

Course Learning Outcomes for Unit V

Upon completion of this unit, students should be able to:

5. Synthesize cultural influences on learning and development in an organization.
 - 5.1 Propose a new hire orientation program for a specific market.
 - 5.2 Discuss the relationship between the learner and trainer.
 - 5.3 Explain delivery methods for a new hire orientation program.

Course/Unit Learning Outcomes	Learning Activity
5.1	Unit Lesson Article: "A Study of Anglo Expatriate Managers' Learning, Knowledge Acquisition, and Adjustment in Multinational Companies in China" Article: "Understanding Ethnicity and National Culture: A Theoretical Perspective on Knowledge Management in the Organization" Article: "National Culture and the Learning Organization" Unit V Scholarly Activity
5.2	Unit Lesson Article: "A Study of Anglo Expatriate Managers' Learning, Knowledge Acquisition, and Adjustment in Multinational Companies in China" Article: "Understanding Ethnicity and National Culture: A Theoretical Perspective on Knowledge Management in the Organization" Article: "National Culture and the Learning Organization" Unit V Scholarly Activity
5.3	Unit Lesson Article: "A Study of Anglo Expatriate Managers' Learning, Knowledge Acquisition, and Adjustment in Multinational Companies in China" Article: "Understanding Ethnicity and National Culture: A Theoretical Perspective on Knowledge Management in the Organization" Article: "National Culture and the Learning Organization" Unit V Scholarly Activity

Required Unit Resources

In order to access the following resources, click the links below.

Armstrong, S. J., & Yan, L. (2017). [A study of Anglo expatriate managers' learning, knowledge acquisition, and adjustment in multinational companies in China](https://libraryresources.columbiasouthern.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=122238318&site=ehost-live&scope=site). *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 16(1), 1–22.

<https://libraryresources.columbiasouthern.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=122238318&site=ehost-live&scope=site>

Khan, S. R., & Khan, I. A. (2015). [Understanding ethnicity and national culture: A theoretical perspective on knowledge management in the organization](https://libraryresources.columbiasouthern.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=100988860&site=ehost-live&scope=site). *Knowledge and Process Management*, 22(1), 51–61.

<https://libraryresources.columbiasouthern.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=100988860&site=ehost-live&scope=site>

Siddique, C. M. (2017). [National culture and the learning organization](https://libraryresources.columbiasouthern.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=121169710&site=ehost-live&scope=site). *Management Research Review*, 40(2), 142–164.
<https://libraryresources.columbiasouthern.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=121169710&site=ehost-live&scope=site>

Unit Lesson

Learning and Development in Global Organizations

Cultural differences can have a substantial influence on learning and development. Many global organizations strive to cultivate both local and global channels for key talent and workforce development. To broaden the management and leadership capabilities, high-potential employees are often selected for international assignments. Coaching and mentoring become very important practices within a global organization and are especially helpful for cross-cultural situations and international assignments. Topics found in global employee learning development include the topics listed in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Global employee learning and development topics

Given the influence of culture in global enterprises, Tarique et al. (2015) suggest seven imperatives to effective global employee learning and development, which are listed below.

1. *Think and act globally*: Global organizations must consider all of the critical localities and markets of the world—not only those at home—during strategic, business, and organizational development planning.
2. *Become a central global learning organization*: Global learning organizations must have the capacity and the desire to gather knowledge and learn from all cultures, at all times, and in all possible ways.
3. *Focus on the global system*: There should be an encouragement of cross-cultural, cross-border, cross-functional, and interdisciplinary information sharing. Efforts in organizational development should focus on breaking down barriers and silos among different cultural groups within the organization with a focus on the global system and not just its parts.
4. *Develop global leadership skills*: There should be an awareness that global leadership requires the use of a specific set of skills and competencies that are different than those within a domestic marketplace.
5. *Empower teams to create a global future*: Organizations should encourage teams to work on cross-cultural collaborations in problem-solving and the management of critical organizational problems.

6. *Make learning a core competency for the global organization:* There should be a development of a core global competency where there are elements of global mindset, cultural intelligence, and skill in dilemma reconciliation.
7. *Make development a cornerstone strategy, and regularly reinvent the organization:* There is a continual development of organizational learning, which is a cornerstone for all strategic and planning activities.

Within global organizations, those responsible for the design, development, and delivery of cross-cultural and cross-border training and development programs must operate in the context of two critical influences: strategic orientation (i.e., how the organization navigates the path between global integration and local variation) and buy-in and support from stakeholders. These two factors will have a strong impact for all aspects of the training and development process of a global enterprise.

Cultural Influences on Training Development

The way that local cultures will respond and perceive various learning activities is an important factor for training professionals to consider. The concepts of cultural dimensions, such as high- or low-power distance, have a profound effect on the selection of learning activities. For example, in high-power distance cultures, training that is highly structured, hands-on, in-house, and conducted by managers and supervisors may be preferred. However, low-power distance cultures may prefer a collaborative style of learning where the learners get to interact with their instructors, and learners are expected to actively participate in the training.

National, organizational, and professional culture will undoubtedly have an influence on the training program during development. Global human resources and training professionals must take into consideration a few factors when incorporating learning methodologies as they manage the training development process.

- Take into consideration how the local culture will view the training and educational process. For example, in a number of Asian cultures, education and training are determined within a high-power distance context where training happens from the top down, meaning leadership or those highly qualified to train will deliver the training. Training takes an authoritative context.
- Another aspect to take into consideration is how the members of the local culture will perceive the leader/instructor and his or her expectations. In many cultures, the instructor is expected to act and is perceived as an expert.
- Lastly, global training professionals must consider how members of the local culture will perceive the role of the learner. Program participation, individual learning activities, and the overall success of a training program can be heavily influenced by the cultural expectations regarding the status and behavior of the learner.

If adequate considerations for cultural consequences are not included when creating training from one culture and delivering it to another culture, the training may not yield success, and learning will likely be limited.

Translation and Interpretation

Key considerations should be made regarding the translation and interpretation of training material. Although some circles may use the terms *translation* and *interpretation* interchangeably, the terms actually differ from one another as shown in Figure 2 below.

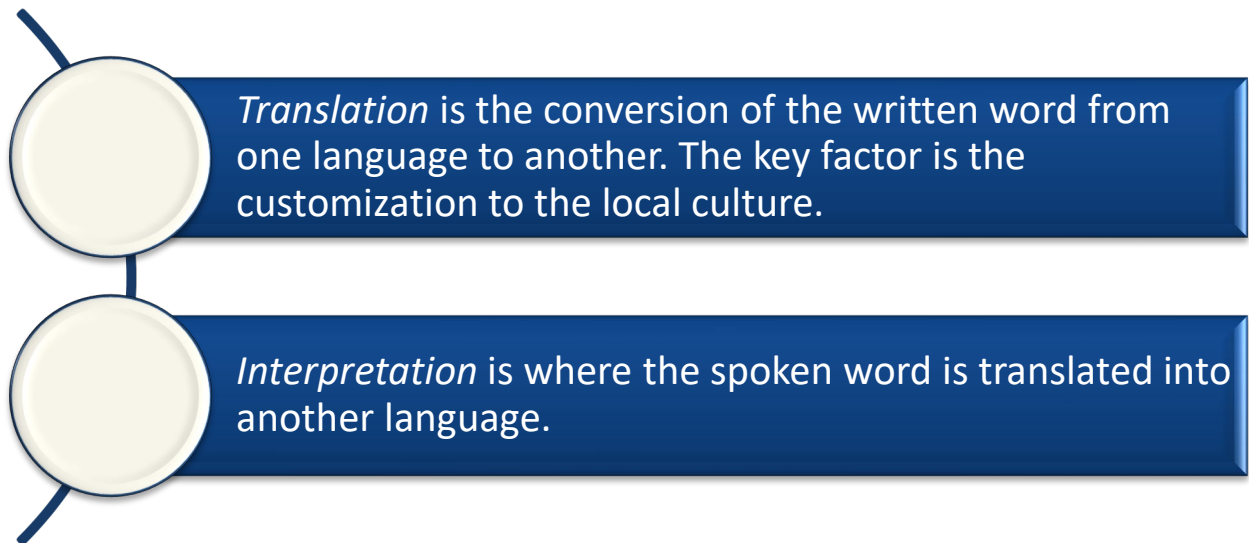


Figure 2: Translation and interpretation actually have different meanings.

The legislation of some countries often mandates that all employee-related material be translated into the local language. Many organizations already utilize translation services for their intranet, website, and employee communications. These same services can also be used in the translation of training programs and materials. The benefits of translating training programs to ensure better participant understanding and retention far outweigh the costs associated with translation.

Current advances in technology have aided in translation by making the process more efficient. Training professionals should understand that different translation contractors and vendors have varying areas of strengths and weaknesses. One vendor may have robust technical capabilities but may have very little experience in the actual translation implementation. In contrast, they may have much experience in translating some languages but then very limited experience with others. It is then important for the training professional to identify the language standards used when evaluating translation vendors or contractors. A good practice could be having a local representative review a sample translation before making a final selection on vendor choice.

On the other hand, in terms of interpretation services, interpreters must be highly skilled. Not only must these interpreters be able to deliver actual presentations and speeches, but they must also be skilled enough to respond to real-time questions that cannot be anticipated but must be interpreted immediately.

Interpretation services can also be very helpful when it comes to interpreting training content for virtual training sessions. Some cultures are very different in their level of interaction as it relates to virtual training. For example, while there may be a great deal of engagement and interaction among Western participants in a virtual training session, many Eastern countries may take a more teacher-learner approach and will wait until the training has been completed to ask questions and participate (Shorney, 2013). Interpreters can help an organization navigate through these cultural differences.

Recommendations for Trainers in Multicultural Context

For global trainers, it can be very challenging to train across cultural differences where the learners have a different culture than that of the trainers. What is even more challenging is managing learners from different cultures in the same training event. Hence, it is important that trainers be skilled in approaching the group in a manner that will be appealing to all groups and offend none. Some of the difficulties that may arise when training across cultures are listed below.

- In some cultures, managers may not want to display difficulty in comprehending the content if their subordinates are in the same training session.
- In a training program with mixed cultures, one culture may dominate and diminish the experience for learners from another culture.

- A trainer may behave in a way that is too informal or may make self-deprecating remarks, which may damage the credibility of the trainer in the eyes of some cultures.
- Language can become an issue if the trainer uses unfamiliar colloquialisms or speaks too quickly.

These challenges are common among global organizations and have caused many training programs to falter. It is, therefore, important for the trainer to have a good grasp of the local customs when designing and delivering training. Some organizations will work with local representatives to obtain consultation on how to best introduce content to a particular culture. As mentioned prior, there are some translation and interpretation services that will add this as a part of the services provided in addition to translating or interpreting material.

According to Shorney (2013), some of the recommendations to combat these difficulties are detailed below.

- Research the customs of all the different groups that will participate in a training program.
- Treat each training participant with equal seriousness and courtesy.
- Keep a professional manner until a level of informality seems to be acceptable to a training group.
- Stay aware of culturally defined needs and feelings such as saving face to avoid the perceived humiliation of not knowing the content presented.
- Diligently work on engaging all learners, and make sure everyone participates.

References

- Shorney, N. (2013, Summer). Cultural differences in training. *Training Industry Quarterly*. Retrieved from [http://www.cedma-europe.org/newsletter%20articles/TrainingOutsourcing/Cultural%20Differences%20in%20Training%20\(Jun%2013\).pdf](http://www.cedma-europe.org/newsletter%20articles/TrainingOutsourcing/Cultural%20Differences%20in%20Training%20(Jun%2013).pdf)
- Tarique, I., Briscoe, D., & Schuler, R. (2015). *International human resources management: Policies and practices for multinational enterprises* (5th ed.). New York, NY: Rutledge.