

# Chapter 6

## Research, Theories, and Pedagogical Practices of Cultural Metacognition in Cross-Cultural Business Education

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### ABSTRACT

*Cultural metacognition, or thinking about cultural assumptions, can help increase awareness, build trust, and create successful business outcomes. The role of cultural metacognition in business is vital. This chapter will enable building a cultural metacognition knowledge base, and promote appreciation of its importance and effect on business enhancement. The context of this chapter will amplify knowledge, ideas, and skills necessary to connect various issues of teaching and learning cultural metacognition in cross-cultural environments. The chapter will facilitate business educators' teaching practices that foster learning cultural metacognition and its effects on cross-cultural business practices. In addition, it includes discussion of the facts related to tools for developing metacognition skills, as well as suggestions for how to fill the gap between theoretical and practical implications. The ultimate goal is to help elevate teaching, learning practices, and research related to the topic of cultural metacognition in cross-cultural business education.*

### INTRODUCTION

Cultural Intelligence (CQ) refers to an individual's capability to deal effectively in cross-cultural situations (Earley & Ang, 2003; Ang et al., 2006; Ang & Van Dyne, 2008). Earley and Ang's (2003) theoretical model characterized CQ as comprising four components: *motivational, cognitive, metacognitive, and behavioral CQ* which is based upon Sternberg's multiple loci of intelligences (Ang et al., 2011) (See

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Table 1). Cognitive CQ is general knowledge and understandings about culture; motivational CQ is the drive, or energy applied toward learning and functioning within cross-cultural situations and interactions; and behavioral CQ is the actions and interactions within cross-cultural ecology. Metacognition is defined as thinking about thinking (knowledge about and regulation of cognition), comprising the processes of monitoring and adjusting thoughts and strategies as one learns new skills (Flavell, 1979; Triandis, 1995). Lane (2009) defines metacognition as one's active control over cognitive process during learning. Metacognitive knowledge is knowledge of one's own cognition and self in relation to various subject matters (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001).

For example, one may be driven to engage in cross-cultural business (motivational CQ). They may learn (cognition) about cultures and how they might function in some settings. However, metacognition takes further steps that are evaluative and reflective in thinking. For example, one might evaluate how effective they are in their interactions with others, or perhaps understand what biases they may hold and think about strategies in order to further their cross-cultural education and pursuit in business. Executing these strategies is behavioral CQ.

Metacognition, a vital part of the four components that make up CQ, can be referred to as cultural metacognition. Specifically, cultural metacognition is thinking about cultural assumptions, and helps increase awareness and build trust in cross-cultural relationships. It is an affective skill in reflecting on cultural assumptions, in preparation for, adaptation to, and learning from intercultural interactions (Earley & Ang, 2003; Earley et al., 2006; Klafehn et al., 2008; Thomas, 2006).

Cultural metacognition is important because people come from many different backgrounds and societal groups, with fundamental differences in worldviews, ethical standards, and social structure. Employees and stakeholders are completely international, and business decision-making becomes more complex as it applies to employees and stakeholders of different cultures. Diverse business industries such as advertising, fashion, and IT, for example, are settings that are increasingly intercultural. A complete knowledgebase of cultural metacognition is essential for business managers to appreciate the importance of different cultures, and to recognize their own cultural uniqueness and the affect it has on business enhancement (Morris, 2012).

According to Morris (2012), gaining awareness of personal assumptions can build trust and take a team beyond cooperating on a task, to true creative collaboration. Cultural metacognition in cross-cultural business education is a vital element in the 21st century. In terms of educational and practical implications, future business success requires training and harnessing metacognitive habits among students and managers (Mor et al., 2013).

The objectives of this chapter are to:

*Table 1. Cultural Intelligence (CQ)*

CQ Component	Description
Motivation (Drive)	The energy applied toward learning and functioning within culture.
Cognition (Knowledge)	General knowledge and understandings about culture.
<i>Metacognition</i> (Strategy)	Thinking about thinking, regulation, monitoring and adjusting thoughts and strategies as ones learns cross-cultural skills.
Behavioral (Action)	Actions and interactions within culture.

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