれ; sooner or later). In Chinese, it could be translated as *zong-you-yi-tian* (总有一天; one day).

Analysis: By comparing the usages of these words in sentences, the nuances among them could be found. *Itsuka* can be used in the case that “I don’t know when but I hope I can see you *itsuka*,” which such use cannot be seen in *tembe mburi* and *zong-you-yi-tian*. *Izure*, *osokare hayakare* and *zong-you-yi-tian* are more similar to the Indonesian word. They all refer to some point that the speaker is unsure about, but *tembe mburi* explicitly implies the speaker’s anticipation of the result relates to the development of action.

4.1.3. Klicutan

Klincutan is a Javanese word that is often translated as *shame* in English. However, it also contains feelings of *helplessness*, *guilt*, and *awkwardness*. It is an emotion that people may have when “they were caught by doing something wrong.” For example, someone is caught eating her friend’s cake without permission or stealing her parent’s money to buy a doll.

The Chinese counterparts could be *xiu kui* (羞愧), *xiu chi* (羞耻), or *nan wei qing* (难为情), and the Japanese counterpart could be *haji* (恥).

Analysis: Compared to *klincutan*, the Chinese and Japanese words have a wider range of semantic meanings. The Chinese terms could also be used when “we feel that another person is better than ourselves,” and the Japanese word *haji* could be used when someone compares himself to others who are better and his ideal.

4.1.4. Nrimo

Nrimo is a Javanese word that refers to the attitude “between *gratefulness* and *helplessness*.” A student gave an example of a man who saved his money to buy a new suit, but he suddenly realized the soles of his shoes had worn so thin that he had to spend all the money he had saved to buy a new pair of shoes. The man did not complain but took the attitude of *nrimo* to accept what happened because he believed God or the Universe decided it.

The Chinese idiom *sai-weng-shi-ma* (塞翁失马) has a similar meaning to *nrimo*. It originates from a story in *Huan-nan-zi* where an older man lost his horse, and this seemingly unfortunate incident turned out to be good fortune because the horse brought many fine horses back. When riding the horse, his son broke his leg, so good luck turned into a lousy future. However, the son was luckily spared from serving in the military because of his injured leg when war broke out. The Japanese counterpart, which originates from the Chinese proverb, is *Ningen banji saio-ga uma* (人間万事塞翁が馬), but daily usage has become different.

Analysis: Both *nrimo* and *sai-weng-shi-ma* show an attitude of “accepting the reality and respecting the decisions made by God, Universe or Heaven,” which helps people “find inner peace and calm within ourselves.” However, *nrimo* is concerned about “what happened in the past.” In contrast, *sai-weng-shi-ma* indicates “an acknowledgment of the possible failures or tragedies that might happen and also a positive expectation for a brighter future.”⁶ Though the Japanese proverb carries the same meaning as *sai-weng-shi-ma*, the function of warning people to stay alert in a lucky situation as it may become a bad one is more penetrating.

The above findings are extracted from the essays written by the participants. As shown in the above analysis it can be concluded that the participants (i.e., the students) acquired a more profound understanding of the emic cultural concepts through

intercultural exchanges of comparing/contrasting English translations, definitions, cases, functions, and examples.

4.2. Reflections

The results below are selections from the “Reflections Survey” that students were asked to complete at the end of the virtual intercultural training method. We present prototypical responses below.

Students’ reflections revealed their positive attitudes towards virtual intercultural training as it provided an opportunity to meet people from another region, and they were able to build friendly relationships with international team members:

I was so excited to join the project and expand the learning and understanding outside the classroom. I managed to use English authentically.⁷ Moreover, I have made new friends in real life! I didn’t imagine that someday I would have a friend from Indonesia! Everything was amazing and refreshing, and most important, this project actually had an impact on my life and taught me that it’s possible to do something and make a difference. I really enjoyed this project and I will never forget this wonderful experience! I started to think if every student can have an opportunity to do intercultural exchange, there might be less misunderstandings, and the world might be a better place. (Mainland Chinese student B)

In my opinion, good intercultural exchange is like a virtuous cycle, for the good feedback you’ll get and you’ll be motivated to know more about each other. It’s interesting to have friends from different region, they always have some concepts that you might never think of. Sure! Better for more intercultural interaction! (Taiwanese/Japanese student A)

Moreover, an Indonesian student held some stereotypes about Chinese people, but after the online exchanges, he wrote:

During the conversation I do feel they are friendly (really), but sometimes these stereotypes disturb me. I have an experience with an unfriendly Chinese when I visited my part-time café.⁸ At that time, I wasn’t in my shift.⁹ I looked at her and tried to have a conversation. I started to speak with English then Mandarin. I asked where she came from and the conversation ends. Even though I knew that it wasn’t a good topic to start with a person we just met, I feel awkward. But my [Chinese] partners, were so kind that I feel warm and maybe with this experience, my stereotypes toward Chinese will change. Thank you. (Indonesian student A)

An open-minded attitude toward people from other regions is the prerequisite for being a global cosmopolitan citizen, and such attitudes proved to be cultivated through the (virtual) intercultural interaction.

Another factor that contributed to the success of the virtual intercultural training is that the participants cultivated a genuine interest in both the cultures of their part-

ners and themselves. As two of the Mainland Chinese students stated in their reflections:

We all feel that intercultural communication is necessary to broaden our horizons and important for understanding our own culture. Before the intercultural exchange, I barely knew anything about Indonesia. But thanks to this project, I started to know about Indonesian culture. Our Indonesian partner is also a university student, we have some common interests and she is friendly and warm, so it was not stressful at all to ask questions and discuss about the cultural concepts. I benefited a lot from chatting via video and text, and also from writing the collaborative paper. Even though we come from different countries, we have something similar in culture. For example, the Javanese word “Nrimo” has very similar connotations with the Chinese word “随遇而安 (Sui yu er an).” Besides, the national motto of Indonesia “*Bbhinneka tunggal ika*” (Unity in Diversity) is very impressive and I think this spirit is needed in this increasingly globalized world.

(Mainland Chinese student A)

Regarding the cultures that they were unfamiliar with, they expressed curiosity about cultures they were unfamiliar with. When it turned to their “own” culture, they did not pose an omniscient stance; instead, they appreciated the online intercultural exchanges as an opportunity to learn more about their “own” culture and recognized the similarities among the cultures.

5. Discussion

5.1. Mutual Transcultural Understandings

According to Welsch (1999), the world may be viewed as a blending of cultures that intermixes, resulting in the unique concept of transculturality. We believe this is important for our understanding of the analyses of the results in the virtual intercultural training of the teacher-researchers in the present work.

On the macro-level, cultures today are interconnected and entangled, resulting in a hybridization (Welsch, 1999). The data from the students’ written products and reflections reflected this because the emic cultural concepts could be understood as universal phenomena, such as the universality of emotion (*nggondhog* and *klincutan*), the universality of coping strategies (*nrimo*), and the exploration of social values/expectations (*tembhe mburi*). On the micro-level, the transcultural formation of individuals became apparent as the students generated transcultural understandings in English (see Freitag-Hild, 2018), as evidenced by their interviews which teased out subtle differences in meanings, leading to the discovery of the subtle nuances among the unique emic cultural concepts.

Mutual transcultural understanding makes hybridization (Welsch, 1999) and transcultural competence possible (Glover & Friedman, 2015; Smith, 2020). Allolio-Näcke (2014) states that hybridity is related to identity construction due to cultural encounters. The phenomenon of globalization has provided the space to create hybrid

identities. For example, a student born in Javanese culture will have a Javanese mother tongue. She will learn at least two other languages during her lifetime, namely Indonesian and English. When she learns non-native languages, she also discovers the cultural logic in both the language and its cultures. In addition, the classroom also requires her to be familiar with the Internet and various kinds of information available in multiple languages. Bhabha (1990, 1994) stated that the technological age we live in allows a person to carry out cultural translations from their culture into another culture or language.

The reflection surveys suggest that although English was the only common language among the participants, the majority of the members of the research teams gained valuable insights into the subtle nuances and commonalities of various Asian emic cultural concepts, which led to the formation of mutual transcultural understandings. By involving everyone as both practitioners with everyday knowledge and co-researchers with academic learning, the project created a communal 'third space' to negotiate and reinterpret cultural meanings. The practitioner-researchers become intercultural agents in this regard. Moreover, by focusing on the related analogous concepts, the project motivated the participants to acknowledge their inner transculturality.

5.2. Limitations

Of course, the current project has limitations. One student suggested that the international research team focus on only one concept: "I'm not sure about this, but it might be interesting if all the groups talk about the same phrase or concept and compare the differences and commonalities. And it would be possible to discuss [the same concept] among the groups if the exchange process gets stuck."

In addition, the frequency of contact is another issue to consider. One student reflected: "The important key to building online relationship is willingness to contact more intensively." However, this might be too intense for other students: "chatting on the WeChat app was nice too, but some seemed to have felt the pressure to respond all the time." However, according to another student: "we asked questions to each other on WeChat beforehand so none of us panicked in Skype chat session while answering the questions."

Another limitation of this project was that the particular focus on Javanese words. Ideally, comments from each cultural member should be incorporated into the project's design. Moreover, face-to-face contact among all participants would make the paradigm more successful. However, there are two reasons for not implementing these changes. One is the COVID-19 pandemic that made it impossible for face-to-face contact. Another is the reality of the situation: a variety of international partners were not available on campus. One could argue that this may not be a limitation of the study but rather a boon to lower the cost of "internationalizing" an institution of higher education.

5.3. Conclusion

We have argued that the current research project fills essential gaps in traditional intercultural training programs because 1) it was entirely conducted virtually,

and 2) the researchers avoided potential pitfalls. When engaging in intercultural training, the trainer-researcher should be conscious of not assuming the role of the “all-knowing expert” in the community. Researchers often “diagnose” cultural syndromes” (Triandis, 1972) of a community when in actuality, the community holds the keys to the most precious pieces of cultural insights. This case involved learning key emic cultural concepts of the “other” through online exchanges, comparing and contrasting the concepts, and then reflecting upon their experience. Therefore, cultural sensitivity and intercultural competence were highly valued by the practitioner-researchers/trainers as valuable traits to convey insiders’ perspectives. We argue that we accomplished this by empowering our participants (students) and would even go far as to say that the teachers/trainers learned from them.

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Note

- 1 In this paper we use the terms transculturality and interculturality interchangeably although we are aware of some complicated disagreement in the literature (...we are aware that not all scholars agree with this usage).
- 2 One difference between Indonesia and other countries is the lingua franca, which is Bahasa Indonesia. The term *lingua franca* presupposes different varieties of Indonesian, but Bahasa Indonesian is the national language.
- 3 The authors of this paper decided to transcribe the exact English words of the student participants as we felt this is how they could naturally express themselves in translation from their native languages. We believe that the grammatical errors are only minor, and that they do not lead to essential misunderstandings of the writings (although when they do, they are mentioned in footnotes). Moreover, it we hope the reader will better engage with the material and decipher his or her own understandings which constitutes the process of the virtual intercultural training method.
- 4 The meaning of this concept may be difficult to understand because there are no verb conjugations in the Indonesian language.
- 5 However, the nuance of *tembhe mburi* seems to be different in the Japanese language. *いつか* is sometimes used as a polite way to defer to someone. For example, “someday we’ll meet in Japan” or “someday we’ll...it’s a polite way of not closing off the relationship/communication without making a definitive commitment.
- 6 To be sure, when Javanese people say “*nrimo*,” it means that you have a problem, but it does not matter, or it is not a big deal. There may be a complaint about the problem or the adversity, but the Javanese think another lesson can be learned from that situation, so Indonesians express it with agency.
- 7 “...use English authentically” means “...communicate in an authentic context in English.”

- 8 The Indonesian student was doing part-time work in a café.
- 9 The Indonesian was off that day.

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