The Pennsylvania State University

The Graduate School

College of the Liberal Arts

"JUST ONE OF THOSE DUTCH DAYS"--

AMERICAN EXPATRIATE SPOUSES IN THE NETHERLANDS:

TOWARD AN EXPATRIATE FRAME MANAGEMENT THEORY OF ACCULTURATION

A Thesis in

Speech Communication

by

Jennifer A. Jones-Corley

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

May 2002

We approve the thesis of Jennifer A. Jones-Corley

Date of Signature

_____   _____
Michael Hecht
Professor of Speech Communication
Thesis Adviser
Chair of Committee
Head of Department of Speech Communication

_____   _____
Dennis Gouran
Professor of Speech Communication
Professor of Labor Studies & Industrial Relations

_____   _____
Michelle Miller-Day
Assistant Professor of Speech Communication

_____   _____
Judith Kolb
Associate Professor of Education

Abstract

The spouses of expatriate employees are frequently cited as the number one reason for early return or failure of expatriate assignments. However, little is known about these spouses' (almost exclusively women) experiences and the challenges they face. This study provides insight into these experiences and challenges by developing an Expatriate Frame Management Theory of Acculturation. The theory is grounded in the experiences of 37 American expatriate spouses (all women) living in The Netherlands. In-depth interviews and on-site observations enabled the women to explore their experiences of expatriation in The Netherlands. This study was an inductive approach to determining the key domains of expatriate experience and how these domains influence the acculturation of the women. Three key, first-order domains of experience for the expatriate spouse emerged: Cultural Challenges, Coping Strategies, and Identity. Each domain encompassed subcategories and concepts deriving from the narratives of the expatriate spouses. As these domains emerged, an on-going second-order analysis led to the identification of the core variable, Frame Management. This core variable formed the foundation of Expatriate Frame Management Theory. Expatriate Frame Management Theory captures important dimensions of the process of acculturation. The theory builds from three central constructs derived from the first-order domains: frame incongruencies, frame management strategies, and personal adaptation. Frame incongruencies are misalignments among the expatriate spouses' frames and those enacted by the host country nationals. These incongruencies create uncertainty and dissonance for the spouse which, if salient, she will want to alleviate. This may spark the need for her to alter, or manage frames so she can achieve a sense of fit, or personal adaptation, in the new culture. Thus, this study offers both a typology of expatriate issues and a process theory of how expatriate spouses manage these issues through the management of their frames.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

Acknowledgements

First, I would like to thank the members of my committee, Dr. Michael Hecht, Dr. Dennis Gouran, Dr. Michelle Miller-Day, and Dr. Judith Kolb. I value all of your input into my dissertation, as well as my graduate career. I cannot thank you enough for your insight into the development of my research and the level of support I received from all of you. I am both pleased and fortunate to have been able to work with each of you. I also would like to extend *een hartelijk dank* to Dr. Jan Pieter van Oudenhoven, of the University of Groningen, The Netherlands, who acted as my "Dutch advisor." Dr. van Oudenhoven provided much theoretical insight into the development of this project and graciously sponsored me as an international research fellow at his institution. I greatly appreciate his friendship and guidance.

I am indebted to the three organizations that financially supported this research: I received an International Research Fellowship from the Department of Organizational and Social Psychology, The Royal University of Groningen, The Netherlands; a Research Fellowship from the Department of Communication Arts & Sciences, Penn State University; and a Dissertation Research Grant from the College of the Liberal Arts, Penn State University. This funding facilitated the travel and data collection portions of this project.

I also would like to thank the women who inhabit room 308 Sparks, whether or not you actually have a desk there. Thanks to each of you for offering suggestions, support, and various items of food during the final stages of my writing. And thank your for respecting the "Rock Star" sign and understanding that my "Go Away" placard wasn't directed toward you, personally…most of the time…

Also, I am grateful to my parents for their love and support in general, and especially as I pursued this degree. Dad, it's finally done!

Finally, and most importantly, I wish to thank my husband, Kevin. For everything.

State College, Pennsylvania
March, 2002

Chapter One: Introduction

Overview of Research Problem

> The doors closed on the plane and I started a panic attack. I can remember thinking, "Okay." I mean, I had to calm myself. My first feeling was, "What am I doing? How can I do this to my kids? How did I let my husband talk me into this? I am crazy. How can I be dragging my family across the country? What's wrong with The United States? I could stay there."…Those were all the thoughts that were going through my head when that door [closed]. I can still hear that door close on that airplane, thinking, "I'm nuts. I'm absolutely a lunatic."

- Pam, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 1 month

Everyday, American women pack-up their possessions, give up jobs, and move themselves and their families thousands of miles around the world while leaving behind friends, family, and often, career advancement. For many of these women, boxing-up their worldly possessions and starting at square one in a country they have never visited is a frightening experience. For other women, it is an exciting new adventure, while for still others it is old hat. These women all share a common identity: they are sojourners, women who, for whatever reason, leave their home country and move to another. Many of these women are expatriates, who move abroad temporarily because of their partners' jobs (Aycan & Kanungo, 1997). These women often manage every detail of the international move, with little to no outside help. Regardless of the amount of help they receive, they usually are responsible for settling in the children, organizing the house, and dealing with the bureaucratic aspects of the move (passports, papers, etc.), all the while struggling with their own acculturation and frustrations (Adler, 1997).

These women, the partners of expatriate employees, sometimes called "trailing spouses" (Harvey, 1995) or "forgotten partners" (Shaffer & Harrison, 2001), face a multitude of challenges and issues during their expatriations, although relatively little is known specifically about them and their experiences (Black, Gregersen, Mendenhall, & Stroh, 1999). We do know, however,

that an international assignment can create profound personal and professional difficulties for the spouses as they struggle to adjust to the new environment and culture (Pellico & Stroh, 1997; Solomon, 1996).

The personal struggles faced by expatriate spouses and their families have also become a concern of multinational corporations (MNC), as the spouses' lack of acculturation is cited as one of the principal reasons for expatriate employee difficulties and assignment failures (Harvey, 1997; Tung, 1988). These employee problems can result in significant financial loss for a company as well as poor organizational performance because of the employee's ineffectiveness (Black et al., 1999). The more practical problems of personal upheaval for the spouses and reduced organizational effectiveness for the employees create a strong applied need to understand the underlying roots of these issues. Although these more applied concerns about expatriation are laudable, there are also important concerns surrounding the theoretical roots and implications of the expatriate spouse phenomenon.

Theoretical Concerns

There are two overarching theoretical concerns that stem from the current body of research on expatriation: (1) the limited amount of research that focuses directly on the experiences of expatriate *spouses* and (2) the limited applicability of "classic" theories of acculturation to the expatriate spouse group. Each of these concerns is explained further below.

Research on Expatriates

Although a substantial body of research exists on expatriate *employees'* cultural and work adaptation (e.g., Black & Gregersen, 1991a; Black, Mendenhall, & Oddou, 1991; Schneider & Asakawa, 1995), little has investigated the *spouses'* experiences. This paucity of research confines our knowledge of this particular group to assumptions or indirect knowledge

about their experiences. Additionally, it creates a situation in which researchers may erroneously assume similarities to other groups of sojourners. Although some similarities may exist, assuming similarities between expatriate spouses and other groups limits our ability to provide fresh insight into aspects of intercultural communication research and to offer ways to extend current understanding of intercultural theories.

The need to understand the spouses' own experiences requires that research involving expatriate employees not be generalized to spouses, as the spouses' experiences are different from the employees' experiences in a variety of ways (Adler, 1997). Expatriate spouses, who are overwhelmingly women, typically face a very different set of non-work related responsibilities frequently with no immediate support group and no clear sense of identity when compared to expatriate employees, who often gain identity via their careers and employing organizations (Adler, 1997; De Cieri, Dowling, & Taylor, 1991). Additionally, spouses may experience career interruptions or termination in order for the partner to take the international assignment. Finally, they may struggle to accomplish tasks that would be relatively simple at home (e.g., making appointments and organizing the household) and find themselves limited in a variety of other ways by language and cultural differences (De Cieri et al., 1991; Torbiörn, 1982; Tung, 1988).

Other research involving expatriates treats spouses as a "variable" rather than addressing the spouses' individual concerns and experiences (Reding, 1999). For example, researchers have statistically controlled for married or unmarried expatriates or had the spouse complete a survey that is more in line with an employee's experience, such as completing work-related questions or questions the employee would also answer (e.g., Black & Gregersen, 1991c; Gregersen & Stroh, 1997). Other studies, such as Birdseye and Hill's (1995), included a minimal number of items about spouses' experiences and have had the expatriate employees, not the spouses themselves, respond to those questions.

There have been a small number of survey-based studies of expatriate spouses and their experiences in the host culture (e.g., Black & Stephens, 1989; De Cieri et al., 1991; Stephens & Black, 1991), but most of these studies assume that spouses' experiences are similar to those of expatriate employees or students, or they relate the spouses' experiences to the outcome of the expatriate employee assignment (e.g., Black & Stephens, 1989). However, neither of these is frequently the case (e.g., Adler, 1997). There have also been a few studies taking an interview-based approach (e.g., Adler, 1997; Shaffer & Harrison, 2001) that have begun the process of providing a more thorough understanding of the spousal experience.

All of these research efforts are valuable for beginning to understand spouses' expatriation but leave room for additional studies to elaborate in more detail the specifics of the their experiences.

Current Conceptualizations of Acculturation

In addition to the theoretical concerns involving the lack of focus on the spouse group itself, there are also concerns about applying existing acculturation theories to this unique group. Extant research on intercultural interaction and acculturation provides considerable insight into the experiences of sojourners as a broad population (e.g., Church, 1982), yet little work has concerned the acculturation of the spouses specifically. Although prior studies are informative to understanding the spouses' experiences (e.g. Adler, 1997), they may assume too many similarities between the spouses' experiences and those of other sojourners. This approach does not consider the challenges faced by spouses resulting from their particular situation, such as identity shifts, more direct interaction with host country nationals, and lack of a support network for dealing with such difficulties.

Although other sojourners may experience some of these difficulties, the overall experiences of spouses are unique; unlike missionaries or students, the move abroad may not

be by choice. Further, unlike expatriate employees, the spouses do not have a work-related support network and the continuity of a career-based identity. All of these differences make prior theories of acculturation difficult to apply effectively to the expatriate spouse phenomenon. Specifically, there may be aspects of spouse acculturation experiences that are not accounted for by current conceptualizations of acculturation.

Likewise, no theory has been forwarded that adequately describes and/or explains expatriate spouses' intercultural interactions and cultural adaptation (Shaffer & Harrison, 2001). Shaffer and Harrison have begun to make theoretical contributions, but not from a communication perspective. In fact, no communication-based theories have been developed that specifically address the spouse experience, although Kim's (2001) work does provide some insight into the communication aspects of the spouses' experiences. To begin to understand these spouse experiences, researchers should directly ask the spouses about their experiences instead of relying on surveys based on the employees' experiences, or others' reports of the spouses' experiences.

Finally, this concern is accentuated because over the years, researchers have challenged conceptualizations of several "classic" acculturation theories on theoretical grounds (see Anderson, 1994; Berry, 1997; Black et al., 1991; Black & Mendenhall, 1991; Church, 1982 for reviews and critiques). Their main contention is that these theories do not adequately capture the nature of the acculturation experience and, therefore, come up short in providing a strong foundation from which to understand the process. Because expatriate spouses confront different problems and issues than the groups about which these traditional theories were developed, it is even more problematic to use these classic theories in attempting to gain a bona fide understanding of expatriate spouse acculturation.

What is needed is theory development grounded in the spouses' perspectives about their experiences during international assignments. To that end, this study offers a different

perspective, that of frames, to examine the expatriate spouse phenomenon. In particular, I used a frames approach to analyze qualitative data that would contribute to the building of a theory of intercultural interaction grounded in the experiences of American women living in The Netherlands, a key expatriate location (GMAC GRS/Windham International, 2000).

The next section provides a brief introduction to the frames perspective and offers a preview of its relationship with intercultural interactions. This perspective and its interrelationships are explained in further detail in Chapter Two.

Providing a Different Perspective

Each of us has our own understanding of the world around us. We interpret our surroundings on the basis of factors such as our upbringing, our experiences, and our culture(s).   These factors and others create the lenses, or frames, through which we view our world (Gray, in press). A frame can be considered a memory structure that contains the sum of past experiences that helps an individual interpret, understand, and communicate about and within a given situation (Putnam & Holmer, 1992; Tannen, 1979). According to Gumperz and Cook-Gumperz (1982), the frames each of us creates and enacts are like cognitive maps that help us make sense of our surroundings. These frames influence what we notice and/or deem worthy of paying attention to in our environment (Goffman, 1974). All of us "carry" these frames in our mind, and they are reflected in how we communicate about something and with someone (Gale, Chenail, Watson, Wright, & Bell, 1996; Goffman, 1974; Tannen, 1979). As Tannen and Wallat (1993) state, "[F]rames emerge in and are constituted by verbal and nonverbal interaction" (p. 60). Employing a theoretical perspective of frames in research provides insight into understanding individuals' interactions from their own perspective through analysis of their communication (e.g., Bateson, 1972; Goffman, 1974; Tannen, 1979; Gray, in press).

The concept of frames is particularly relevant in intercultural interactions (Tannen, 1979; Torbiörn, 1982). When we travel, interact, and live abroad (e.g., become expatriates), we may find that the frames that helped us understand our experiences at home no longer "work" in the international setting. That is, the cognitive maps that helped us navigate life in our home countries are no longer accurate in the international landscape. This misalignment between our frames and the host country's frames contributes to culturally-based frustrations. Understanding frames becomes important when we consider the increased need to interact globally with one another for economic and social reasons, such as expatriation. For instance, an expatriate spouse could make sense of a new cultural situation on the basis of her background, memories, and past experiences (i.e., her frame). If the spouse has no background with the host culture, she may have to struggle to adapt or create new frames to deal with life in the host country. However, if she has previous or more frequent contact with the host culture, she may find it easy to use and/or create different frames.

I believe that frames are key to understanding intercultural communication and are at the roots of acculturation. Applying a framing perspective to the case of expatriate spouses provides an opportunity to advance the application of frames theoretically, as well as a means to gain insight into the experiences of expatriate spouses.

The expatriate spouse population is well suited for a study of frames and framing; relative to other groups who move abroad this group receives little to no assistance in preparing for their intercultural experience. This means that they have little to no opportunity to alter old frames or develop new ones that would align with the frames of host country's culture(s) prior to moving abroad. Moreover, unlike the expatriate employee who may be able to employ the same/similar frames because he is with the same company at a similar job, the spouse may have to create entirely new frames because of the significant changes to her life and her more frequent interaction with the host culture. The result could be a situation in which the spouse

arrives in the host country with only her home country frames and has to choose how she will "manage" her frames: Will she be able to alter old frames to make sense of her new environment? Will she create new frames? Or, will she figure out some other way to negotiate her frames in the new environment?

The interplay of frames and culture provides an useful theoretical structure for intercultural communication research. Little work to date has related to the notion of framing or frame management to facilitate cultural interaction and acculturation. A framing approach in the case of expatriates can provide insight into the types of frames expatriates "bring" to the new culture and how they manage those frames to create meaningful understanding of their new cultures. The framing approach further encourages a focus on the communication aspect of the expatriate experience and contributes to a richer understanding of acculturation and intercultural communication.

The next chapter is a review of literature relevant to this study. Included in the chapter is further information concerning expatriate spouses, an examination of framing theories, and a discussion of several of the predominant conceptualizations of acculturation. The chapter concludes with an explanation of the guiding research questions for the project.

Chapter Two: Review of Related Scholarship

This chapter provides a review of literature relevant to this study and has four sections. The first section discusses individuals abroad, including expatriates and expatriate spouses. The second section focuses on literature relevant to the theoretical underpinnings of the framing approach used in this study. This section begins with a brief overview of the concept of frames and then delves into the development of the concept across several disciplines. The third section examines prior research on acculturation, including the predominate families of adaptation/acculturation models. The chapter concludes with an explanation of the guiding research questions of this study.

Individuals Abroad

There are numerous reasons why individuals travel and live abroad that range from vacation to occupational opportunities. Broadly speaking, these individuals could fall into one of three types of people abroad: Tourists, sojourners, or immigrants. Each of these groups has its own characteristics and membership, with the sojourner groups encompassing a wide variety of subgroups, including expatriates (Aycan & Kanungo, 1997). The length of stay in a country and the issues that stem from this factor are often defining characteristics for each group. For example, tourists have the shortest stay (several days up to a month or so) in a country and often feel little or no need to adapt to the host culture. Expatriates and immigrants stay in the host country longer (several months up to 5 years for the expatriate and the remainder of their lives for the immigrant) and often feel a greater need, sometimes pressure, to adapt to the host culture (Berry, 1997). These two groups have a greater necessity to interact with the host culture to live out their day-to-day lives—unlike tourists who can "wait until they get home" to take care of daily life needs like getting their hair cut. Sojourners and immigrants have a greater

need to interact with and adapt to the host culture, which makes them key groups to examine in gaining an understanding of framing, acculturation, and cultural experiences.

Expatriates

Multinational corporations (MNCs) frequently establish international branches and subsidiaries in attempts to remain competitive in the global marketplace. Often, to increase the likelihood of success and maintain or instill a consistent corporate culture, MNCs send employees from the home headquarters abroad to manage and lead their international divisions (Aycan & Kanungo, 1997). Spouses and families frequently accompany these expatriate employees in these international assignments (Adler, 1997). The placement of expatriates in host countries may cause difficulties in the workplace, as well as in their personal lives, as the employees and their families struggle to adjust to the new environment and culture. Unfortunately, expatriates and their families frequently return home from the posting early as a result of the cultural struggles they face (Tung, 1987).

There are various perspectives regarding what constitutes an expatriate. This study refers to expatriate employees as "expatriates" and the spouses/partners of these expatriates as "expatriate spouses" or "spouses." Expatriate employees in Aycan and Kanungo's (1997) terms are:

> [E]mployees of business or government organizations who are sent by their
> organization to a related unit in a country which is different from their own, to
> accomplish a job or organization-related goal for a pre-designated temporary
> time period of usually more than six months and less than five years in one term.
> (p. 250)

The 2000 Global Relocation Trends survey (GMAC GRS/Windham International, 2000) reports that 87 percent of expatriates are male and 71 percent of all expatriates are married. Spouses accompany 77 percent of the married expatriates, and 60 percent of married expatriates have at least one child with them. *Business Week* (Koretz, 1999) reports similar

figures: only 14 percent of expatriates abroad are female, even though women constitute about 30 percent of students in MBA programs—a common recruiting pool for multinational companies. Black and colleagues (1999) indicate that 85 percent of U.S. expatriates are married and that men are selected for international assignments over 90 percent of the time. The accompanying spouses or partners, usually women, recently have been dubbed "forgotten partners" (Shaffer & Harrison, 2001) and "trailing spouses" (Harvey, 1996), as they often "follow" the employee to the country without their own employment or are legally unable to obtain employment due to immigration restrictions.

The success and failure of expatriate employees have been the subjects of considerable study in recent years. Much of the research has focused on organizational success or failure with an emphasis on expatriate employee adaptation—first to the job requirements and then to the culture (e.g., Black & Gregersen, 1991a; Black et al., 1991; Tung, 1987). From a corporate standpoint, employees sent abroad, ideally, should benefit their companies by being successful in their international position. This bottom-line concern has contributed to the growth of a large body of management-related literature that examines expatriate employees' experiences.

As noted earlier, the extent of spouse and family adaptation to culture is often cited as a principal reason for expatriate failure (Harvey, 1997; Solomon, 1996; Tung, 1988). However, researchers disagree about the effect of marital status and families on expatriate success. Marriage can provide stability for some expatriates (Black et al., 1999; Solomon, 1996); for other expatriates, spouse and family problems may be the primary cause of their assignment failure (Birdseye & Hill, 1995). Solomon (1996) notes that the family can be "a crucial source of stability, nurturance and support for the expatriate employee-and by extension, the business" (p. 82). A study by Caligiuri and colleagues (Caligiuri, Hyland, Joshi, & Bross, 1998) supports this claim in revealing that family issues (i.e. family support, communication, and adjustment) are related to the expatriates work adjustment.

Another study produced mixed results concerning spouse and family influences, such that while family responsibility has a significant negative impact on employee job satisfaction, it did not play a significant role in the employee's decisions to end his/her assignments early (Shaffer & Harrison, 1998). Additionally, some specific spouse factors (adjustment, satisfaction, and living standards) are positively related to employee job satisfaction and non-work satisfaction, and spouse adjustment negatively effects expatriates' desire for early assignment departure. Shaffer and Harrison concluded that their mixed results do not directly support the notion of the centrality of spouse and family factors in expatriate success of earlier work. Instead, their study clarifies earlier work "suggesting [that] effects of family context are broad and varied rather than narrow and direct" (p. 111). Hence the spouse is only one of a multitude of family-related matters that can affect the expatriate experience. Moreover, spouses are also important in their own right, as a unique reflection of intercultural interaction, regardless of their effect on the employee's work situation. A discussion of expatriate spouses and the issues they face follows.

Expatriate Spouses

Although there is limited research on the expatriate spouse phenomenon, we do know that the spouses' experiences are different from the expatriates' experiences in several ways. Spouses often face a very different set of non-work related responsibilities, frequently with no immediate support group and no clear sense of identity when compared to expatriate managers who often gain identity via their career (Black et al., 1999). Unlike the spouse, the expatriate manager is often in an office surrounded by individuals fluent in English, working toward common organizational goals, and effectively insulated from interacting with host nationals who may be unfamiliar with American culture and the English language (Tung, 1988). The spouses, however, often need to interact with host nationals on a daily basis to accomplish everything

from purchasing groceries to finding appropriate schools for their children. Adler (1997) comments that while the employee has colleagues to translate the language and explain the culture for them, the spouse usually depends on her/his own ingenuity and personal knowledge to gain cultural understanding. Solomon (1996) compares the expatriate spouse to a corporate CEO and observes that the spouse (most frequently a wife) oversees all aspects of the international relocation and adjustment and is responsible for making the assignment function smoothly, often with little or no assistance.

The lack of assistance and the pressures of helping the family move and adjust can result in the spouse's feeling isolated (Black et al., 1999) and create difficulties for establishing a meaningful life (Adler, 1997). This feeling of isolation and meaningless is then multiplied when one considers that family support and past friendships may be strained due to distance and that the spouse has yet to establish community support networks (De Cieri et al., 1991). Moreover, the lack of an immediate support network often makes it difficult for the spouse to navigate the "daily nuisances" that are part of life in the new culture, as she has no one to ask about how to "get things done."

Faced with all these potential difficulties, how, then, can expatriate spouses adapt to the new culture? Some research has suggested that spouses who befriend host-country nationals are better able to adapt to the country because they learn about the culture and the nationals' expectations (Black & Gregersen, 1991b). This friendship, in conjunction with family support, helps the spouses adjust to the culture. Black and Gregersen (1991b) have asserted that cultural novelty, or the extent to which the host culture is different from the home culture, also plays a role in the spouses' adaptation. The more novel the culture, the more difficult it is to adjust. Their study revealed that the general living conditions of the family affect spouses' adjustment; living conditions equal to or better than those at home make adjustment easier. One finding that is particularly relevant to a framing view of the spouses' experience was

revealed by Black and Stephens (1989): A positive outlook about the expatriate assignment (i.e., a positive expatriation frame) by the spouse was positively related to their ability to adapt to the culture. This information is helpful in beginning to understand the spouses' adaptation experiences. However, the data do not provide information concerning how the spouses befriend host nationals, why they find the culture different, or what about the living conditions make the experience better or worse than at home.

A limited number of studies (e.g., Adler, 1997; De Cieri et al., 1991; Shaffer & Harrison, 2001) focus on the expatriate spouses' experiences through interviews and surveys with the spouses themselves. These studies are helpful in understanding spouses' experiences and begin to address the distinct issues faced by the spouses. Adler (1997) provides quotations from her various interviews with expatriate spouses to illustrate the traditional u-shaped phases of cultural adaptation they experience (honeymoon, culture shock, adjustment, etc.). For example, in the period she labeled "Culture shock: the initial period abroad" (p. 267), Adler provides examples of initial disorientation and frustration, language problems, and loneliness. Similar finding emerged in a study by De Cieri and colleagues (De Cieri et al., 1991), but when the experiences were quantified and analyzed in conjunction with survey data, they did not support a u-shaped model of adjustment. Instead, the data reflected a more linear pattern of adaptation throughout the posting.

Adler's study also provides insight into the women's feelings of separation from their spouses and lack of social support. Often, frequent travel was required of the employees, which left the spouses responsible for many major family decisions that previously had been made in conjunction with the expatriate employee (Solomon, 1996). Based on her interviews, Alder concluded that spouses (all women in her study) related stories in which they described themselves as "living in a gilded cage"—having nice homes and servants but also hours of emptiness and non-activity (p. 275).

Work by Shaffer and colleagues (Shaffer & Harrison, 1998; Shaffer & Harrison, 2001; Shaffer et al., 2001) involving the interaction of expatriate employee and family issues provides much needed insight into the expatriate spouse experience. Recently, Shaffer and Harrison (2001) have advanced a model of spouse adjustment that informed the current study. The researchers developed the model based on interviews with spouses and subsequent results of a survey developed in part from the interviews. The crux of the model is that spouse adaptation hinges on the loss and re-establishment of identity in the new culture. Shaffer and Harrison note a distinction between their results and those of prior expatriate studies: social support, such as relationships with family, was key to spouse adjustment. Although their research did not focus specifically on the communication facets of the spouse experience it is nevertheless relevant to the current study.

This section offered insight into expatriates and expatriate spouses and some of the difficulties and challenges they face during their expatriation. The next section examines the theoretical underpinnings of frames, the theory this study uses to examine the experiences of these individuals.

Frames

The concept of frames and framing has been adopted in numerous disciplines. Broadly, a *frame* is like a lens we use to interpret and make sense of the world around us while *framing* is the process of creating a new and/or enacting an already existing frame (Gray, in press). There are a variety of specific terms and definitions associated with frames and framing although there are some similarities among these conceptualizations (see Table 1 for researchers and definitions).

Table 2.1: Significant Frame Theorists and their Conceptualization of Frames

Researcher	Term	Perspective	Definition
Bartlett (1932)	Schema[1]	Cognitive Psychology	"…an active organisation of past reactions, or of past experiences, which must always be supposed to be operating in any well-adapted organic response. That is, whenever there is any order or regularity of behaviour, a particular response is possible only because it is related to other similar responses which have been serially organized, yet which operate, not simply as individual members coming one after another, but as a unitary mass" (p. 201).
Bateson (1972)[2]	Frame	Psychology; Meta-communication	"…it is (or delimits) a class or set of messages (or meaningful actions)" (p.186). "the frame is involved in the evaluation of the message…as such the frame is metacommunicative" (p. 188).
Chafe (1977)	Schemata[3]	Linguistics	"…a pattern by which a larger chunk [of experience] is broken down into smaller chunks" (p.43); identification of the type of situation or event that is occurring.
	Framing		A chunk that is broken down into small enough section that it can be verbalized in a sentence; it includes specific individuals involved in a particular event.
	Category		The particular words and/or phrases that are expressed within the frame.
Entman (1993)	Frame	Communication	"…to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described" (p. 52).
Fillmore (1975)[4]	Scene	Linguistics	"…not only visual scenes but also familiar kinds of interpersonal transactions, standard scenarios defined by the culture, institutional structures, enactive experiences, body image…any kind of coherent segment of human beliefs, actions, experiences or imaginings" (p. 124).

---

[1] Bartlett does not like this term and offers alternatives ("active developing patterns"; "organised setting"). However, he did not use the alternatives as he felt they also were problematic.
[2] Bateson's work was originally presented in 1955.
[3] Chafe notes that he follows Barlett's understanding of "schema" and argues that Minsky (1974) and Goffman (1974) use the term "frame" in a way that would include his definition of schema.
[4] In later work Fillmore (1976) includes the notion of "schema" as the conceptual level between frame and scene.

	Frame		"…any system of linguistic choices—the easiest being collections of words, but also including choices of grammatical rules or linguistic categories—that can get associated with prototypical instances of scenes" (p. 124).
Goffman (1974)	Frame	Sociology	A frame answers the question, "What is it that's going on here?" (p. 8)
	Primary Framework		Renders "what would otherwise be a meaningless aspect of the scene into something that is meaningful" (p. 21).
Minsky (1979)	Frame	Artificial Intelligence	"…a data structure for representing a stereotyped situation like being in a certain kind of living room or going to a child's birthday party" (p. 1).
Schank & Abelson (1977)	Scripts	Cognitive Science[5]	Specific knowledge that allows us to "interpret and participate in events we have been through many times" (p. 37). "…responsible for filling in the obvious information that has been left out of the story" (p. 41).
	Plans		"…repository for general information that will connect events that cannot be connected by use of an available script…" (p. 70). "Describe the set of choices that a person has when he sets out to accomplish a goal" (p. 70).
	Goals		Whatever it is the person hopes to achieve.
	Themes		…"contain the background information upon which we base our predictions that an individual will have a certain goal" (p. 132).
Tannen (1993)[6] Tannen & Wallat (1993)	Interactive Frames[7]	Linguistics	"…what people think they are *doing* when they talk to each other (i.e. are they joking, lecturing, or arguing? Is this a fight or is it play?) (p. 6). (Italics original)
	Knowledge Schema		"…participants' expectations about people, objects, events and settings in the world, as distinguished from alignments being negotiated in a particular interaction.

---

[5] This is the authors' term. They note that it stems from the intersection of cognitive and social psychology with artificial intelligence.

[6] Tannen's earlier work (1979) clusters many concepts together, noting, "…the notions of script, frame, and schema can be understood as structures of expectations based on past experience, and that these structures can be seen in the surface linguistic form of the sentences of a narrative. Furthermore, the structures of expectation which help us process and comprehend stories serve to filter and shape perception" (p. 179).

[7] Tannen's earlier work (1979) used the term "frames" for what she now refers to as "knowledge schemas". She uses the term "interactive frame" to represent the idea of frame stemming from Goffman and Bateson's work.

One of the main distinctions among these definitions is the level of interpretation, such as examining the *specific* sequence and details of a given event versus a general *plan* for interpreting a type of event. Schank and Abelson (1977) use the term *script* to indicate the specific interaction details of a given event (like ordering food in a restaurant) whereas Bateson (1972) uses the term *frame* as a way of explaining how individuals agree on the overarching intended meaning of a message (i.e., the metamessage), such as "this is play" or "this is serious." Some researchers define the term *frames* similar to Bateson in their work (e.g., Frake, 1977; Goffman, 1997). Moreover, other researchers use additional terms, such as *schema* or *category* to reflect similar ideas (e.g., Chafe, 1977a).

Even though researchers differ in their specific definitions of the concept of frame, they usually acknowledge that a frame is, at some level, the sum of past experiences that help an individual interpret and understand a current situation (Tannen, 1979). Another facet on which many scholars agree is that frames entail expectations regarding what will, or should happen in a given situation (Agar, 1994; Tannen, 1979). These expectations reflect individuals' previously accumulated knowledge. For example, if an individual watches two people being introduced to one another, s/he may evoke a "greeting ritual frame" to make sense of the situation. It may be that by using this frame, the individual comes to expect the two people to shake hands and exchange names upon meeting. The expectations of this frame would be based on the individual's experience of previous introductions. If these components of a greeting are present during the observed meeting, then the appropriate frame was employed to make sense of the situation. However, if something else happens during the introduction, for example, the interactants bow toward one another, the greeting ritual frame would have to be modified to make sense of the given introduction; the individual would modify the frame to include bowing as an option for a greeting ritual. Thus, frames provide individuals with the ability to categorize new information and compare it with extant information to determine what is happening in a

given situation. By not having to treat each person or event as utterly new, individuals can make sense of the world around them through drawing connections

At this point, it may seem that frames are similar to stereotypes, in that they both are cognitive processes based on perception. Although there are similarities between these concepts (e.g., both are ways for individuals to simplify their worlds cognitively), it is important that one understand the distinction between these concepts. Stereotypes are rigid and fixed, whereas frames can be altered or completely recreated (Bartunek, 1988). Additionally, stereotyping is a process that allows someone to view an individual as a group member and apply information about that group of people to the individual (Cox, 1993). The key is that one applies group traits to an individual (e.g., "group X members are lazy, you are a member of group X, so you must be lazy"). A frame may involve stereotypes (i.e., assigning group traits to an individual), but frames are not limited to individuals. One can also use them to make sense of a situation or behavior and communication within a situation. For example, Minsky (1979) posits that we use frames to identify everything from fundamental situations and environments (such as "indoor" or "outdoor") to specific types of environments (the indoor type of "Kristen's office").   Thus, frames are flexible and go beyond applying group traits to individuals.

One way to think about frames is metaphorically, as in the frame around a picture (MacLachlan & Reid, 1994). For instance, an individual experiences a new event or meets a new person and metaphorically "places" a cognitive frame around the situation, which determines what becomes figure in the situation and what becomes ground (Bateson, 1972; Putnam & Holmer, 1992). The figure-ground distinction helps the person to determine what is the most salient aspect(s) of the event (i.e., the figure) and focus on that, while de-emphasizing what is background or environment (i.e., ground) of the event or situation (Bateson, 1972; Entman, 1993). The interpretation of an event via a given frame, in effect, prescribes what a person will pay attention to and what he or she will ignore. By employing preexisting frames in

new situations, the individual is able to make connections to already known information and draw some kind of conclusions (or make sense of) the current situation. The metaphorical concept of "placing a frame around a situation or interaction" is known as framing.

Individuals' framing of a situation has implications for how they understand the behavior in the situation, give the behavior meaning(s), and may affect their reactions to those meanings (Gale et al., 1996; Goffman, 1974). The framing of a situation is reflected in the language an individual employs when communicating in or about an event or situation and trying to make sense of it (Goffman, 1974; Tannen, 1979). In any situation, an individual may choose to adopt a given frame from any number of possible frames; the choice of which frame to employ depends on the behavior of others in the situation in addition to the individual's own repertoire of past experiences (Torbiörn, 1982; van Dijk, 1980). In effect, the cognitive activity of Person A frames her communication, which communicate her frame(s) to Person B. Person B then decides how, and/or if, he will accept the frame(s) she is communicating. He also frames his own understanding and his communication in his frames, which may or may not parallel hers. Hence the two parties negotiate the frame(s) they use in the given communication transaction. Researchers have found evidence of these frames, without directly asking individuals about them, via more micro, linguistic, conversational analysis (e.g., Tannen, 1979; Tannen & Wallat, 1993) and more macro thematic levels of analysis (e.g., Goffman, 1974; Gray & Donnellon 1989).

These micro and macro approaches to framing have been used by researchers in a variety of disciplines. One result has been several branches of frame-related research. Work has been conducted in psychology (e.g., Bartlett, 1932; Bateson, 1972), cognitive psychology and artificial intelligence (e.g., Minsky, 1979; Schank & Abelson, 1977), sociology (e.g., Goffman, 1974), and linguistics and communication (e.g., Clair, 1993; Entman, 1993; Putnam & Holmer, 1992; Tannen, 1979). The following sections provide an orientation to the study of

framing within these disciplines and illustrate the multitude of approaches to understanding framing.

Preliminary Work

The preliminary investigation of frames and framing can be traced to Bartlett's (1932) work, in which he discusses "schema" as mental structures of past reactions or experiences. Bartlett believes these past experiences are not organized as individual units, but are instead clustered into manageable groups that allow for easier cognitive retrieval. Recalling these "organized masses," as he calls them, allows individuals to react to and participate in current experiences. Further, Bartlett posits that the organized mass develops continuously and is always accessible. In his research, Bartlett found that individuals tended to create a general impression of the entire situation presented and then compose the details of the situation based on the general impression and past experiences. However, the idea of continual development contributes to individuals modifying current frames and creating new frames in cross-cultural settings.

After Bartlett, the work of Bateson (1972) represents the next major development of the notion of frames as a psychological construct with implications for communication. Bateson emphasizes the idea of frames as metamessages, that is, communication that allows individuals to agree about how to interpret a message. A classic example from his work involves animals' knowing when certain behaviors are meant as play and when those same behaviors are intended as aggression; Bateson argues that it is frames that allow the animals to know how to interpret the messages. He extends this argument to humans in noting that some frames are recognized consciously (such as a job interview frame), whereas others may have no explicit referents. In either case, the frame "assists the mind in understanding the contained message

by reminding the thinker that these messages are mutually relevant and the messages outside the frame may be ignored" (Bateson, 1972, p. 188).

Many of Bateson's (1972) ideas in this area arose as part of his work involving schizophrenia. He believes that successful social interaction depends on the ability to communicate about communication. Schizophrenic patients, he argues, do not have this metacommunication skill as they had been consistently placed in a double bind where they had to obey contradictory messages as young children. The root of the double bind theory is that the mother of the patient would manipulate the frames of her child (the patient) and of herself so the child (patient) would not be able to determine an accurate message. For example, the mother might say, "I'm doing this for your own good," while she is actually upset and acting out against the child. Her verbal message might seem supportive, and, thereby, it could limit the child/patient's ability to understand the underlying hostile message. This creates situations in which the child/patient is unskilled at expressing his or her actual thoughts and unskilled at determining what others mean as well. This aspect of Bateson's work is relevant to the present study in that frames are cognitive structures for interpreting the social world that can be altered or changed (which was his proposed treatment). Bateson's belief that schizophrenia is a communication disorder has been invalidated for a variety of reasons (for discussion see MacLachlan & Reid, 1994), but his thoughts concerning framing and metacommunication are still applicable, especially in terms of human understanding.

This early work by Bartlett and Bateson demonstrated the importance of understanding metamessages and laid the foundation for future scholars to examine how individuals' frames help them participate in and interpret interactions. After Bateson, scholars in several additional fields adopted frames and framing as concepts useful for understanding how human memory and interpretative functions. The main fields include artificial intelligence (in conjunction with cognitive psychology), sociology, and linguistics, and communication.

Artificial Intelligence and Cognitive Psychology

The notion of framing also in the emerging field of cognitive psychology in conjunction with the growth of artificial intelligence in the mid 1970s. However, instead of retaining a metacommunication perspective on framing, scientists concerned with cognitive and artificial intelligence focused on the *message system*, which involved the structure and organization of knowledge (MacLachlan & Reid, 1994). Importantly, according to MacLachlan and Reid (1994), these researchers developed the ideas of frame-like structures that allow for a topical or sequential organization of memories instead of as distinct, and possibly unrelated, information, an understanding used in the past. The fields of cognitive psychology and artificial intelligence, then, depended heavily on the underlying assumption that memory and perception are linked (Schank & Abelson, 1977), which led researchers to examine how we store and retrieve previous knowledge to understand and make sense of current situations. These storage and retrieval mechanisms have been called variously scripts, schemata, or frames (Minsky, 1979; Schank & Abelson, 1977). Although individual researchers have emphasized specific terms within their work, such as a script or a schema, these aspects are often fine-line distinctions, or the terms are used somewhat interchangeably.

To illustrate, Schank and Abelson (1977) defined a script as "a structure that describes appropriate sequences of events in a particular context" (p. 41). Scripts, according to these scholars, contain detailed examples of sequential behavior: "John was the quarterback. As time ran down, he threw a 60-yard pass into the end zone. His team won the game" (p. 39). With this example, as with their research, Schank and Abelson asserted that they were trying to unearth the specific details, especially the sequencing, of the knowledge structure. This sequencing specificity is what, in their view, distinguished a script (emphasis on sequence) from a schema (emphasis on type). Lord and Foti (1986) note that: "a schema provides observers with a knowledge base that serves as a guide for the interpretations of information, actions, and

expectations" (p. 22). This definition de-emphasizes the specific sequence of behaviors in scripts, yet highlights the notion of a system of knowledge for interpretation and is more similar to the notion of frames discussed below. Although the use of scripts is meaningful in cognitive psychology, for the purposes of this study, the more thematic understanding of knowledge as schemas or frames was used. A focus on participants' communication via the frames they use permitted better examination of how individuals generate understanding.

Understanding, according to Shank and Abelson (1977), "is a process by which people match what they see and hear to pre-stored grouping of actions that they have already experienced" (p. 67). The emphasis in artificial intelligence has been on frames as containers of knowledge that could be accessed by computers for understanding instead of an interactive and developmental process of understanding (MacLachlan & Reid, 1994). Researchers in the field of artificial intelligence investigated frames as a way to organize knowledge ultimately to enable robots and computers be able to "think" and "make decisions" based on input data in natural language (i.e., everyday spoken language) versus computer programming language (logic language) (MacLachlan & Reid, 1994). Artificial intelligence researchers, however, quickly discovered that computers needed substantial amounts of information to be able to interpret any natural language input, because so much of what makes humans understand is not in the syntax of the story. Specifically, to understand a sequence (sentence, story, etc.), one needs more than linguistic knowledge of the words and the grammatical connections among them, yet nowhere in that syntax sequence is such information available (MacLachlan & Reid, 1994).

A frequently cited example (with various adaptations) to illustrate this point is the restaurant script (Schank & Abelson, 1977): "John went to the restaurant. He asked the waitress for coq a vin. He paid the check and left" (p. 38). This example highlights the need for prior information to understand a script; The interpreter needs to know that there are waitresses in restaurants ("the" waitress), as well as checks ("the" check), which are paid by the customer.

By using the article "the" to refer to waitress and check, it seems as if these figures had already been introduced, when, in fact, they had not, unless one thinks of them as "given" in a prototypical restaurant scene. Other "given" information is also assumed in this story. For example, the interpreter is expected to understand that John chose a table or was seated at one by the host or wait staff, may have looked at the menu to determine what food he wanted (his order), and gave his order to the waitress, who brought him his food. He ate the food (or had it wrapped "to go"), asked for the check, paid it, and then left. Clearly, the majority of the information is not explicitly in the scenario, but is instead *implied* or *understood* on the basis of the script of "restaurant." It is this grouping of expectations into a frame that encouraged artificial intelligence researchers to think about programming computers in ways that could enable them to understand stories in natural language. Cognitive scientists also used this computer programming aspect as a way to understand memory retrieval.

One of the primary researchers in the artificial intelligence branch of frame research is Minsky (1979), who posited that a frame is a memory structure for representing commonly experienced events. Such structures, then, allow people to make sense of, or understand, experienced events. Consequently, when an individual experiences a new or different situation he or she selects a frame from memory and adapts it to fit the current situation to make sense of that situation. These adaptations are made to the information that is included in, or attached to each frame structure, explained below.

Attached to each of these frames is information—some about how the frame is used, some about what should happen next in the situation, and some about actions to take if the expectations are not met. The information contained in and about each frame may be related to other frames. Such clusters of related frames are called *frame-systems*. These concepts represent the broad generalization of Minskian frames. However, because Minsky was dealing with artificial intelligence in computers, he also developed a specific vocabulary to help others

understand the various components of frames. Although the information is more specific to artificial intelligence, it informs our understanding of how the human mind could work to store, retrieve, and make sense of the information.

Minsky (1979) observed that frames could be thought of as "a network of nodes and relations" (p. 1) with two levels, the top levels and the lower levels. The top levels of frames are consistent; that is, the frames at these levels contain information thought always to be true about the situation (e.g., a room has four walls, a ceiling, and a floor). Lower levels have what Minsky labeled *terminals* or *slots* to be filled with information specific to that situation. Within each terminal, there can be *markers* that indicate conditions or specifications the event must meet to be considered appropriate for that terminal. Crevier (1993) provides a clear example of these terms by using a room frame example:

> When opening the door into a new room…one would invoke the generic room frame [top level], which would consist of a list of the main features one normally perceives in a room: walls to left, front, and right, a floor and a ceiling…. One would then proceed to match these with features of the image actually seen [terminals]. In doing so, one would take into account the required properties [markers] specified for each feature in the frame. For example, the room frame may require that the floor be made of wood, tile, or carpet [marker examples]. Encountering grass instead would cause one to reject the room frame and activate the outdoors frame. (p.173)

Crevier goes on to note that once the appropriate frame is accepted (for example, the room frame) the person "fills in the slots" with markers, such as colors, textures, etc. This "filling in of the slots" continues until instead of a generic room frame, the person remembers the specific room frame (e.g., Kristen's office). Basically, as Shapiro (1987) points out, what this example illustrates is that the individual realizes the situation is a certain category (a room) in a certain situation (for example, an office building) and expects to see certain things (e.g., furniture, computer, and so on—markers of an office). When what is expected to be there is not (i.e., the markers do not fill the expected slots), the person may experience surprise and/or

disorientation. The result of this confusion is that the person has to reinterpret (or *reframe*) the situation.

Crevier (1993) sees Minskian frames as comparable to a tax form, such that there is a set of slots to be filled-in by the individual; some of the slots are empty while others contain "default" information that corresponds to the top level frame component discussed earlier. The individual completes the slots in the tax form until the appropriate tally is reached and the situation can be understood. However, Minsky (1979) proposes that if a given frame does not correspond to the situation, and the situation is salient to the individual, the frame that has the closest fit to the situation will be adapted and remembered. This proposal somewhat limits the application of a tax-form metaphor, but the image is helpful in understanding Minskian frames. Shapiro (1987) provided an example of having to adapt and/or change frames:

1. He plunked down $5.00 at the window.

2. She tried to give him $2.50, but he wouldn't take it.

3. So when they got inside, she bought him a large bag of popcorn. (p. 304)

This example is intriguing because for most people it entails several instances of frame change: the first frame may be thought to be a "horse racing frame" or a purchasing frame." The second frame seems to be an attempt at "making or returning change frame." However, by the third line, it is clear that the frame is actually a "dating" or "friends" frame, which leads the reader to re-evaluate the first two frames (from gambling to date/friend and from the she being a cashier or teller to a date/friend). The ability to adapt frames, then, becomes important in both human and artificial intelligence understanding.

One question that arises from this example is: How are frames activated? That is, how does a person know which frame to employ to make sense of a situation? Minsky (1979) provided vague insight into the answer in stating that frames are evoked "when evidence and expectation make it plausible that the scene in view will fit it" (p. 5). Hence, a frame is used if

the evidence present seems to match the type of evidence that frame contains; if frame expectations match with current events than that frame would be evoked. Minsky stated that one conducts a test to ensure the correct frame is being employed; this involves matching terminals and conditions to what was being seen. However, he offered little discussion of the type of evidence necessary to evoke a frame. It may be that for each person (remember, Minsky's discussion focused on computers), the same evidence evokes different frames depending on that person's past experience.

Even though the fields of cognitive psychology and artificial intelligence have concerned the use of frames in computer and robotic understanding, the underpinnings of the research is informative to this discussion of framing. It provides background information regarding the development of framing, as well as helpful metaphors for understanding how interpretation results from frames. Additionally, this work aids in the understanding of one way frames can be structured and used to help individuals store, recall, and make sense of information and situations. Another field that furthered the understanding of frames is sociology.

Sociological Work

Goffman is a key figure of framing research in Sociology (Goffman, 1974; Goffman, 1981) and has developed a detailed theory of framing. Goffman sought to examine the structure of how individuals in society interpret situations and gain understanding via those frames. Goffman's definition of frame stemmed from Bateson's work and emphasized the situational aspects of framing. All frames, he felt, can be applied to a series of activities (or *strip*) and will help individuals understand the actions within that activity. Included in this understanding are expectations of the extent to which individuals should be involved in the activity of the frame, with limits on what constitutes too little involvement and too much involvement. The goal of his work, as he put it, was to "isolate some of the basic frameworks of

understanding available in our society for making sense out of events and to analyze the special vulnerabilities to which these frames of reference are subject" (Goffman, 1974, p. 10). The vulnerabilities mentioned focus on the amenabilities of frames to change and adapt, including frame misinterpretations. In simple terms, Goffman wanted to find out how people answer the question, " What is it that's going on here?" (p. 8).

Although Goffman forwarded frame interpretations by individuals, at times his work highlighted instances in which there is a "correct," or most appropriate, interpretation of the situation and an "incorrect," or inappropriate, interpretation. He drew this distinction early in his writing in discussing the maxim: "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (Goffman, 1997, p. 1) and noted that this statement is problematic because often how the situation is defined by one person is not as relevant to understanding as how the situation is defined by the majority of people or society as a whole.

Goffman believed that society typically is responsible for the definition of "what's going on" in a situation and that the individual merely assesses the situation in light of its impact on him- or herself and then responds accordingly. This emphasis on a correct interpretation of a situation is interesting, in that it laid the groundwork for his discussion of issues of deception, which involves the ability to make people believe they are experiencing a different frame than they "actually" are. However, at various points in his work, he notes that individuals in the same setting do not experience the same thing. For example, opposing teams at a football game do not have the same experience. These different explanations of frame interpretations can be confusing, but they allow us to think of frames existing at both "appropriate" social and individual levels of interpretation.

In addition to this general understanding of frames, Goffman provides specifics within his frame analysis theory (Goffman, 1974). The main underpinnings of Goffman's theory of frames include strips, primary frameworks, keys or keying, out-of-frame activity and frame breaking,

and frame disputes and misframing. An explanation of each of the terms helps to clarify Goffman's conceptualization of framing. Goffman began his discussion of framing with the notion of a *strip*, a term used to demarcate any sequence of activities that one wants to use as a starting and ending point for analysis. The strip is, in effect, the unit of analysis for Goffman.

Goffman furthered his definition of frames in his discussion of primary frameworks, ones that render "what would otherwise be a meaningless aspect of the scene into something that is meaningful" (p. 21). Primary frames allow individuals to "locate, perceive, identify, and label a seemingly infinite number of concrete occurrences defined in its terms" (p. 21). These frames allow individuals to understand a variety of aspects of the world around them. Additionally, Goffman posited, individuals are unaware of their frameworks and unable to explain them fully, but they are nevertheless capable of applying them fully. (He did not offer details concerning how that happens.)

According to Goffman, primary frameworks consist of two types: natural and social. *Natural frameworks* demarcate instances that are a result of nature; they are not willful per say, but are caused by the physical world. *Social frameworks*, however, are the result of agency, primarily the agency of humans. These social frameworks provide "background understanding for events" caused by human beings (Goffman, 1974, p. 22). These two frameworks can occur simultaneously; that is, the willful events of the social framework occur within or in conjunction with the natural framework. Goffman provided the following illustration of this interconnection: "When the sun comes up, a natural event; when the blind is pulled down in order to avoid what has come up, a guided doing" [social framework] (p. 24).

Keying is another aspect of framing Goffman discussed in his work. *Keying* occurs when a frame is interpreted in a way that is not its expected or common interpretation. So a set of activities that would be meaningfully interpreted in one primary framework would be conducted in a similar fashion, but would be interpreted as a different primary framework. A

reiteration of the earlier Bateson example illustrates this concept: usually, the animal behaviors of attacking and biting are interpreted as fighting, yet in a given strip, the activities would be keyed so that these activities are actually playing. What would give rise to this interpretation? Various *brackets*, such as spatial cues regarding the behavior, help establish the frame "playing." Goffman extended this example to humans in arguing that a fight could be staged, fantasized, described retrospectively, or analyzed.

Similar to keying, *rekeying*, may also occur: once a strip is keyed, it may be keyed again to another frame (Goffman, 1974; MacLachlan & Reid, 1994). To return to the play example above, something could happen within that strip of activity so that the behaviors would be rekeyed to a fighting frame. Clearly, this keying and rekeying could continue and create much confusion about what is "going on." Related to the notion of rekeying is the idea of *fabrication*, which is the "deliberate manipulation of frames" (MacLachlan & Reid, 1994, p. 50). In these instances, someone purposefully deceives the interpreter of the situation so that the interpreter believes something to be true that is not, such as the activities of a con man.

Two other concepts that Goffman discussed in his work involving frames that are informative to this discussion are out-of-frame activity and frame breaking. *Out-of-frame activity* includes behaviors that are part of a frame but which are to be ignored by frame participants, such as the children's retrieving a tennis ball during a match, or an instructor's stopping his or her lecture to let a student into the class. This out-of-frame activity idea may be salient for expatriates, as they may not yet know what is included in a frame and what is considered out-of-frame activity. Goffman asserts that if a person does pay attention to these out-of-frame activities, it may be indicative of boredom with the "main frame."

Frame breaking exists in an occurrence that does not fit into the framework and, thereby, creates confusion among the frame participants. These occurrences, Goffman stated, could include anything from slipping on a rug or breaking a vase to an individual's misinterpreting, or

misframing, the event. Also included in frame breaking are instances of showing emotion at inappropriate times, what Goffman termed "flooding out" or "cracking up" (p. 351). Goffman posited that a reason for flooding out is an individual's discovering that he or she has misframed an event, which causes the person to break out of the frame he or she has been trying to enact. Often, the breaking out of an event involves laughter or tears, with the person's trying to adopt the "correct" frame as soon as possible.

Finally, Goffman forwarded the ideas of frame disputes and misframing. *Frame disputes* occur when more than one way of framing an event exists and the individuals involved use the different frames to make meaning of the situation. A classic example of this is sexual harassment cases when the two parties may have very different frames for what has happened (MacLachlan & Reid, 1994). In cases of frame disputes, *misframing*, or misinterpreting the event may be given as the cause of the dispute. Or, as mentioned earlier, the event may be *keyed* by one of the parties so as to be a joke instead of a serious statement.

All of these aspects of Goffman's frame analysis theory contribute to understanding how individuals interpret and understand various events. Components of his theory have been incorporated into a variety of research lines, including work in linguistic ethnology of language (Gumperz, 1982a; Gumperz, 1982b; Tannen, 1979; Tannen & Wallat, 1993). However, his original work, *Frame Analysis*, often utilized newspaper clippings and radio/TV stories as examples throughout his analysis. These examples are informative and interesting, yet Goffman admitted that there was no consistency in how he discovered or chose to include them. With this in mind, it is important to acknowledge that Goffman's original work is insightful and instructive, but is limited in its scope of analysis. His later work (Goffman, 1981) reflects more traditional research methods and included a variety of linguistic examples. However, a few authors (e.g., MacLachlan & Reid, 1994) maintain that Goffman avoided discussing the political and social ramifications of frames (e.g., framing homosexuality as a "sin" versus a "genetic

orientation"). Goffman himself thought that more work could be done with framing in the discipline of linguistics (Goffman, 1981). However, his well-developed theory provided various aspects of framing that could be beneficial to examine in light of the process of cultural adaptation.

Linguistics and Communication

The fields of linguistics and communication have made strides in the use of frames as the theoretical underpinnings of various research projects. However, frame theory is fairly fractured within these fields (Entman, 1993), ranging from micro-linguistic analysis approaches (Gumperz, 1982b; Tannen & Wallat, 1993), to rhetorical strategies (Clair, 1993; Entman, 1993), to broader-level frame categories (Gray & Donnellon, 1989; Lewicki, Gray, & Elliot, in press). Nonetheless, the various approaches provide informative background information and analysis techniques.

Linguists examine the micro-aspects of language to understand frames and framing (Chafe, 1977a; Fillmore, 1975; Tannen, 1979; Tannen & Wallat, 1993). These micro-aspects include prosody (e.g., voice inflection, voice level, and pitch variation) and other aspects of nonverbal communication (e.g., facial expressions). These aspects, Tannen (1979) suggests, are methods of framing that convey the metamessage of a given communication act. Understanding these linguistic aspects of framing and how they function is essential, as not understanding them often leads to problems and misinterpretations in conversations. Moreover, these linguistic markers of frames are predominately determined by cultural customs, which results in conversationalists' using them sub-consciously. Culturally based linguistic markers become particularly problematic during cross-cultural conversations. Gumperz and colleagues (Gumperz, 1982a; Gumperz, 1982b) have provided a detailed analysis of instances in which

cross-cultural conversationalists misconstrued their conversation partner's message due to cultural differences, including differences in framing.

Chafe (1977a, 1977b) developed several of the initial forays into framing from a linguistics approach, couching it within creative verbalization and memory. He posits that events are remembered in what he calls "chunks" that are interrelated with each other in multiple ways. It is these chunks of information that help an individual sort experience by similarities and determine how to communicate the event verbally. Chafe outlined three key terms to explain the various levels and types of chunks: schemata, frames, and categories. Chafe suggested that an individual first determines the *schema* by examining the incident and determining the type of situation or event that is occurring. Next, the individual identifies the *frame* by creating actual verbal expressions about certain people and their roles in the event. After determining the frame, the individual establishes the *category* by choosing the words he or she will use to identify items that have a role in the incident (e.g., choosing to use the words "jungle gym" versus "structure" versus "monkey bars" to describe children's playground equipment). To make each of these choices, an individual must examine each level of the event by matching what is currently happening against the expectations held about that type of event by the individual. Even though Chafe delineates these layers of knowledge the underlying premise is the same: an individual derives the meaning of an event by determining what that event belongs to, or is a part of, similar to Goffman's (1974) understanding of framing.

Tannen's work (Tannen, 1979, 1984; Tannen & Wallat, 1993) uses frames as a relational concept rather than a sequence of events (unlike cognitive psychologists). Her research emphasizes conversation between individuals and the misunderstandings that often occur between conversational partners. She notes that the meaning of the same words and nonverbal behaviors may vary as the interpretation depends on the speaker and the context (Tannen, 1984). Similarly, determining how to interpret a message is contingent on one's ability

to understand the frame of the message. In line with this, differences in background (cultural, ethnic, etc.) may contribute to an inability to interpret certain frames or to the misframing of certain messages.

Tannen's more recent work (Tannen & Wallat, 1993) incorporates the notions of interactive frames and knowledge schemas and their interrelationship. The idea of an interactive frame most closely parallels the idea of frames presented by Bateson (1972) and helps interactants determine the metamessage of a specific communication episode (e.g., "joke" versus "insult"). These frames emerge within and through conversations and interactions. Knowledge schemas, however, provide the broader view of individual understanding. These schemas relate more closely to the idea of a lens through which people view their worlds; they contain individual communicators' expectations about facets of their surrounding environment, instead of about a particular interaction. These knowledge schema contain the background experience that allows individuals to fill-in the unstated details within a communication episode. (If we think about the restaurant script discussed earlier, knowledge schemas are what allows an individual to understand that there are waitresses in a restaurant and that using "*the* waitress" is appropriate.) Interactive frames and knowledge schema interact within a communication episode to create understanding. An individual's knowledge schema provides the background information necessary to make sense of the frames that are being employed during the communication. Moreover, Tannen and Wallat (1993) illustrate how a "mismatch in schemas triggers a shifting of frames" in their analysis of a medical examination (p. 61).

Chenail (see Gale et al., 1996) provides a link between the linguists' micro-approach and a broader macro-level analysis. He developed an analysis method he calls "Recursive Frame Analysis" that allows "researchers and therapists to note their perceptions of semantic shifts in a conversation" (p. 281). Chenail developed this method largely to help therapists track conversations with their patients to gain a better understanding of the content and development

of the therapeutic sessions. However, his approach provides insight into multiple types of communication situations by giving researchers a sequential method to examine how communication is shaped and reshaped by frames within a given setting.

Recursive Frame Analysis (RFA) is based largely on the work of Bateson (1972) and Goffman (1974). This foundation is reflected in the understanding of frames forwarded by Chenail: "our conceptual or cognitive views of particular situations" (Gale et al., 1996, p. 281). In addition to this somewhat broad understanding of frames, RFA incorporates Tannen's (Tannen & Wallat, 1993) idea of "interactive frames," which Chenail defines as "…linguistic patterns through which we create meaning in our conversations. We build our conversations word-by-word and understand the words we hear and use in conversations by how we contextualize them" (Gale et al., 1996, p. 281). The analysis technique is recursive because as we communicate our interactive frames and listen to other's interactive frames our (cognitive) frame is shaped and reshaped. It is this combination of the linguistic patterns of interactive frames with the conceptual definition of frames offered above that creates a link between the linguistic micro-analysis approach and the broader macro-analysis communicative approach.

Clair's (1993) work takes the broader level approach to understanding frames and communication by examining what she calls framing devices. She defines framing devices as "rhetorical/discursive practices that define or assign interpretation to the social event by the actor or actors" (p. 118). She provides an approach for understanding individuals' communication by examining framing devices that sequester communication about sexual harassment from other organizational communication. Her approach enables one to detect individual patterns of communication and the hegemony involved in some types of frames. She offers an interesting view of the power of frames, but she does not discuss how frames could be altered or new frames could be employed. Her notion of framing devices is helpful as a label for the narratives that create and are contained within a frame.

Entman (1993) specifically attempted to synthesize the various "scattered conceptualizations" of framing in the communication fields. Although his focus was more on framing in/by the media, his observations are still helpful in understanding individuals' framing. Entman asserts that framing involves the selection of certain aspects of a given understanding of reality and the making of these aspects more meaningful (i.e., salient) in a particular "text" (an actual written document or otherwise that communicates the frame); the more salient the information, the more likely individuals will process and remember it. Salience, Entman feels, can be achieved by means of such techniques as placement or repetition, among others. However, he continues, even if these techniques are not used an item can still be salient if it aligns with an individual's schemata.

A given frame forwards a particular view and/or understanding of the communicated situation. According to Entman, frames have four functions:

> [To] *define problems*—determine what a causal agent is doing with what costs and benefits, usually measured in terms of common cultural values; *diagnose causes*—identify the forces creating the problem; *make moral judgments*—evaluate causal agents and their effects; and *suggest remedies*—offer and justify treatments for the problems and predict their likely effects. (p. 52)

These four functions vary in terms of how, when, and whether they are enacted in a given frame, such that any frame may include all or only some of the functions.

These four functions of frames can occur in a least four locations including: "the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture" (p.52). Entman explained that the communicator's choice of communication is guided by his/her frames and that the frame is embedded within the text (a document or otherwise). The frames in the text are discernable because the words, sentences (etc.) "provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments" about the topic (p.52). He continues by implying that the receiver is also guided in understanding via his or her frames, and notes that the receiving frames may or may not align with the frames intended by the communicator.

Finally, and of particular interest to this study, is Entman's inclusion of culture as a frame location: "[C]ulture is the stock of commonly evoked frames; in fact, culture might be defined as the empirically demonstrable set of common frames exhibited in the discourse and thinking of most people in a social grouping" (p. 53). This conclusion is relevant to this study, as it provides a clear explanation of the interplay of frames and culture. Using the understanding that frames and culture stem from and reinforce one another, we can begin to see how individuals functioning within their home culture/frames experience confusion and misunderstanding when one interacts with individuals from another culture and, therefore, another frame set. Let us further consider the relationship between frames and culture so we can see specifically how they influence one another.

Interconnections Between Frames and Culture

Frames play a particularly relevant role in intercultural interactions, as the one developed and used by members of a given culture may not include the intended meaning of frames in another culture (Entman, 1993; Torbiörn, 1982). If individuals from differing national level cultures (and, hence, differing frame sets) interact via distinct, or even merely misaligned frames, there is a clear possibility of problems and misunderstandings arising during interactions. Gumperz and Cook-Gumperz (1982) summarize this scenario well:

> We all know that it is much easier to get things done when participants share the same background [frames]. When backgrounds differ, meetings can be plagued by misunderstandings, mutual misrepresentations of events and misevaluations. It seems that…. judgments of performance and of ability that on the whole are quite reliable when people share the same background [frames] may tend to break down. Interactions that are normally seen as routine often meet with unforeseen problems. (p. 2)

Frake (1977) also examines the connection between culture and frames by highlighting frames as a relational concept. He expresses concerns about the notion of frames and culture and offered a metaphor for their interplay:

> Culture provides principles for framing experience as eventful in particular ways, but it does not provide one with a neat set of event-types to map onto the world. Culture is not simply a cognitive map that people acquire in whole or in part, more or less accurately, and then learn to read. People are not just map-readers they are map-makers…. Culture does not provide a cognitive map, but rather a set of principles for map-making and navigation. (p. 7)

Frake's work provides insight into the idea that individuals' frames are influenced by their culture (the set of principles for map-making), but that each individual has to determine meaning on the basis of his/her own experiences and frames (the notion that one is a map maker). This metaphor is helpful when we consider the various experiences that each expatriate has: s/he may be from the same culture as other expatriates, but because of one's own experiences, personal interpretations will differ.

Other researchers have examined culture and the notion of frames. In her study of cultural competence and adaptation, Kim (1988) incorporated the notion of frames although she did not label it as such. Instead, she utilized the idea of internalized cultural competence. She posited that individuals behave in certain ways because of their understanding of what is appropriate or competent, concepts that most likely stem from their frames. These internalized notions of what is competent, according to Kim, "remain largely unrecognized, unquestioned, and unchallenged until [individuals] encounter people with different cultural attributes" (p. 52). Problems arise when individuals attempt to understand different cultural situations in terms of a frame(s) inappropriate to the situation (i.e., a frame from the individuals' home culture). This is an important distinction: errors in framing occur not because individuals failed to determine the "correct" meaning of an event, but instead because they are unsure of the appropriate framework to apply to the situation. This leads to the possibility that individuals may be highly competent within their own culture (e.g., being able to recognize a frame and knowing how to respond according to that frame), but, in an unfamiliar culture, the same individuals may not know what to expect or how to respond. This, Kim argues, makes them culturally incompetent.

This concept of underlying competence is essentially grounded in frames; individuals have expectations (often subconsciously) about interactions that often are not evident until something deviates from those expectations. So even though an individual is competent in the home country (i.e., can utilize an appropriate frame to interpret and respond to the situation), s/he may be incompetent in the host country by selecting the wrong frame to interpret the situation, or does not have an appropriate frame in his/her repertoire.

Frames as Defined in the Current Study

Clearly, there are multiple approaches to frames and framing. These approaches have developed in several fields and take different approaches to analysis and understanding according to the goals of a given researcher. This study drew from several scholars' views in an attempt to create a workable understanding of frames for this project.

First, the study incorporated the approach suggested by Putnam and Holmer (1992), which calls for a blending of Bateson's (1972) psychological frames with Goffman's (1974) frame approach. This results in an understanding of frames as heuristics and means to explain and make sense of the current social situation based on our past experiences. Putnam and Holmer feel that this understanding allows researchers to focus on the communication of the situation and maintains the idea that "frames are dynamic, reflexive, and intertwined with implicit as well as explicit messages" (p. 148).

This view of frames coordinates smoothly with the second perspective adopted by this study: Chenail's Recursive Frame Analysis. Combining Putnam and Holmer's definition with Recursive Frame Analysis leads one to focus on communication to determine frames and helps us realize that frames may change and develop as a function of the persons involved in the interaction and their experiences.

Finally, I couch my definition and understanding of frames in line with Entman's and others' position that frames strongly influence and are influenced by culture. In particular, I believe framing and reframing provide the cognitive tools for helping expatriates acculturate (or not) to a host culture.

In the previous sections I reviewed frame literature, drew connections between frames and culture, and explained this study's approach to frames. Next, I need to examine the possible relationships between frames and acculturation. However, before I pursue the relationship, I discuss the process of acculturation itself and how others have studied it.

The next section is an overview of several of the typical models of acculturation/adaptation. These models focus predominately on other sojourners (expatriate employees, students, Peace Corps works, etc.), not on the experiences of spouses. However, they offer clues into the frames and framing an expatriate spouse may experience. With this in mind, throughout the discussion I note possible relationships between the models and frames.

Adaptation and Acculturation

The process of acculturation has attracted the interest of a variety of scholars in multiple fields. The result has been numerous terms and explanations for how people learn to interact successfully in a new culture. Cultural adaptation ordinarily refers to an individual's psychological response to or psychological comfort with various aspects of a new environment (i.e., the host country) (Janssens, 1995). Some scholars have a process orientation and think of acculturation as "the process by which individuals change their psychological characteristics, change the surrounding context, or change the amount of contact in order to achieve a better fit (outcome) with other features of the system" (i.e., the host culture) (Berry, Kim, & Boski, 1987, p. 63). Although the first definition has contributed to a general understanding of adaptation, it reflects more of a static idea; it seems that an individual may have the same type of response to

the various aspects of the environment. The second definition encourages a dynamic understanding of adaptation; an individual is able to change things to achieve an understanding of his/her surroundings. The process orientation is more informative to this project, as it reflects the ability of women abroad to change the ways they interpret, or frame, their surroundings until they feel at ease in the new culture. Without understanding their process, we cannot fully appreciate their outcomes.

Individuals abroad experience a variety of difficulties that influence their need and ability to adapt. These difficulties include: 1) "differences in values, attitudes and beliefs between the home and host cultures," 2) " loss of the familiar and/or loved objects of the home culture...all those objects which define one's former self," and 3) "social incompetence," as the expatriate may not know how to appropriately respond to new social stimuli (Anderson, 1994, p. 304). Each of these difficulties may stem from the "original" frames (i.e., those based on home country culture and experiences) that expatriates and immigrants invoke to make senses of the new culture. The ability of the women of interest to reframe, alter, or somehow manage their frames may be related to their adaptation.

Almost no inquiries into frames or frame management to facilitate cultural interaction and acculturation exists. Instead, considerable research has been conducted via surveys to determine the overall progression of acculturation or to determine country/culture differences that make acculturation difficult. The result of many of these investigations has been models of acculturation that outline the various phases an expatriate experiences as they become acculturated. Despite their lack of direct applicability, the models are helpful in examining the process of acculturation and may, therefore, be helpful in understanding if, how, and/or when framing and reframing are likely to occur. With this in mind, the following discussion reviews several key conceptualizations of acculturation.

A comprehensive review of acculturation and cultural adaptation research by Church (1982) identified several, now classic models of acculturation. The researcher noted that the majority of these models are descriptive in nature, with little to no empirical support. However, they are the historically dominant models of cultural adaptation, several of which are still forwarded today. Church derived three relevant families of models from the body of cultural adaptation literature: the "stages" models, the "curve of adjustment" models, and the "culture learning" models (p. 540) (see Appendix A for figures of stages and curve of adjustment models).

Stage Models

The stage models focus on the steps, or phases that sojourners experience as they are socialized to the new culture. Typically, the stages number from four to five and begin with a stage of fascination and excitement about the new culture. This is often called the "honeymoon" stage and commonly occurs during the first few weeks of the stay in the new country. At this point, the expatriate typically is interested in the new aspects of the foreign culture and finds them novel—sometimes even exciting. Additionally, the expatriate has not had enough experiences with the new culture to realize what (if any) of his or her behavior is inappropriate, which adds to the positive experience. In terms of frame use, the expatriate probably still employs original frames from the home culture.

The next stage is characterized by frustration with the new culture and an intense realization of the differences between the home culture and the new culture. Commonly, this stage involved what has been referred to as "culture shock." However, "culture shock" in this context does not refer to the original physical condition, but instead to "a crisis of personality or identity" (Anderson, 1994).   Within this stage, the individual receives negative feedback about her/his actions, but does not know the appropriate behaviors.

The frustration, and possibly hostility, toward the culture continues to the point that the sojourner develops an ability to interact and participate (limitedly) in the culture, at which time the expatriate enters the adjustment phase. We know little about the types of behavior that bring out this new ability, but it does occur. This point may be when frame management begins; that is, the behavior that contributes to this new ability is the expatriate's change in (or management of) frame(s).

As the expatriate's ability to interact with the host country nationals and follow the accepted societal norms improves, she or he moves toward the stage of "mastery." During the mastery stage, the expatriate is generally adjusted to the culture and needs only to make small adjustments in behaviors and thought. This is typically the final phase in the stage model, although some researchers include an independence phase, during which the individual cherishes the other culture and values its societal beliefs and actions. Reaching this stage prepares the individual for additional cross-cultural experiences. These last two phases seem to signal the expatriate's ability to employ different frames than home culture frames to make sense of the surrounding new world.

Curve of Adjustment Models

The next type of model Church (1982) discussed is the curve of adjustment. Typically, the curve has been U-shaped, although some researchers proposed a W-shape curve, as they included a mirror image of the u-shape to represent the repatriation process on return to the home country. The curve is usually plotted on a graph with time on the horizontal axis and level of adaptation on the vertical axis. Similar to the stage models, the U-curve illustrates the initial fascination with the country and a sense of being fairly adapted, followed by a dip in the understanding and preference for the new culture (indicating lower adaptation levels, possibly culture shock), and ending on an upward swing as the newcomer continually adjusts to the

culture over time, and then plateaus. Initially, the U-curve of adjustment model did not receive significant support. However, since the publication of Church's 1982 review, more empirical support has been garnered for it (Black et al., 1991; Black & Mendenhall, 1991). Nonetheless, there is still debate over its legitimacy, as some researchers have found statistical support for a mostly linear model of adaptation, at least among expatriate employees (Janssens, 1995). Regardless of the trajectory of the model, it suggests that similar emotions and behaviors are enacted, but to differing degrees. That is, there is still an initial interest fostered by the newness of the culture, some frustration in adjusting to it, and eventual adaptation to differing degrees.

Cultural Learning Models

Church (1982) examines "culture learning" models. These models focus on the notion of "operant conditioning and social learning principles" to guide the sojourner to adaptation (p. 543). Basically, the sojourner experiences new reinforcers and stimuli, which results in changes in the individual's understanding of rewards and punishments for behavior. To adapt, the sojourner needs to learn new behaviors and how to interpret feedback in the new situations. It may be that the new behaviors are based on the new (or adjusted) frames that the expatriate employs.

Recent Conceptualizations

Black and Mendenhall (1991) have augmented cultural learning models by combining social learning theory with U-curve models.   These researchers use social learning theory as a framework for the U-curve model to explain why the various phases occur. Social learning theory posits that individuals attempt to predict what actions will be taken in any given situation and from this determine how they will, or should, behave in that situation. The researchers note that, "learning is affected by both observation and experience" (p. 121). The ability to predict derives from past experiences and applies to current situations. This aligns with the notion that

frame management occurs on the basis of learning new aspects of a culture and adding the new knowledge to past background and experiences of expatriates.

According to Black and Mendenhall (1991), there are four aspects of social learning theory that help explain cultural adaptation: attention, retention, reproduction, and incentives and the motivational process. These aspects parallel possible ways individuals could alter/create their frames. An examination of each aspect with the corresponding framing attribute (in parentheses) is helpful in understanding the similarities. The attention element involves the expatriate's noticing the different cultural behavior. (The expatriate notices a behavior that is outside of their current frame of behavior.) Retention occurs when the expatriate has observed the behavior and encodes it as a memory. (During this phase, the expatriate creates a new frame for the behavior by storing the behavior in their memory.) Following retention is reproduction, or the modeling or acting out of the behavior (The expatriate chooses the new frame from their memory and applies it to a similar setting). Finally come incentive and the motivational process, which refer to possible rewards for modeling a specific behavior and facilitating learning. (The expatriate keeps the new frame in her collection of frames and chooses to continue to use that frame based on the positive feedback she receives for its use).

As applied to U-curve/ stage model theories, the attention phase most likely occurs during the downward swing of the honeymoon stage, as expatriates notice the differences around them. The attention phase continues as expatriates discover more distinctions between the new culture and their home culture. As these distinctions increase, the expatriate's ignorance of appropriate behaviors also increases (because they have not yet begun retention). This leads to the culture shock stage. However, once the expatriate begins to observe and retain the appropriate behaviors, he or she has greater understanding of appropriate behavior and begins modeling that behavior. This contributes to a decrease in culture shock and

movement toward the adjustment phase. As the expatriate continues to model the behavior and is appropriately rewarded for his or her efforts, the adjustment phase continues. When the expatriate has learned enough new behaviors to interact fully within the culture, s/he enters the mastery stage. Of course, all of this is contingent on the expatriate's receiving desired rewards and reinforcement for the modeled behavior.

This adaptation of social learning theory to U-curve models and stages of adaptation does seem to be theoretically stronger more sound than any of the process models alone. Nonetheless, it is important to remember that other research that challenges the validity of these process models remains.

This review of acculturation models provides us with some insight into how framing could function within the expatriate experience. However, we still do not know about the actual frames enacted by expatriate spouses during their time abroad. The task facing me was to apply this study's understanding of frame approaches to the expatriate spouse experience in an attempt to identify frames used by the women in intercultural interactions and to describe the interrelationships of these frames. The following section examines possible relationships and concludes with the guiding research questions for this study.

Frames and Expatriate Spouse Experiences

Examining the frames of expatriate spouses at different points during their expatriation can enable us to determine the types of frames and framing that the women employ throughout their (non)acculturation experience. This examination helps to illuminate individuals' communication patterns and offers insight into how the spouses interpret and make sense of their new surroundings abroad. This represents a starting point from which to enhance the understanding of the expatriate spouse experience more fully.

The main reason for examining frames is that they and the ways spouses manage and/or negotiate their frames (e.g., altering and/or re-framing and creating new frames), are related to the expatriate spouses' ability to acclimate to the new host culture: I believe that most expatriate spouses arrive in the host country with only their home country frames, the ones that allowed them to navigate life successfully in the home country. However, these frames often are less than helpful as a means of making sense of their surrounding in the new country as individuals in the host country have their own set of frames, which are different (perhaps significantly) than those of the expatriates. Therefore, the spouse may struggle to understand the situation since her home country frames do not match the frames of the host country national.

This type of disconnect between the expatriates' choice of frame(s) to interpret the situation and the frame(s) intended by the host nationals may lead to frustration and confusion. It may be that expatriates have to struggle to adapt their frames or create new frames that are compatible with those of the hosts (Torbiörn, 1982). Kim (1988) maintains that sojourners who experience stress or disequilibrium may react in such as way as to restore and protect their personal stability. These reactions may further result in verbal attacks on the host country's characteristics (food, language, values, etc.). It would seem that such reactions are an attempt by the sojourners to maintain their home country frames. By attacking the host country, expatriates are, in fact, affirming their own frames and strengthening their belief in those frames. Reaffirming and strengthening their home culture frames may help expatriates deal with the new culture for some time. However, as Kim (1988) points out, these types of responses are not helpful to expatriates' longer-term adaptation. Instead, the expatriates could develop methods for coping with and making sense of their intercultural interactions. Deciding somehow to alter frames or create new ones (i.e., frame management or negotiation) is one such method.

If the expatriate chooses to manage or negotiate her frames, there are a multitude of changes and choices that would allow her to make sense of her cultural interactions and feel a sense of fit or belonging to the host culture.   For example, she may reframe the original frames she brought to the new culture to align more closely (or completely) with the host culture's frames; she may create frames that enable her to "straddle" cultures by creating new frames used only for interaction with host nationals and maintaining, but not necessarily changing her home frames; she may create new frames and alter older frames to parallel host frames more closely; she may not change any of her frames (which may result in her cloistering herself in an expatriate community); or she may chose some other way of managing her frames. There is a wide variety, then, of possible frames and framing choices expatriate spouses can enact to help them understand their intercultural interactions and feel a part of the new culture. It is this variety of frames and their interrelationship to each other and intercultural interaction that this study was designed to reveal.

Guiding Questions

This project had as its central aim identifying various frames used by women abroad to discuss their intercultural experiences. Additionally, I hoped to be able to offer a description of these experiences from an examination of the interrelationships among the frames used by the American women abroad. The interplay of frames and culture provided an interesting dynamic for the current study, one that affords us a stronger understanding of how the women of interest navigated their new environment(s). To focus the trajectory of my study to these goals I developed the following guiding questions:

GQ1: What are the patterns of recurring frames within and/or across the intercultural stories that reflect importance for the expatriate spouses?

GQ2: What is the nature of the relationship of these frames to the cultural experiences and acculturation of the expatriate spouses?

To answer these questions, I adapted an inductive approach that involved interviews with expatriate spouses. Employing a frames approach to study the intercultural experiences of expatriate spouses allows us to understand in greater detail the patterns and types of communication used by this group to make sense of its environment.

By using data grounded in the expatriates' experiences, the frames perspective advanced this body of research and provided a clearer picture of the expatriate spouse experience. The details of the method used to collect and analyze the data to respond to these questions appear in the following chapter.

Chapter Three: Methods

This study used an inductive approach to investigate the frames of female Americans during their expatriation in The Netherlands. Specifically, I collected in-depth interviews and field notes and analyzed them via the constant comparison tools of naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

I adopted this approach for two reasons: first, we have little information about the experiences of the female expatriate, especially from a frames perspective. An inductive approach allowed me to explore the phenomenon of female expatriation and gain an understanding of the multitude of frames surrounding intercultural interactions during this phenomenon. Second, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985) and others (e.g., Strauss & Corbin, 1994) the constant comparison technique lends itself to the development of theory grounded in the experiences of the participants. One of the goals of this project was to contribute to the development of frame-based theory of intercultural interaction; using the approach I did increased the likelihood that that goal could be realized. The method presumes that to theorize about concepts and variables, the researcher must first directly investigate and interact with the concepts and variables of interest. The techniques embodied in this approach offer a detailed and systematic way to use data to develop theory—theory derived not only from the researcher's deliberations, but also as a result of the researcher's interactions with those being theorized about (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The approach, as Glaser and Strauss (1967) note, provides a different type of data and allows for unique insight into the phenomena of interest when compared to the more traditional, deductive forms of theory testing. A detailed explanation of the constant comparison and naturalistic inquiry techniques used in this study is provided in the data analysis section.

Data Collection

Boundaries and Focus of the Study

This study focused on the framing of intercultural experiences and acculturation within the boundaries of female, American expatriate accompanying spouses (i.e., spouses of expatriate employees) in The Netherlands. Specifically, I was interested in the women's descriptions of interactions with host nationals and their feelings about living in the host culture. This helped to establish the boundaries of the study (Miles & Huberman, 1994) and determine inclusion-exclusion criteria for any new information to keep data collection relevant to the phenomena under study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For example, the boundaries of "expatriate spouses" required that data collection be limited to participants who met the criteria and focused the data collection and analysis on frames dealing with their intercultural experiences and adaptation.

The Research Location

I collected the data for this study during an extended stay in Groningen, The Netherlands, over a period of 5 months. The interviews took place in several areas within The Netherlands, including the northern city of Groningen, several surrounding northern villages, the central Amsterdam area, including numerous surrounding towns, and several smaller, southern villages.

The Netherlands was a fertile setting for research into intercultural experiences and framing by American women. First, it is the tenth "most active destination" for expatriates (GMAC GRS/Windham International, 2000, p. 18), which suggests that it is a likely destination at some point for women involved in the expatriate life. Additionally, The United States and The Netherlands have strong corporate ties that create numerous opportunities for interactions between Dutch nationals and American expatriates (American Embassy, The Hague, 1999).

The number of American businesses in The Netherlands exceeds 1,600 and accounts for almost a quarter of international establishments in the country (American Embassy, The Hague, 1999). Strong relations, such as these, increase the likelihood that American corporations will send American employees and their families to The Netherlands. In fact, Solomon (1996) noted that The Netherlands has a large number of the expatriates in residence and a variety of services available to the expatriate community.

Although The Netherlands and The United States share several cultural traits including moderately low power distance, high individualism, and moderate uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede, 1997), there are important differences. The cultural dimension of masculinity varies considerably between the cultures, with The Netherlands being less masculine than The United States. Language is also a difference between the countries: English is widely spoken in The Netherlands (to varying degrees of proficiency), but Dutch is the national language, and often the only language, in addition to dialects, spoken in smaller towns and villages. The language difference was a particular issue for this study's participants as many of the women interviewed did not speak Dutch, found it a particularly difficult language to learn, and often felt they did not need to learn it, as so many Dutch nationals were willing to speak English with them. A final distinction between the two nations' cultures is related to the size of the countries: The United States is a large, politically and culturally dominant country, whereas The Netherlands is a small country with a strong, but not widespread culture. This creates a psychologically asymmetrical relationship: the Dutch know many things about American history, politics, and culture, whereas Americans are, for the most part, ignorant of the Dutch culture and society (van Oudenhoven, Askevis-Leherpeux, Hannover, Jaarsma, & Dardenne, 2001). The result is a potential for numerous stereotypes and misunderstanding between members of the two cultures. This provided a relevant backdrop for examination of cross-cultural framing by expatriates and immigrants.

Participant Recruitment

No accessible database was available to determine the existing population of expatriate spouses and immigrants in The Netherlands. (The United States consulates and embassies will not release the number of Americans living in foreign countries for security reasons.) Consequently, purposive and network sampling procedures to locate participants were adopted. Purposive sampling, that is, choosing participants who have certain desired characteristics (Patton, 1990), was used to identify American women in The Netherlands who were willing to talk about their experiences in The Netherlands. In addition to purposive sampling, network sampling, asking initial participants to suggest other possible participants, was used to augment the preliminary purposive sample (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Participants were recruited by several means. First, while still in The United States, I contacted five expatriate support groups through their websites: "The International Women's Contact" (a non-profit organization in the south of The Netherlands), Connect International (a non-profit relocation organization in The Netherlands), Groningen-In-English (an English language list-serve for English speakers living in the city of Groningen), The Expat Exchange, and the Amsterdam branch of FAWCO (Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas). I contacted website administrators or the listed contact person for each site to inquire about the possibility of posting my participant recruitment letter (Appendix B) on their sites. Representatives from The International Women's Contact, the American Women's Club-Amsterdam, the Groningen-In-English Listserve, and The Expat Exchange responded to my e-mail and either offered to post my participant recruitment letter on their website or permitted me to post it. I received e-mails of interest from 24 female Americans living in The Netherlands. These initial e-mails enabled me to build relationships with individuals within the on-line Dutch expatriate community and to begin to identify a pool of potential participants. These

relationships provided initial contacts within The Netherlands to begin purposive sampling, in addition to providing background information on the expatriate experience in The Netherlands.

As a strategy to increase the number of potential participants, I also networked within the expatriate community once I arrived in The Netherlands. First, I met with the American moderator of an English language list-serve in the Groningen. She helped me with several of my own adaptation needs (e.g., how to set up a bank account in the city) and brainstormed with me to think of other ways to meet Americans. She told me that several of the list-serve's members participated in an English language Mom-and-Tots Playgroup and invited me to attend their sessions. These playgroup sessions helped me to meet other Americans living in the Groningen area and further increase the participant pool.

In addition to participating in the Mom and Tot group, I also attended the "Welcome Back" meeting of the American Women's Club in Amsterdam held in early September. This gathering allowed me to meet a variety of Americans at different points in their expatriation, as well as several women who had relocated to The Netherlands for their relationships or for their own careers. These contacts led to several of my initial interviews, as well as served as links to additional interviewees later.

Finally, I posted information flyers requesting participation in the study in the American Bookstore in Amsterdam, The clubhouse of the American Women's Club in The Hague, and The International School of Amsterdam (see Appendix C), all places frequented by Americans.

I subsequently contacted each person who inquired about the study via a phone call and/or e-mail. I described the project and asked each contact if she would participate in the study. If the person wanted to participate and identified herself as an American I selected her as a participant and we scheduled an interview time and location. Interviews most frequently occurred in a café or the person's home.

All participants had assurance that their disclosures were confidential, and each signed an informed consent statement as required by the university (see Appendix D). Names of the respondents were kept confidential. All participants were informed of the use of pseudonyms, along with actual descriptors as my approach for identifying direct quotes (e.g., "Chloe", 32 year-old expatriate, mother of 2). All interviewees were all asked the same set of questions, with follow-up probes based on their responses to the initial questions (see Appendix E). All data were strictly confidential.

Some participants did not take part in interviews for the study, but I was able to observe them in such settings as club meetings, social club functions, and playgroups. Whenever possible, I made these participants aware that the observation was occurring in that setting and made sure that they had agreed to the observation.

Participants

A total of 37 American women, all wives of expatriate employees, participated in face-to-face interviews. The women varied in age from 26 to 56 years, with an average of 39 years of age. The women represented all regions of The United States, with seventeen spouses' having prior expatriate experience in 12 countries. The women had been in The Netherlands anywhere from 1 month to 7 years, although most expatriate spouses had been in country for about 2 years. The respondents were well educated, with all having at least some university experience, and several having advanced degrees. Five of the women were employed either part or full-time, and several commented that they were searching for work. Additionally, many of the women volunteered their time to various non-profit organizations. Twenty-one women had children under 18 living with them, whereas the remaining women either did not have children or had adult children living elsewhere.

Role of the Researcher

The nature of this study placed me in a peculiar role; that is, I experienced a variety of the phenomena described by the participants as I also was adapting to the Dutch culture and struggling to find my place. Unlike the participants, however, I was not the spouse or partner of an expatriate employee or Dutch national; I was employed and had a specific set of tasks I needed to accomplish. These goals and tasks did give me at least one different frame from the participants--that of researcher. Although my role as researcher differentiated me from the participants, I still faced many of the same difficulties interacting in the Dutch culture as they did. These shared similarities created a role that included that of a listener, participant-observer, and an occasional friend, as well as a researcher. I attempted to keep detailed notes of my involvement with the participants, as well as a self-reflexive record of my own development for reference, and possible insight, throughout the process of data collection and analysis (see Appendix F, for example)

I was unlike the participants in other ways. I had made a concerted effort to travel to The Netherlands for my dissertation research. For example, I applied for several fellowships and grants and pursued alternate financing for my trip. I knew well in advance (about a year) that I would be living and working in The Netherlands, unlike the participants who often found out they would be moving to The Netherlands only several months before their departures. My advance knowledge of my trip allowed me to prepare for my intercultural experience. I explain these preparations below.

My preference is to be introverted, except in the classroom, where I am the instructor and facilitator of the class. I find I have to make a focused effort to meet to new people and introduce myself to others in new situations. About eight months before my departure, I made a commitment to increase my social interaction, including meeting new people, learning things about their lives, and sharing information about mine. I made this effort because I knew that I

would need to make new friends and acquaintances in The Netherlands. By beginning the process early, I believed I would be more comfortable being social and making new friends once in The Netherlands. The ability to form new relationships with people, and interest in doing so is related to successful adaptation (Black et al., 1999).

In addition to increasing my social interactions, I also decided to learn some of the Dutch language. I enrolled in an intensive Dutch language and culture class two months before my departure for The Netherlands. The course lasted six weeks and focused on conversational Dutch, what the instructor called "survival Dutch" for tourists and expatriates. Black and colleagues have noted that, "language proficiency is a tremendous advantage to operating in a foreign land" (1999, p.61). Even though many Dutch nationals are proficient in English, developing a familiarity with the Dutch language helped to prepare me for my international stay. Specifically, I was able to experience confusion and disorientation relative to the language and culture during a time when I still was able to fall back on my own culture as needed. This helped me prepare for the time of confusion and disorientation I would experience during my stay.

Interviews

I conducted semi-structured interviews using a guide (Patton, 1990) with the women. The interview guide outlined the set of questions and potential probes that could be adapted to each participant (see Appendix E). This approach involved asking participants a general set of topical questions, but allowed for follow-up questions specific to each interviewee (May, 1990). This facilitated collection of a common set of information from each participant, but also allowed the participants to frame their responses according to their own perspective (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). Additionally, it gave the participant and me the freedom to pursue additional information and experiences not specifically covered by the interview guide.

I created the interview guide with the intent of exploring as much of the expatriate spouse experience as possible. I developed interview questions via a multiphase process. First, I identified general characteristics of expatriate experiences by drawing from prior research on expatriation and acculturation like social difficulties, relationship satisfaction, cultural novelty, mental health, and identity issues (e.g., Black & Gregersen, 1991b; Black & Stephens, 1989; Church, 1982; Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985; Westwood & Leung, 1994). Next, in light of the extant spouse-based research, I determined characteristics of expatriate experiences that seemed to be specific to spouse experiences (e.g., Adler, 1997; De Cieri et al., 1991; Pellico & Stroh, 1997; Stephens & Black, 1991). Once I had determined the variety of issues surrounding spouse expatriation, I developed open-ended questions designed to tap into these general and specific characteristics. To address issues of validity, I had three former expatriate spouses review the interview guide and make suggestions for additional topics and revisions based on their personal experiences living abroad. I incorporated their suggestions for revisions into the interview guide (see Appendix E). The interview guide remained flexible throughout the study; that is, if I needed to drop or add questions as a consequence of the emergent themes in the data, I made the appropriate changes. As Rubin and Rubin (1995) note, "[Q]ualitative interviewing design is flexible, iterative, and continuous, rather than…locked in stone" (p. 43).

Each interview lasted from 45 minutes to two hours (with the average about 80 minutes). I audio-taped each interview with the respondent's permission. All interviews were transcribed verbatim from these tapes.

Field Notes and Memos

I kept several types of notes and memos during the data collection process including field, theoretical, and methodological memos (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973; Taylor & Bogadan,

1984). These notes and memos facilitated tracking of research activities and assisted me in making sense of the data. I took field notes during group meetings and kept a systematic record of events, behavior, and other relevant factors was made. I labeled each set of notes with the date and time, the type of event observed, and the participants present, as applicable.

In addition to these field notes, I recorded memos regarding data analysis and methodological decisions (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Data analysis memos contributed to an audit trail to document the researcher's thoughts and reflections on the coding process, including preliminary descriptions and understandings of the code or the category, as well as notes concerning possible theoretical relationships. Methodological memos consisted of remarks that dealt with the design of the study or operational tactics. These could range from reminders to change an interview format to critiques of chosen methodological tactics. These memos (see Appendix G for examples) became a record of my thoughts and decisions and provided a clear audit trail, discussed below.

Trustworthiness

The concept of trustworthiness in qualitative research parallels concerns of validity and reliability in quantitative methods. The nature of these concepts deals with the need to convince the reader that a given piece of research is accurate and worthwhile (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). However, techniques used to meet this need vary across methodological approaches. Lincoln and Guba (1985) operationalize trustworthiness as credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability in delineating a variety of specific activities to be completed by the researcher. I enacted as many of such activities as I could to establish trustworthiness in this study. See Table 3.1 for a specific listing of my activities and their corresponding trustworthiness component.

Table 3.1: Techniques to Ensure Trustworthiness[8]

Traditional Criteria	Trustworthiness Criteria	Criteria met in this study through:
Internal Validity	Credibility	Extended engagement in the Field - Lived in The Netherlands for 5 months. - Careful observation of intercultural situations to determine salient factors and characteristics. Variety of Data Types - Interviews - Field Notes - Memos Peer Debriefing with - Committee member specializing in interpretive methods. - Peer graduate students trained in interpretive methods. Member Checks - Transcripts returned to participants for review and correction. - Formal and informal discussions of findings with participants.
External Validity	Transferability	Detailed (thick) description of: - Concepts and categories in the grounded theory - Structures and processes related to adaptation revealed by the data
Objectivity	Confirmability	Meticulous Data Management and Recording - Verbatim transcription of interviews. - Conscientious field notes. - Clear memos on theoretical, methodological, and personal decisions. - Accurate records of contacts, interviews & other meetings. *All of these items are available in the audit trail records*
Reliability	Dependability	The Following Techniques Were Used: - Purposive and theoretical sampling - Accurate records maintained for an Audit Trail - Self-reflection illustrated through personal journal - Participants' confidentiality protected

---

[8] This table is adapted from the trustworthiness criteria delineated in Lincoln and Guba (1985). The third column follows specifics outlined by Lincoln and Guba but is specific to this study.

Audit Trail

Maintaining an audit trail is a technique used to ensure that the methods and results of a given study are trustworthy and confirmable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The qualitative audit trail is metaphorically similar to a fiscal audit; that is, someone other than the researcher (an auditor) examines the records of data and analysis processes used by the researcher to determine the accuracy (or trustworthiness/confirmability) of the study. Whether or not an audit is actually conducted, the discipline of collecting materials for audit can help the researcher organize and structure the data in ways that will be helpful in the analysis and writing of the results. Lincoln and Guba outlined six audit trail categories: 1) "raw data," which include audio-tapes and notes of interviews and observations, as well as survey data, 2) "data reduction and analysis procedures," such as write-ups of field notes, preliminary coding of data, and summaries of notes as well as theoretical notes and speculations, 3) "data reconstruction and synthesis products," including the relationships between categories and the structure of domains, second-order interpretations of the data, and the final report of the data, including its relationship to other research, 4) "process notes," such as methodological notes, 5) "materials relating to intentions and dispositions," which could entail personal notes and journal entries, and 6) "instrument development information," including the development of the interview guide, how observations were made, and survey development (pp. 319-320).

I recorded and organized each category of data as accurately as possible. I made the data available to the auditor, who was a committee member trained in qualitative research methods (see Appendix H for list of audit materials and subsequent auditor report). The auditor was able to examine the audit trail, as well as question me regarding the data collection, method choices and analysis decisions. I addressed all concerns expressed by the auditor by the researcher and discussed until we reached a consensus.

Data Analysis

I analyzed the data inductively by using the constant comparison techniques similar to those of Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Lincoln and Guba (1985). Locke (1996) has described these techniques as a "recursive, process-oriented, analytic procedure" (p. 240). This description is accurate, in that the data collection, coding, and interpretation often overlap. These overlapping processes allow for a richer understanding of data and for additional data collection as necessary. The following sections describe the specific analysis procedures used in this study.

Analysis Procedures

Because this study focused on frames in examining the expatriate phenomenon, the analysis took the form of uncovering frames within the communication of the participants. I began by making complete transcripts of all interviews and then locating frames within each transcript by means of open coding and developing further relationships through axial coding procedures (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Open coding involves "the naming and categorizing of phenomena through close examination of data" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 62), whereas axial coding involved a series of procedures that allow for new combinations of data by "making connections between categories" (p. 96). Details of these procedures follow.

Locating frames. Open coding enabled me to identify various frames within each transcript. The coding began with a careful reading of each transcript and identifying words and phrases (i.e., units of analysis) that indicated a particular frame. Recall that for this study frames were heuristic devices to explain and make sense of the current social situation based on past experiences. Operationally, frames were passages that reflected an interpretation (expected or actual) of a situation, event, or behavior. The length of the frame was not bound by our understanding of common grammatical structures such as sentences. Instead, I

determined the frame by meaning; if the passage reflected a coherent focus that was

consistent, understandable, and identifiable I marked it as a frame. When the focus of the

passage changed, I noted the end of the frame. I used this process to determine the frames

within each transcript. At the same time, I also used constant comparison techniques to

determine similarities and differences between and among passages and frames.

Constant comparison coding. Using constant-comparison techniques (Glaser & Strauss,

1967), I compared each unit of analysis to previous units to determine: 1) if it reflected a frame

and 2) if it was the same or different from previous units. If it did reflect a frame, I then

determined whether it was conceptually similar to existing frame codes; if so, I labeled it with

that code. If it was different, I established a new conceptual code, and labeled the unit

accordingly. Additionally, I made efforts to label units with "*in vivo"* codes, ones using the

language of the participants. This type of conceptual code allowed for the most accurate

reflection of the participants' thoughts. These codes are first-order concepts, that is, ideas

taken directly from informants' responses (Van Maanen, 1979). If the unit of analysis did not

reflect a frame related to cultural interactions and adaptation, it did not serve as data in this

study.

As I coded the data conceptually, I searched for relationships among concepts to create

categories. Categories, according to Strauss and Corbin (1990), are groupings of "concepts

that seem to pertain to the same phenomena" (p. 65); each category has various properties or

characteristics. I carefully examined each coded concept to ensure that it conceptually fit into

the category by aligning with the properties and characteristics of that category.

As categories emerged, the process of axial coding began. Axial coding allowed me to

examine relationships within and between categories to create overarching groupings, or

domains, as Spradley (1979) refers to them. Each domain contained clusters of related

categories. I established these domains by examining each category for its similarities to and

differences from other categories. To help determine the relationship between categories, I

employed Spradley's (1979) semantic relationship questions (e.g., "X is a kind of Y," "X is a

reason for doing Y," "X is a step in Y," and "X is a place to do Y"). I clustered categories similar

to one another to form domains. I then examined domains for possible relationships, again by

means of Spradley's (1979) semantic relationship items, as well as looked for relationships not

specifically elicited by Spradley's items.

For this project, the relationships among domains reflected first-order data; they suggest

the relationships implied by the participants within the data (Van Maanen, 1979). As these

domains and relationship emerged, I also examined the data for the core category, or the

variable that accounted for the main patterns within the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

The core variable emerged as I examined the domains more closely. The core variable

and resulting relationships reflect a more abstract, theoretical understanding of the patterns

within the data. This understanding represents a second-order analysis, that is, theoretical

groupings made by the researcher, not implied by the participants (Van Maanen, 1979). These

are the types of relationships that assisted me in building a theoretical understanding of cultural

interaction and adaptation grounded in the experiences of spouses who were living with

intercultural interaction on a day-to-day basis.

Throughout the coding process, I maintained an on-going journal and/or documentation

of coding decisions and thoughts about any given code, category, or domain (Glaser & Strauss,

1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This memoing helped me to reflect on the coding decisions and

clarified which units of analysis belonged to which concept and, therefore, category or domain.

This information was included in the audit trail.

Data Management

As Huberman and Miles (1994) emphasize, "A good storage and retrieval system is critical for keeping track of what data are available…" (p. 430). Given their position, I utilized the qualitative data management computer program NVivo to manage various data related to the study. The program allowed for electronic storage of all transcribed material, provided on-line methods for coding the data, and relatively easy data search and retrieval functions. Additionally, it permitted me to create theoretical and methodological memos related to specific aspects of the data analysis process with ease. Earlier versions of the NVivo program have been used successfully in other qualitative research (e.g., Witmer, 1997).

I conducted the preliminary steps of the analysis process described previously via the NVivo system. Specifically, I completed the open coding and axial coding with the aid of NVivo. However, due to technical difficulties with the NVivo program, materials relating to the core category coding and the relationships between the first and second order findings I processed by hand.

This chapter provided a detailed description of the method used to analyze the data in this study. The following chapter outlines and explains the findings of this analysis.

Chapter Four: Findings

This study investigated the experiences of 37 American expatriate women living in The Netherlands. The use of semi-structured interviews allowed the women to talk about their experiences freely and share additional information that I had not asked about explicitly. Analysis of the resulting interview transcripts resulted in a multitude of frame concepts that organized into categories, which were then collapsed into three broad frame domains: Acculturation Challenges, Coping Strategies, and Identity (see Table 4.1). I created a model of the relationships among these domains from the interviews.

An analysis of each of the three domains yielded the core variable, Frame Management. The core variable represents a second-order finding involving interpretation of the data and what, at a theoretical level, were the patterns and findings within the data. This core variable and the various ways it was enacted within the domains form the basis of the grounded Expatriate Frame Management Theory presented in the final chapter.

The current chapter presents and explains the concepts, categories and domains that emerged during analysis. These results are first-order findings that address the first guiding research question of this study:

GQ1: What are the patterns of recurring frames within and/or across the intercultural stories that reflect importance for the participants?

The chapter also presents and explains the core variable, Frame Management, which emerged as a second-order finding during analysis. This core variable partially addresses the second guiding research question:

GQ2: What is the nature of the relationship of these frames to the cultural experiences and acculturation of the women abroad.

The presentation of Frame Management Theory in the final chapter concludes the

discussion of this second question.

Table 4.1: Domains, Categories and Concepts

Domain	Category	Concept / *Description*
Acculturation Challenges	Cultural Differences	Dutch Days
		Convenience
		Netherlands easy to live in
	Language	*Statements focusing on the difficulties of the Dutch language and/or the frequency/level of English spoken in The Netherlands*
	Medical Care	*Statements about seeking out; avoiding; or receiving medical care in The Netherlands*

Coping Strategies	Social Support	Social Support from Expatriate Community
		    - Short term friendships
		    - Children help develop social network

		Social Support from Husband
		Social Support from Family and Friends in The United States - Email facilitates these support systems
		Lack of Social Support from Dutch nationals
		Religion-Spirituality
	Other Coping Strategies	Gather Information
		Assess and Accept the Situation
		Observe Others
		Emotional Release
		Filling Time
Identity	Personal Identity	*Statements that reflect the women's understanding of who they are as individuals.*
	Cultural Identity	*Statements that reflect the women's recognition of their American culture (American culture broadly defined).*
	Career-Work Identity	*Statements that indicate an understanding of themselves based on their career or prior work experience.*

Domain: Cultural Challenges

When individuals move to another country, they often face the challenge of "figuring out

how things work" in the new culture. These acculturation challenges can stem from a variety of

sources, such as preconceived frames about how things should happen (based on how they

happened in the home country), lack of familiarity with the language and/or cultural practices of

the new culture as well as a variety of other sources that may provide a different, or entirely new

way of interaction for the expatriate. The considerable cultural challenges faced by the

participants in this study were clear as Cultural Challenges was the largest domain and

contained the most categories and examples of underlying concepts of all the domains. The

domain contains three broad categories: cultural differences, language, and medical care. The

three categories all involve issues related to acculturation challenges for the expatriate.

Cultural Differences

The biggest challenges faced by the expatriate women stemmed from differences in

cultural practices between The United States and The Netherlands. The differences often

centered around daily life activities (buying groceries, finding a home and furniture, registering

cars, etc.), what numerous participants called "the little things." As Chloe noted:

> [The Netherlands] doesn't sound exotic and really challenging, but it's really
> different. It's the little things that make it really different and it's the little things
> that make up your life, so it makes your life really different.

> - Chloe, age 30, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 1 ⅓ years

These "little things" that are different between The United States and The Netherlands create

many of the cultural frustrations expatriates face. These "little things" included differences in

customer service orientation (with the Dutch having a markedly less attentive orientation),

bureaucracy and paperwork, such as completing registration with the "alien police" and the city

government, and the generally slower pace of life, among others. Laura commented on dealing

with the paperwork issues:

> Like applying for things…Like going for permits…coming from the U.S. I
> expected it to be a very efficient system and for something to take us only a few
> minutes and I found that to be very frustrating. Just simple things like going to
> get a parking permit, you know, was a whole day ordeal. Some things that at
> home could've taken a short time.

> - Laura, age 32, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 1 year

Becky echoed a frequent example illustrating the pace of life:

> In America the goal is get in, get dinner, get out and do something else. So
> that's been that cultural thing-- in all of Europe its like that [slower paced] and it's
> really difficult for a focused American to adjust…. If we're going out for dinner its
> going to be long. You're not going to go in and get out real soon.

> - Becky, age 55, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 3 years

The cultural differences arising from these "little things" formed the foundation for the Cultural

Differences category.

There were several additional concepts that reflected cultural differences, but which I

initially coded as distinct concepts: Dutch Days, Convenience, and The Netherlands is Easy to

Live In. I coded these concepts separately because they were *in vivo* concepts mentioned

frequently by the participants (e.g., Dutch Days and Convenience) and in one case, seemed to

go against the notion of being frustrated by Cultural Differences (Netherlands Easy to Live In).

However, in the final data reduction analysis, I collapsed all the concepts together as their

central variable was cultural differences, which led to acculturation challenges. The initial

concepts are explained below.

Dutch Days.[9]   During my interviews numerous women mentioned experiencing a "Dutch

Day," a day that was particularly frustrating because of difficulties encountered while interacting

in Dutch culture. Often, it was a day when small nuisances piled up on one another until the

woman felt overwhelmed by the tasks she faced that day. Leigh Ann defined a Dutch Day for

me during her interview:

> Well…it's just one of those days when everything goes wrong. You're fighting
> the weather. You fell off your bike. I mean, I remember one day my daughter
> was going to go on a Brownie sleepover. She needed a flashlight. And I thought
> this is not going to be that hard. I walked to the Albert Heijn. Well, Albert Heijn
> doesn't sell flashlights. I went to my local, like hardware store. They don't sell
> flashlights. I went to the drugstore. They don't have flashlights. Seven stores and
> four hours later I find my self in the Kalverstraat walking in every single store I
> can and I finally walked in to this Xeno... And I walk in and there's a flashlight.
> And I buy it. And it works once for the one thing and then it breaks. It doesn't
> matter. You know, its like, geez, this cannot be this hard…But just things like
> that, where it's like the country is killing you.
>
> - Leigh Ann, age 32, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 1 year

The triggers that spark a Dutch Day are often small problems that would be easy to

resolve if the woman were in her home country. However, because the cultural ways of doing

things are so different, what start out as seemingly small tasks pile onto each other until trying to

accomplish all of them (or even part of them) feels overwhelming. Pam describes her

experiences during the first month of her expatriation:

> Before I came over it was exciting. …And then we got over here and the first
> couple of days, we were taking the kids around. It was fine. And then you start
> trying to deal with the basic day-to-day stuff. And it's sheer panic. I spent, I
> would say, the first two weeks in tears everyday. And I'm not a crier. I'm not an
> emotional person and when my husband would walk into the door and I would
> just start crying and he looks at me and I still have tears come to my eyes. And
> I've never had such a high level of emotions.
>
> - Pam, age 42, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 1 month

---

[9] I am unsure of the origins of the phrase, "Dutch Day," but it was commonly used among the American
expatriate community. It seems the expatriate community is also unsure of its origin. In fact, when I
asked Leigh Ann where she heard the term, she said, "I thought I made it up."

What makes Dutch Days particularly interesting is that it was mentioned by women who were well beyond the typical "culture shock" phase (Church, 1982), in terms of length of time in country, yet still had moments when the Dutch culture frustrated them. Additionally, some women placed the blame on the Dutch culture and the country, not on themselves and their own, American, upbringing. In that respect, the frame served as an easy referent for the difficulties that occurred because of the conflict between Dutch and American traditions.

Convenience. Another frequently mentioned concept that became part of the larger Cultural Differences concept was Convenience. Americans living in The Netherlands often believe that "taking care of business" in the new country is more time consuming, more difficult, and less convenient than in The United States. Some of this feeling may arise from not knowing how to accomplish a task, but it may also be related to business practices such as the types of stores available and the hours the stores are open.

> Stores close here at six. They're not open on Mondays. Especially in the small towns…. Stores are opening on Monday here. Slowly on Sunday. …At first like the bakery would run out of bread if we bought bakery bread or I'd go and they're out. Albert Heijn…out of toilet paper for three days. Or they'll be out of things that aren't so a necessity like *koffiemelk*, or they run out and they don't get them you know versus [like in] the states. It's like why is that? But you would have to plan your shopping early or plan to do things. …you have to plan to go to six different stores to get things because they all have different things.

> - Melinda, age 31, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 1 year

Several women pointed out that although they missed the convenience of shopping hours and products in The United States, the produce and other products in The Netherlands were much fresher than the products available in The United States. They saw this as a positive result of having to deal with the inconvenience of many of the Dutch business practices and traditions.

Netherlands easy to live in. Some woman who had expatriate assignments in other countries or who had lived in The Netherlands for more than a year commented that life in The Netherlands was easy. Janet summarized their thoughts when she said,

> Holland's easy to like. It's easy to live here. You have travel opportunities, you can meet people, all the things that an expat experience is all about.
>
> - Janet, age 51, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 4 years

During the initial data reduction, I was hesitant to place this concept within the Cultural Differences category. However, after consideration I realized that the underlying idea still centers on cultural differences, but because of these women's prior experiences or length of time in The Netherlands, they viewed the differences as easy instead of difficult. This conclusion led me to collapse the concept into the Cultural Differences category.

Language

> But I would say the language difference…Like at first I felt like oh it's very easy. You don't really need to know Dutch. I always had the belief that it's important to try because you're in a host country and I think you should learn that's my opinion or make an effort to try to learn the language…I initially I felt like, "Oh I really don't [need it] I can function fine without it." But now I notice the subtle things that I'm missing out on whether it's being with neighbors but when conversation breaks into Dutch, I can follow it a little bit but I just sort of feel on the outside somewhat. And then I also I just feel like sometimes with strangers until you get to know them and they get to know you. I feel like I'm limited to just the short vocabulary and that doesn't--I'm not able to express really who I am. It's sort of like a shell of who I am because of the communication differences.
>
> - Laura, age 32, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 1 year

Language seems to be a particularly difficult issue for American expatriates in The Netherlands, as illustrated by the quotation above. Many expatriates reported being told explicitly that not speaking Dutch would not be a problem during their assignment in The Netherlands because of the widespread use of English. Although this was the case for many women, there were women who lived in smaller towns and villages where English was not

commonly spoken. These women felt a stronger need to learn Dutch and often possessed

rudimentary Dutch skills obtained through conversational classes or individual tutoring.

> Yes, everybody says to you, "Everybody speaks English and it's fine." But you know what? They don't all speak English. And when you go into some of these grocery stores and they're not speaking English and they're looking at you like how dare you not speak Dutch and you're trying to find something and they can't help you...
>
> -Pam, age 42, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 1 month

Perhaps the strongest contributing factor to expatriate language difficulties was the

expansive language skills of Dutch nationals themselves. The Dutch typically speak at least

one language, often English, in addition to their local dialect and Dutch. This seems to be

especially the case with university-educated Dutch and younger generations of Dutch. English

is also widely spoken in larger cities, such as The Hague and Amsterdam and frequently spoken

at some level by shop keepers, especially in cities and tourist destinations.

The pervasiveness of English throughout the country discouraged many expatriates from

learning Dutch because they felt they could "get by" with their English skills and/or very limited

Dutch, such as politeness phrases (e.g., Hello, Good morning, Thank you). Moreover, many of

the women who lived in The Netherlands after other expatriate assignments did not feel the

same imperative to learn Dutch as they had in the prior country because of the widespread use

of English in the country. Women who lived in France and Germany felt they had to learn the

language to function on a daily basis (grocery shopping, etc.) because so few people in those

countries spoke English. Conversely, learning Dutch did not seem necessary to these women

for them to function on a daily basis in The Netherlands. Likewise, several of the multiple

expatriates had already learned another language well and were not willing to commit the effort

to learn Dutch, or did not think learning Dutch was "worthwhile," since it is not a widely spoken

language:

I could've had language lessons. They would've helped with that but I didn't. I worked real hard when we were in France with French…but it was just--I'm not a linguist. It's not easy for me. Now why would I kill myself trying to learn Dutch? And they speak English. And I can't use this language any place else. French is at least usable.

- Helen, age 51, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 4 years

Even though many of the women could take care of their daily life needs without speaking Dutch, they still expressed frustration at not being aware of local activities and events and not being able to follow the local news. (International news was broadcast in English on CNN and BBC channels.)

Well, the language, because we don't know the language so, like, we still don't ever really know what's going on. You never know what's going on in town really, I mean, kind of. …It's just kind of weird, I always feel out of the loop and you get mail about some official things and you never know what it is and you're kind of flailing through and getting out your dictionary and trying to figure out what it is. And ultimately sending it in to work so somebody can translate it for you.

- Chloe, age 30, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 1 ⅓ years

Regardless of where the women lived in The Netherlands, and whether or not they felt a pressure to learn Dutch, the majority of women indicated an interest, at some level, of learning Dutch. Several women who had been in The Netherlands for over three years expressed a desire to speak Dutch, but were hesitant to begin lessons because their expatriate assignment was drawing to a close and they could be transferred to another country within the year. A frequent refrain from women who tried to learn and practice their Dutch with nationals was that the Dutch nationals would not permit them to use their Dutch; once Dutch nationals heard the women's American accent, they would switch to English, either to speed up the transaction or to practice their English with a native speaker. Ironically, several of the longer-term expatriates noted that their Dutch acquaintances were upset that the expatriates had lived in the country so long (usually over four years) and still could not speak Dutch.

This category remained separate from other adaptation difficulties for several reasons: first, it was very frequently and distinctly mentioned by the women. Second, the category illustrates a frame being "placed" on many of the women as so many expatriates were told not to worry about speaking Dutch due to the pervasiveness of English. This assumed language frame may intensify the women's frustrations surrounding their inability to learn/speak Dutch. Third, some women avoided this issue by purposefully not pursuing Dutch because they spent so much time learning another language and/or they do not see the value of Dutch.

Medical Care

The availability and quality of medical care in The Netherlands were a frequent concern for expatriate women and often one of the factors expatriates considered before they would accept an international assignment.

> *Interviewer: Did you have any concerns about coming over here?*

> Medical and education. They were the two things that would have driven me back to the states in a heartbeat. And we decided that before we even moved over here, that with my son's education if I didn't feel it was good enough or if there's medical that we can't have taken care of. The medical is still an issue here. I just tell everyone, don't get sick. Don't have anything serious happen to you over here…

> -Debra, age 38, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 2 years

The expatriates regarded Dutch medical care as similar to that in The United States, but preferred health care in The United States and felt that in many instances it was superior to the Dutch system. The majority of women had a local doctor in case of emergencies, but waited until they returned to the U.S. to visit their doctors, dentists and other specialists. Lynda, a 51 year-old who had lived in The Netherlands for four years noted: "I have a doctor here, but I try to take care of those things [routine medical appointments] when I'm in the States."

One of the most frequently mentioned medical concerns was the lack of medication, particularly antibiotics and painkillers, distributed by Dutch *huisarts* (general practitioners).

Although many of the women agreed that there are times when U.S. doctors prescribe too many

drugs, there were instances when the women believed an antibiotic would reduce the problem

easily; this was often the case with small children who had had similar problems in the past.

Colleen told a story about her young son, Ryan:

> The *huisarts* said to me at one point, when Ryan had these ear infections, he
> [Ryan] needed to have his eardrums punctured. And he [*huisarts*] was telling
> me that he wants to do surgery. And I said, "I just want antibiotics." And he said,
> "This is not a shop that you come in demanding products. I am the doctor and I
> will make the decisions about my patient." And I said, "Well your patient is my
> son and I'll make the decision." And it was just awful.

> - Colleen, age 34, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 2 years

The women also found the Dutch doctors had a different interaction style that was difficult for

many of the participants. For example:

> Well, I have to give you, this is a culture difference and it has to do with the
> medical field. I went into for my, there is a history in my family of breast cancer,
> so I been advised to have a yearly mammogram and I'm getting the age where I
> need a yearly mammogram anyway. My *huisarts* also said I have a lot of cysts
> in my breasts and you should have an ultrasound, too. So she referred me over
> to the hospital in *Haarlem* and the ultrasound, they're some women technicians,
> they had a male doctor doing the ultrasound which is ok, that's no big deal. But
> they don't give you any drapes or anything and at the end of the ultrasound
> there I was naked from the waist up and he shakes my hand. And I just went
> oh, I just tried not to react, but that's a culture difference. They don't, you see all
> the time post cards with naked woman on them and that doesn't bother them
> that much.

> *Interviewer: You were uncomfortable?*

> I was uncomfortable in that situation and I didn't, it was something that I didn't
> expect.

> - Lynn, age 49, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 1 ⅓ years

In general, the majority of expatriate women avoided Dutch medical care unless it was

necessary (e.g., emergency, pregnancy) and often waited until home leave or holidays to return

to The United State for care. This approach to health care created a situation where a

potentially difficult cultural interaction was simply avoided. The women recognized that the

Dutch system worked for Dutch nationals, but felt more comfortable and assured interacting with an American, or an American-trained medical professional.

Summary

This domain illustrates the various challenges expatriate women face as they live their day-to-day lives in The Netherlands. For many of the participants, these challenges were frustrations that they had to handle to function effectively within the new culture. The need to deal with the frustrations and learn how to interact in the Dutch culture often motivated the women to use various coping strategies to manage the challenges. These methods of handling the cultural challenges is discussed in the following domain.

Domain: Coping Strategies

The expatriate women face a multitude of cultural challenges, as illustrated in the prior domain. As these women live out their lives in The Netherlands, they develop methods to handle, or cope, with these cultural challenges. The Coping Strategies domain reflects the strategies and methods the women repeatedly used to handle the challenges they faced and consists of two broad categories: Social Support and Other Coping Strategies. Each of these categories embodies several concepts that I collapsed for the overarching category.

Social Support

One of the clearest examples of Coping Strategies mentioned by the participants involved seeking, giving, and receiving social support. Living abroad provides many opportunities for maintaining and developing social support networks with a variety of new people from multiple cultures. However, there are also challenges to creating a support network abroad: host country nationals may be difficult to befriend, friends from home often do not understand the expatriate lifestyle, and friendships with other Americans may be difficult to

make and somewhat transitory. Yet all of the women shared stories about seeking and receiving friendship, encouragement, help, comfort and emotional support (or lack of support) from various sources. These types of social support were the most frequently mentioned way of coping with acculturation challenges. The source of support they most emphatically mentioned was other members of the expatriate community.

Social support from the expatriate community. The participants overwhelmingly turned to other members of the expatriate community for help in making sense of their new environment and experiences. Although the expatriate community entailed multiple cultures (British, French, etc.), other Americans in the expatriate community were the main source of support. Dependence on one another was facilitated by formal established networks, such as the American Women's Club, as well as informal coffee hours and English language "Mom and Tot" playgroups. Both formal and informal networks provided a forum for the women to share information, concerns, experiences, and develop friendships. In several instances, groups were established to encourage personal hobbies, such as knitting or cross-stitching, became "known" as a place where women could vent their frustrations and learn about how others handled similar experiences. One group that fostered such a place for expatriates was a needlepoint group that had adopted the informal name, "Stitch and Bitch." It is important to realize, however, that these formal and informal groups did not serve merely as a place for women to complain; they also were places for women to share their positive experiences and find out more about the Dutch culture and events within the Dutch society.

The importance of help and encouragement from other expatriates and the need for friendship was clear in the stories the women told about their expatriation. Numerous participants mentioned the important role that other expatriate women played in helping the participants negotiate the Dutch culture and feel comfortable within their new environment. The

importance of friends was evident in comments Ellen, a 50 year old multiple expatriate who had

been in The Netherlands for five years and who shared her belief about friends:

> If you could find a friend, one friend, I think you'll do okay. Uhm, some people
> don't need to. They might be happy just held up in the house. But if you have
> one friend to share with and moan and groan sometimes. Celebrate with
> sometimes, I think you'll do okay.

A difficulty in turning to other expatriates for friendship is the short-term nature of these

friendships, because expatriate assignments tend to average about two years, although some

expatriates may stay up to five years. These relatively short stays create expatriate

communities with a frequently changing membership. The length of residency creates a

situation in which friendships tend to be shorter in duration and where the expatriate's support

network is in a fairly constant pattern of flux. One of the results of this is that expatriates have to

develop new friendships on a more continual basis than they would if they lived in a stable

location in The United States. Ellen expressed the feelings of many American women living in

The Netherlands:

> Your friends are expats, that's the only thing, and they leave. And you make
> new friends. And they leave. And you think, "I can't stand this any longer". And I
> have one friend that she just, teasingly she'll say, "How long are you going to be
> here? And you tell her. And she'll say, "If you're not going to be here more than
> six months I can't be your friend." You just get so tired. It takes an effort to have
> a good friend and you begin by…by sharing things, little things. The things that
> don't matter and then you get into the friendship more deeply and you share
> more of yourself. You have to have a good friend. And then you become like
> family, and then they're gone. So it's hard. Most of my friends are leaving in
> June. We had a big swarm, I guess there were maybe 45 families I'm not [sure]
> exactly... And now there are maybe, maybe five, six.
>
> —Ellen, age 50 expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 5 years

This transitory nature of the expatriate experience is compounded by the fact that the

development and maintenance of the friendship are also compressed, which, as many women

noted, caused friendships to develop more quickly. Moreover, because women abroad do not

have a developed support system in place as they would in The United States (family members,

and so on), they turn to other expatriates in times of need. This creates a situation in which the expatriates are forced to depend on one another and develop a depth of friendship that may not have existed if the friendship had developed in The United States. The quickness and depth of relationship development is described by Colleen. Colleen told a story of when she was an expatriate in Singapore, in the hospital for several days, with a newborn child. Although this happened in another country, it exemplifies the types of stories described by women living in The Netherlands:

> First time I had met this lady, walking back to the service apartment and she says, "So when does Mike [Colleen's husband] come back?" And I said, "He's not coming back until next week. He's got to go to India." And she said, "So what are you going to do ?" And I said, "Well, I really think I need to take a shower." Hadn't had a shower for, like, days. And she said, "That is it. You're coming to my house." So we went to the service apartment, packed up some stuff and she will be one of my best friends until I die. I mean we still are in touch. I…had never met this woman before, had a six week old baby. And I went and stayed with her for a week. Had never met her before. But that's kind of what this expat life does to you. You have nobody else. You have nobody else. And you just have to trust.

> - Colleen, age 34, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 2 years

The depth of relationships is also evident in remarks by Nicole, a 40 year old multiple expatriate who observed that:

> I think you develop tighter relationships here because you're like just here together kind of like "Doing time", some people say. It's so funny. Yeah, but you know, you're just here in this experience together and so we are taken away from our normal world and we're sort of put in a safe little society and you know so we have all these little clubs and all these little activities.

Expatriate spouses recognize that friendships while one is abroad are short-term and transitory in nature. This group of women understands the importance of friendships while realizing that they are limited by the nature of their situation: short term postings in multiple countries do not allow for the slow development of relationships.

Not only are the development and depth of friendship influenced by expatriation, but choice of friends may also be a factor. Women who had been in the country for a year or more

reflected that when they first arrived in The Netherlands, they became friends with women they may not have befriended under other circumstances. As the women spent more time in the country, they became more choosey about friends and developed groups of friends with whom they felt comfortable. However, they still found that there were types of people in their social circles during their expatriation that may not have been in The United States.

> I mean well, with Americans, it's easier [to make friends]. Pretty much when you're put into a situation you're going to bond faster. And I'm friends with, I think, different people than I necessary would've been in the states. It's kind of a very diverse, like a mix of personalities. I think you're just kind of thrown into situations so you kind of cling on to each other. Which often makes you more accepting of just differences.

> - Melissa, age 27, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 13 months

Participants with and without children agreed that children provided an entry point into a social network for the parents. For example, the majority of school age children attended an International School, so the children's activities (athletics, after school events) enabled expatriate parents to meet each other. Arranging play dates, trips, and carpools also allowed the women to interact with other expatriates. Additionally, several participants felt that having children forced them to take the initial step to meet people or figure out how to do something because the child needed the information. In effect, the child became the motivator for the participant.

The participants without children felt they were at a disadvantage in meeting people, as they did not have the entrée into a social network that children provided. The women without children turned to other sources, such as American or English language clubs and occasionally sports, to develop their social networks.

Social support from husbands. The women in this study also turned to their husbands[10] for friendship, encouragement, help, comfort, and emotional support. It seemed that the women relied on their husbands more for general emotional support, while they turned to other expatriate women for information about specific day-to-day living needs and social interaction. In fact, a majority of women commented that their husbands were very supportive and sympathetic about their situations. However, the men were more "insulated" from the Dutch culture because they interacted in an English-based organizational culture for the majority of the day, so often, they could not empathize with the women. Leigh Ann expressed a common sentiment when asked if she felt like her husband understood what she was going through:

> Yes and no. He knows that he survives by the sheer grace of me. He knows that he has food on the table and things like that because I figured it out. But I don't think he understands how very, very difficult it can be. I don't think he understands the level of frustration, [like] fighting with the weather to get to the store [on foot or by bike]. You get to the store and it doesn't even carry what you think it should… I don't think he has had that frustration level. I think he's well-insulated. So I don't think he understands the depth of how bad it can be. But, I know he understands that it's a bitch. But for him, why complain about it? So I don't complain. If I complain about it, I may [say] "Oh God I can't believe this happened", or whatever, but I won't make any disparaging remarks, let's say, about it, because for him he feels the burden of it was his decision to bring us here. It wasn't, we made it as a family. But when things are bad he takes it all on himself.

> - Leigh Ann, age 32, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 1 year

The majority of women deeply appreciated the support from their husbands and several acknowledged that their husbands were their best friends. Many of the participants also acknowledged that the expatriate experiences had strengthened the bond between them and their husbands.

> In one sense we've grown closer because we don't have anybody to fall back on but each other. So I remember when we first moved to Hong Kong and I couldn't run home, to mom, because I was in Hong Kong. So being away from

---

[10] The term husband is used here to indicate relational partner. All women in this study were married to men and referred to their partners as their husbands.

family and life long friends and stuff like that makes you grow as a unit. Your immediate family here we're very tight. We often spend the holidays just with us. So in that sense it's gotten stronger. Because I didn't have like college friends that I'm hanging out with that I have, you know what I mean, that kind of history with.

- Colleen, age 34, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 2 years

Although the women shared a close relationship with their husbands they still realized that their husbands did not understand everything expatriate women experience. A few women noted that they behaved in ways that would cause their husbands to experience some of the same cultural challenges that they did.

I purposefully try to draw back and let him experience them himself sometimes. Like I'll send him to the grocery store. *J: without any bags?* Without any bags. Without a guilder. Just he--I think sometimes he might underestimate the impact. Because it's silly little stuff. I mean how much does it hurt you to go to the grocery store and not have any bags? I mean you deal with it. But at the same time if you have three or four things happen in a day and it's like, Take me home! So he sometimes, he might underestimate that.

-Sara, age 38, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 11 months

Support received from the husband does play an important role in the lives of the expatriate women; however, it seems to function differently from the support received and given to other members of the expatriate community. These first two sources of support, other expatriates and husbands, are key relationships for the expatriate spouse. The remaining sources of support also play a role in the coping strategies of the participants, but to a lesser extent than the first two sources.

Social support from people in The United States. Not only do expatriates face challenges meeting and developing new friends in The Netherlands, they also struggle with maintaining their connections and friendships in The United States during their stay abroad. There were two sources of social support from people living in The United States: family (usually parents and siblings, occasionally adult children) and friends. Numerous expatriate women had difficultly depending on individuals at home for substantial social support because

many of the people in The United States could not understand the expatriate experience fully.

This was often the case because the family/friends had not been to The Netherlands, so it was

difficult for the participants to share their stories with these individuals. Additionally, the physical

distance and lack of physical contact (visiting on the weekends or holidays) seemed to

contribute to the difficulty of maintaining the relationships. Other women commented that when

they do talk with their friends at home, their friends are typically not interested in the expatriates'

lives, do not really understand what it is like, or are envious of the traveling and of what is often

seen as a "glamorous" lifestyle.

> Maintaining friendships, even…family ones is difficult when you're over here.
> Because everyone thinks you're on vacation. And secretly they're jealous as hell
> and that you're there and they're not so they tend not to be interested in your
> life.

> -Abby, age 56, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 5 years

Family members tended to be more supportive of the expatriates' move abroad and

tended to offer more support to the women than did friends, although a handful of women had

close friends who tried to be supportive of the expatriate. In both cases, the sources of support

tended to be women rather than men. Expatriates seemed to maintain family ties more readily

than they did friendships, but many expatriates expressed a lessened sense of obligation

toward family members; nevertheless they expressed concern for family members' well-being.

A general consensus among those interviewed was that they had to take the initiative to

maintain their friendships, especially relationships beyond immediate family. Several

participants decided they would conduct an "experiment" to find out how their friendships in The

United States would survive if they stopped taking the initiative to maintain it. They called their

experiment a "silent protest" because they did not notify their friends of their experiment, but

merely stopped calling them. Melinda, a 31 year-old expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for a

year explained that she was tired of being the person who "made all the effort to maintain the

friendship," so she participated in the "silent protest" with a few of her expatriate friends. Unfortunately, at the time of the interview, none of her friends had taken the initiative to call.

Religion and/or spirituality. Organized religion and/or spirituality was a means to both facilitate a social support network and a source of spiritual support. Many women sought membership in a church, synagogue, or bible study as a means to meet other people with similar interests, as well to worship. Often the emphasis was on the sense of fellowship created through these religious affiliations and the sense of support that stemmed from the members of such organizations. Several participants also discussed their belief that God wanted them to have the expatriate experience and sought comfort in the belief that he would take care of them during their expatriation.

This concept aligned most closely with the social support category because the majority of comments have to do with the social interaction and support received from belonging to a church, synagogue, or bible study group. There were not enough comments about religion to make it a distinct coping strategy.

Social support from Dutch nationals. Very few participants had friends who were Dutch, and no participant claimed a Dutch national as a close friend, although several women had Dutch neighbors who they were friendly towards.

Many participants felt that the Dutch are hard to "get to know" and that it was difficult to "break into the Dutch circle." In addition to being difficult to get to know, American traditions regarding establishing new friends are different from those of the Dutch. For example, several expatriates noted that in some places in America individuals new to a neighborhood are greeted by neighbors already living in the area. This is the opposite of the Dutch custom, where the new neighbor takes the initiative for meeting existing neighbors. Although this difference is one that many expatriates were aware of, they found it difficult to enact, or at least difficult for the friendship to grow after the first meeting.

The compressed time frame of expatriate friendships probably contributed to the lack of friendship and support between Americans and Dutch. For example, the Americans tried to develop deeper relationships in a short amount of time, while the Dutch were more interested in developing lasting relationships over time--as the American would be if she were living in The United States.

The general lack of friendships among American and Dutch made the Dutch a very weak source of social support for American expatriates. Often, if some type of social support did exist between an American and a Dutch person it is more functionary, such as how to accomplish a particular task in a particular time or place. The lack of friendship and social support among expatriates and Dutch was somewhat surprising in light of the fact that much of the acculturation literature encourages expatriates to interact with host nationals as much as possible (Black et al., 1999). In fact, finding a "cultural informant" has been linked to increased levels of acculturation and general satisfaction in several studies (Black & Gregersen, 1991a).

Other Coping Strategies

In addition to social support, expatriates used other methods for coping with their new environment. This category explains four additional strategies used by expatriates: Gathering Information, Observe Others, Assess the Situation and Accept It, and Emotional Release. Aside from the Emotional Release concept, the strategies align fairly well with the strategies forwarded for reducing uncertainty according to Uncertainty Reduction Theory (Berger & Calabrese, 1975). Gathering Information and Observe Others are both passive strategies that allow participants to learn more about how people interact in the Dutch culture without having to directly interact with someone themselves. Assess the Situation and Accept It is an active strategy, as the expatriate evaluated their current conditions, determined a way(s) to remedy the current situation, and acted to implement those remedies. These similarities are logical, as

reducing uncertainties about practices in the new culture is one of the key ways expatriates can become knowledgeable about appropriate ways to act and contribute to their acculturation. However, the concept Emotional Release does not fit into the uncertainty reduction strategies, as this coping mechanism's goal was not to reduce uncertainty, but alleviate the emotional duress of the expatriate woman. Each concept is described in more detail below.

Gathering information. Many participants, especially first time expatriates, attempted to acquire as much information about The Netherlands and the Dutch culture as they could, both before moving to the country and once in the country. This most often involved reading books and searching the Internet for resources about the culture and what it would be like to live in the new culture. Several of the formal networks publish guides and manuals about The Netherlands that were key information sources for many expatriates. Once in The Netherlands the expatriates read less and, instead, relied on members of their social support networks to find answers to new questions.

Experienced expatriates often sought less information about the Dutch culture and country than inexperienced expatriates. Several of the experienced women commented that they felt as if they already knew the types of things they would need to accomplish in the new country (finding children's schools, grocery shopping) and reported that they were able to achieve these goals in other countries. This may have increased their sense of confidence in the "transportability" of these skills and decreased their feeling of needing to find out new information. Other women were simply too busy with their lives in the other country before the move to learn about The Netherlands, or the move happened so quickly that they did not feel they had time to learn about the country.

Observe others. Once in The Netherlands, a common strategy for figuring out how to do something was to watch it being done by others, either Dutch nationals or other expatriates.

> I remember the first week we were here, I remember going to the post office, standing in line waiting, and everyone kept going and everyone kept going, and I'm standing there with 2 kids and I'm thinking why isn't anybody letting me go, and I realized that you had to take the little number….

> - Paula, age 40, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 5 years

This vicarious learning was a simple, non-embarrassing way for the women to make sense of the practices in The Netherlands. This strategy surfaced in a variety of settings, but most often in situations dealing with business interactions (returning recyclables to the store, etc.)

Assess the situation and accept it. During interviews, participants often told stories of cultural difficulties they faced. When I asked the women how they managed the situations, many responded with a version of "I just do." When I probed further, several women talked about looking at the situation they were in, determining a few things they could do to manage or improve the situation, and then acting out the behaviors to let them manage the expatriate situation.

> I think my low point was last summer, my son went to a Spanish language camp….So he was gone an entire month and my husband works long hours. He's gone; he doesn't get home typically not…before 7 in the evening. So there I am, just with the dog and the things is, his school is closed in the summer. American Woman's Club shuts off….There's no, the activities for someone like myself are pretty well shut down….We took some nice trips, but my husband has to work most of the time. He can't, a week or two at the most is what we can take off, so I hated it. I felt so isolated, but I have a plan for next summer. I know there is an organization called Access out of the Hague, I'm sure you've heard of it. They always need volunteers, so I could go down there a day or two a week, just to get out and be with other people and…I could do that….So I'm not going to have that lonely summer next summer, I'm going to get out and make my own opportunities.

> - Lynn, age 49, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 1 ⅓ years

Emotional Release. The final concept includes a variety of emotional responses to frustrating situations used by the women. Some type of emotional release, crying, laughing,

"getting mean," was mentioned by the participants as a method to cope with a challenging

cultural difference or an all-around "Dutch Day."

> It was very strange, but I realized I was just, I was intimidated. Intimidated here
> because of the cultural differences.   It took me, I don't know if it was a year, but
> it was some time within that first year. That in the beginning I was really
> intimidated. I wouldn't ask things. I had to figure it out all on my own. And then I
> could get into some problems in directions or this or that or one way streets, or
> whatever. And I would just cry. I would cry at the drop of a hat because I was
> just frustrated that I couldn't just do it like I always did. And I do remember that.
> But of course that's past.

>> -Becky, age 55, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 3 years

Filling Time. One of the striking concepts that emerged within the interviews was the

women's need to "keep busy" and "fill time" during their expatriation. As Nicole explained it:

> Our schedules are so busy. For a whole bunch of unemployed women we have
> like the busiest schedules. They do this tour. And that tour. And this class and
> that class and this lunch and that lunch. And they're just so busy that they're
> busy and do a lot, see a lot, and make lots of friends.

By staying busy and keeping active the expatriates met other people and tried to create

a sense of fulfillment for themselves. However, several women commented that even though

they were active, there still was something missing. This seemed to be especially the case for

women, like Jessica, who had given up their jobs to move to The Netherlands.

> This year I got more involved in the club the *Haarlem*. So I have to plan the
> activities for the region and it's fun. You know the first year we also formed our
> own little group of just going on trips. Learning these things. I have to say I have
> really filled up the time. I don't know that I feel fulfilled. I'm busy. I'm very busy.
> But I still feel like there's something missing.

>> -Jessica, age 44, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 16 months

Summary

This domain entails various methods the participants used to manage their lives in the

new culture of The Netherlands. The main approach was to seek and receive social support

from others, predominately other expatriate women, but also husbands. In addition to seeking

social support the women also employed other strategies to reduce their uncertainties about the new environment and have an emotional release from the challenges of the new culture.

Domain: Identity

The concept of identity focuses on how people answer the question "Who am I?" There are many ways individuals can choose to answer this question. In general, individuals think of themselves as belonging to a certain social category(ies) that has given characteristics, such as nationality (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995). These characteristics then become a way of defining who that individual is--a part of their self-concept. An individual's understanding of who she is as a person can be enacted and understood at several levels, such as personal, enacted, relational, and communal (Hecht, 1993).

In addition to this understanding of identity, we know that our identity develops throughout our lives, and we may find that often, significant life changes may alter our identities as well. Moving to another country could easily be the impetus for identity development, growth, and/or change. This domain provides insight into how the women in this study made sense of the question, "Who am I?" and embraces categories that illustrate the multiple facets of identity, including those that are individual, cultural, and career-related. Each of these identities contributed to the participants' understanding of who they are and who they might be becoming during their time abroad.

Personal Identity

Most of us have a general understanding of who we are as individuals and what contributes to our sense of self. The women in this study also had that type of understanding, but many of them felt that they had developed in some way through the experience of living abroad.

> I think I know myself a lot better now. I'm more comfortable with being alone. I really treasure [it] now--after I got the nerve. I constantly had people around me. [Now] I long for that time to just be able to go read. I think I'm--I know myself more. I'm more at ease with being by myself. I find things that I'm interested in, that I didn't necessarily think I was. I definitely think that I'm different than I was a year ago.

> - Melissa, age 27, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 13 months

Similarly, other women discussed their time abroad as an opportunity to alter their identities purposefully, perhaps even create a new identity, as Abby, a 56 year expatriate who had lived in The Netherlands for five year indicated:

> Nobody knew me over here. I could do-- I could reinvent [myself] and all those things that you said to yourself you "should" do this and you "should" do that and you know, well nobody knows about those, so maybe I don't have to do those things. I can do something differently.

An interesting tension seemed to play out among some expatriate women who noted that they had grown in some ways (e.g., their ability to recognize and value cultural differences) but still thought it important to maintain an identity that was more consistent with their identity and behavior as it was in The United States. A handful of women commented that adopting some Dutch cultural practices or traditions was "fake" and not a reflection of their true selves. The majority of the women, however, acknowledged that the expatriation was a significant experience in their lives and that they were affected by it.

A few of the women mentioned identities that others attached to them because of their expatriate status, such as "rich" or "snobby." This was an identity many women fought against, instead considering themselves fortunate to have the opportunity to live as an expatriate. This also contributed to the women's hesitation to share stories of their travels with their friends and families in The United States, because they saw these travels as possibly reinforcing an identity they prefer to eschew.

The passages in this category reflect a broad understanding of the women's own identities, whether they remained consistent or were somehow altered. The remaining categories focus on two specific facets of identity, cultural and work/career.

Cultural identity: "American-ness"

The importance of a cultural identity as an American was apparent throughout many of the interviews. Identifying as "American" and having cultural experience as an American influences everything from greetings, to clothing, to expectations about social interactions. That is not to say that they do not recognize and, to some extent, adopt Dutch practices and norms, but they are often unwilling, and occasionally unable, to completely lose their American culture and traditions. For example, several women held Thanksgiving Day dinners at their homes, and local groups of the American Women's Club's arranged Trick-or-Treating for American children on Halloween.

Expatriate women saw little reason to relinquish their American identity because their stay in The Netherlands was so brief. However, these women enjoyed participating in aspects of Dutch culture (e.g., coffee hours and *Sinterklaas* celebrations) and recognized the value of these traditions, but probably would not continue to observe them after they returned to The United States or moved to another country. In several cases, living in The Netherlands reportedly made people more aware of their American identity:

> I love Americans. And the more I meet other people the more I like Americans. I love that Americans are loud. I like that the Americans are honest. …People love to make comments about Americans. I had a problem with that when I first got here. People meet you and they like you and you're American [yet] they feel like it's totally fine to put down Americans because you're not like that. I've gotten a lot of American pride this year. I am still American. Everything about me is American…and I'm comfortable with that. I'm not embarrassed like I used to be embarrassed, I think, to be American.

> -Kate, age 29, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 6 months

Many of the interviewees maintained their American identity by joining American clubs, having American friends and seeking out American products and services in The Netherlands. Additionally, many spouses "Import America": they have American goods shipped to them by their friends in The United States, or bring large quantities of American products back to The Netherlands, as one expatriate spouse commented:

> And just like food. I got just big Tupperware things full of like chocolate chips, and Spaghetti Os, and macaroni and cheese, and aspirin, Tylenol just things you can't get here. J: So are you bringing those from home? They came over with the move and I just still have them. Hopefully they won't go bad before we move in another year just in case.

> -Cindy, age 30, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 2 ½ months

The American expatriates did realize that there are often negative identities attached to them because of their culture, such as "ugly American." Many of the women were sensitive to these identities and made an effort to present themselves, their behavior, and by extension, their country in a positive light in The Netherlands. Joyce shared a story of shopping with two other Americans:

> She [an American] wanted to do something the American way and very boldly told the merchant that that's not the way we do it in The United States, and she wanted to do it her way. And this other American friend and I had to take her to the car and give her a little talk. Look around you, you are not in The United States, you are in Holland and if that's the way they do it, that's the way it's going to be done here, and we are the foreigners living in another country. And so, I can see this ugly American profile is out there, because there is a certain percentage of us who portray that. I guess because I don't want to be labeled that way, I do make an effort to try not to be offensive, even though it's something that I disagree with, and it's a system that I think personally could be improved, or it's not the way I do it at home, I try not to say that because I am a guest in this country, bottom line, I am a guest here and I need to remind myself of that and try to be gracious and do things that might not be my way, but it is probably the proper way for me to handle things.

> -Joyce, age 53, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 13 months

Career-Work

This category was different from the other identity categories, in that participants' life experiences (largely a function of age and children) influenced the way in which they enacted behavior appropriate to this category. In general, the participants fell into one of three broad groups: women in their mid-20s to early 30s without children; women from 30 to mid- to late-40s with children under 18 living with them; and women in their 50s who either do not have children, or whose children are living elsewhere.

The first group, women in their mid-20s to early 30s with no children seemed to struggle more with career-related identity issues. Most of these women worked in The United States prior to expatriation and either took a leave of absence or gave up their careers to move to The Netherlands. Many of these women had some difficulty adjusting to not working and the slower pace of Dutch life. Although several women mentioned that they did not believe there was pressure on them to take a job, they still felt that they needed to work. Several women felt that they should be working, for a variety of reasons, including financial and personal. Andrea summarized the feeling of several women in this group:

> I miss my life back home, living in my house, going to work everyday, having a meaningful job, having a purpose, bringing home money, which is another big difference. I never, I don't remember the last time I didn't have my own money, and I guess that might be more of a marriage issue, too, but if we were at home, I'd have my own job, so I'd feel like I was contributing. But now I feel like I have to do all the wash, I have to clean everything, I always have to cook because that's my job here, because I don't bring in any money. I have a small part-time job, but oh, my God, it's nothing.

> -Andrea, age 29, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 2 months

Many of the women were searching for jobs in The Netherlands or did volunteer work as a means of feeling that they were contributing to the society. The feeling of having a meaningful job, and through that job having intellectual stimulation, was also a common concern among women of this group:

I'm thinking about trying to find another job. ...Now I'm not working and I wander around the park and wander around the city and read three books a week and I'm completely relaxed now, but it would be nice to use my brain again.

—Allison, age 26, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 6 months

The loss of a job, its financial benefits, and its intellectual stimulation coalesced to create doubts for some spouses about who they were. Americans often define themselves by their work; in fact one of the first questions asked in typical American conversation is: "What do you do for a living?" By giving up their jobs, these women were often at a loss for how to answer that question and similarly may struggle to define themselves. Kate, a 29 year-old expatriate in The Netherlands for 6 months struggle with being a "housewife":

I think for my family it's been strange because they've always thought of me as not a housewife. They don't think of me that way. I think they were a little disappointed for me and for my career because … they were proud of what I had done and I'd accomplished a lot and I was working. I was happy with what I was doing. So I think it's strange for them, as parents, when people say, "What's Kate doing?", that I'm a housewife. I mean, people don't say that anymore. That's what I'm doing. So I think that's been weird for them. I think that's been as weird for them as it's been for me. And kind of embarrassing.

She continued, noting that she did not feel "good" about being a housewife, but she was not going to accept any job only for the sake of having a job.

The second group, women in their 30s and 40s with children living at home shared several experiences that were different from the other groups. Even though a few women in this group gave up careers to become expatriates, most had stopped working before moving to The Netherlands and considered themselves full-time moms. Thus, many in this group did not have problems defining who they were; or, if they did, they were able to shift readily into the role of "mother," and often, "volunteer." These women were active in their children's education and extra-curricular activities, volunteering at the school and attending various events. Understandably, members of this group was able to transport their "mother" identity overseas

with few problems and had to add new facets to their identity instead of developing a new identity as had members of the first group.

The final group, women in their 50s either with grown children, or without children, also had different identity experiences. Only one woman in this group continued to work while in The Netherlands, even though several had worked in The United States. Those who worked in The United States were pleased to have the free time and often referred to their expatriation as a vacation. These women seemed to be more reflective about their experience abroad, perhaps because most of them had at least one prior expatriate experience, or perhaps because of their life stage. Overall, this group of women was very active in groups and clubs and traveled frequently, either with these groups or with their husbands.

Summary

The Identity Domain reflects frames the women held and enacted that helped them define who they were as individuals. There were three broad types of identity frames, personal, cultural (American), and career-related, that reflected the salient aspects of these women's identities. These frames illustrate some of the ways expatriate women experienced identity and provide insight into salient identity characteristics.

<div align="center">

Model of Domain Relationships

</div>

These three broad domains present a variety of first-order frames discussed by the expatriate spouses. Together the three domains, *Cultural Challenges*, *Coping Strategies,* and *Identity*, illustrate the frame types that emerged as salient to the expatriate participants. These frame types represent first-order data in that they are participant-based and clustered together by similarities among the initial coded passages. The relationships among the frames are illustrated in Figure 4.1, below. These relationships were also evident in the data, which contributes to the figure being a first-order understanding of the data. For example, an

expatriate spouse would mention that she found out where to buy a certain product that she could not find (a cultural challenge) by asking an American friend where that product could be purchased (coping strategy). The relationships are explained further in the sections below.

Figure 4.1: Model of Relationships among First-order Domains

This figure illustrates the three domains that emerged in the data analysis. There were multiple relationships among these domains reflected within the interview data. However, the domain Cultural Challenges (CC) was the pivotal domain related to the other two domains, Coping Strategies (CS) and Identity (ID), and often acted as a trigger for the frames enacted within the other domains. These relationships are explained below.

A *Cultural Challenge* could trigger the enactment of a *Coping Strategy,* illustrated by the bottom arrow from CC to CS. Depending on the strategy enacted, the *Coping Strategy* could alleviate that particular challenge, and thereby allow the expatriate to deal with a new cultural challenge, or it could increase the frustration felt by the challenge and reinforce the difficulty of dealing with that challenge. Both of these relationships are illustrated by the top arrow from CS going to CC, because regardless of whether the challenge was alleviated or increased, the expatriate still had to face cultural challenges, either new challenges once the original challenge was alleviated, or the same challenge if it was not alleviated. Hence, the relationship between the two domains of CC and CS is similar to a feedback loop wherein CC triggers the CS, which once enacted feeds back into the CC domain, either because the CC has been dealt with and the expatriate can then deal with another challenge, or the CS failed, the CC is still present and must be dealt with again.

Another relationship exists between Cultural Challenges-Coping Strategies-Identity. If an expatriate spouse faces a cultural challenge and enacts a coping strategy, depending on which strategy she enacts, she may also influence her Identity domain. For example, if she faces a cultural challenge and chooses to turn to her American friends for advice or comfort (CS), she may strengthen her sense of American identity (ID). Consequently, a coping strategy can be related to an individual's identity. Usually, this relationship was enacted by the participants through coping strategies, such as having American friends, which enhanced the expatriate's American identity.

A direct relationship also exists between Cultural Challenges and Identity, without being filtered through Coping Strategies. For example, an expatriate may face cultural challenges that stem from the Dutch nationals' identity. A common challenge was dealing with the direct, and in the expatriates' view, often rude, interaction style of Dutch nationals. This challenge may conflict with the expatriate's identity and cause her to question, or feel frustrated about, her own identity as an American who enacts and expects a certain interaction style. At this point, the expatriate might enact a coping strategy (illustrated by the top arrow between ID and CS), such as making friends with other Americans, or turning to other Americans for advice. This could reinforce her American identity (reflected by the bottom arrow from CS to ID) and also help her to alleviate some of the cultural challenges she experiences (arrow from CS to CC).

These relationships reflect the complex interactions among first-order frames the expatriates reflected within their interviews. As these domains and relationships emerged, I also examined the data for theoretical understandings of how frames functions within the data. This theoretical analysis resulted in the second-order finding of the core variable Frame Management. The core variable is the main theoretical construct (i.e., second-order construct) that accounts for the patterns within the first-order data. The core variable is explained below.

The Core Variable: Frame Management

The following sections provide a discussion of the core variable, Frame Management. Specifically, I discuss how the core variable emerged and explain the various strategies that constitute Frame Management. I also provide an example of how each strategy was enacted by the participants. This core variable forms the foundation for the Expatriate Frame Management Theory developed from the current research project. The theory is explained in detail in the final chapter.

The Emergent Core Variable

During the open and axial coding that resulted in identification of the three domains above, several additional concepts emerged: Attitude (about living abroad), Expectations (about life abroad), and Figuring It Out. Originally, it seemed these categories fit into the Cultural Challenges Domain. However, after re-reading these passages and reflecting on the concepts, I decided that the data more accurately reflected part of a process of frame management that facilitated the acculturation of the expatriate women, instead of concepts within the Domain Cultural Challenges. At this point, I felt that I needed to review these concepts to see if I could gain a clearer understanding of the emerging idea of frame management

First, I re-examined the concept "Attitude," which was an *in vivo* code. I found that although the women talked about an attitude concerning life in The Netherlands, they were, at a theoretical level, discussing their frame about being an expatriate living in The Netherlands. For instance, Sandi noted:

> I am thoroughly enjoying the experience. Again, partly because I didn't have grandiose expectations. We came with very positive attitudes that this is just going to be an adventure and life will get mundane and routine, just like it did at home and then there will be some fun and exciting and different things.

> - Sandi, age 40, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 2 ⅓ years

Examining descriptions of these attitudes led me to realize that the participants' expectations about the country were also reflections of frames, so I re-examined the Expectations concept. I found that the participants' expectations about life abroad reflected frames they had created about their new lives prior to actually moving. Often, these expectations derived from information gathering they had done about The Netherlands and expatriation, as well as prior frames they had developed about living abroad and general cultural practices. When the women arrived in The Netherlands, they employed these frames to make sense of their surroundings and found that while some of their expectations aligned with frames employed in the Dutch society, many of the frames did not, creating a situation of *frame incongruence.*

This incongruence between the frames of the expatriate and the frames of Dutch society prompted the expatriate spouse to figure out how she needed to interact within the new environment. The "figuring it out" process involved finding out new information to help understand how certain practices (business, social, etc.) function in the new environment. I came to understand that, in effect, the women were altering and otherwise managing their frames to achieve a level of comfort or fit with other frames being enacted in the society.

From examining these three concepts more closely, an understanding emerged of how frames function within an intercultural setting to help women acculturate. Specifically, I understood that women employed their original home country frames in the host country and that often, these home country's frames did not align very well with the host country's frames. This created frame incongruence that led to frustration for the expatriate and prompted her to take some type of action to reduce the frustration. This action was to manage the frame incongruence in some way. Once this finding was clear, I went back to the transcripts to see if there was evidence of frame management at a theoretical level within the passages of each domain. There were multiple examples of ways women had managed their frames to help them

make sense of the new environment within each domain. The examples clustered together to form certain types, or strategies of frame management.

Frame Management Strategies

The variable Frame Management consists of several strategies that individuals use to manage and negotiate their frames (see Table 4.2). Depending on the situation, these strategies can be enacted in various ways (i.e., using multiple tactics). There were five frame management strategies that emerged at a second-order level from the interview data. Table 4.2 illustrates the strategies most commonly used in each domain. A description of each frame management strategy follows.

Expand. One of the most frequently used strategies involved the expatriate's expanding a current frame to include a new characteristic, often a Dutch characteristic. For example, the women all had frames about business interactions: the behaviors and communication patterns that were involved in a successful commercial transaction. However, their home country frames about business interaction often did not encompass the components necessary for successful interaction in The Netherlands. Thus, the expatriate had to expand her frame to include Dutch components of that frame. Often this was accomplished through learning new behaviors and adding those to an existing frame.

Table 4.2: Frame Management Strategies Across Domains

Frame Management	Domain	Strategies
	Acculturation Challenges	Affirm
		Expand
		Create
	Coping Strategies	Affirm
		Expand
		Create
		Deny
	Identity	Affirm
		Expand
		Create
		Deny
		Recede

Frame expansion also functioned at a more conceptual, and less behavioral, level. For example, many of the women discussed how they had grown over their stay in The Netherlands and often reported developing a broader understanding of the world around them and becoming more open-minded. This reflects an expansion of their frames, especially their identity frames.

The Expand Strategy encouraged expatriates to maintain the frames they developed in their home country while allowing them to modify these frames to align with the frames enacted in the Dutch culture.

Create. Another strategy used by the women to manage their frames was to create a new frame that previously did not exist. The creation of frames occurred most frequently when expatriate spouses confronted a Dutch behavior or cultural practice that was unfamiliar to them. The women created new frames as they determined what the situation was and how to respond within it. The Creation Strategy was also enacted within the Identity domain as a means to add an additional facet to their sense of self, where previously one may not have existed. For

example, several women who had given up their jobs to move to The Netherlands and were trying to reconcile their career identity with their current unemployment status used this strategy. The result of this strategy was a new frame such as "housewife," "volunteer," or another type of personal identity.

The Creation Strategy provided a way for the expatriate women to add frames to their existing frames and, thereby, included frames used in the Dutch society of which they were previously unaware.

Affirm. In some instances, the women chose to acknowledge a frame from their home culture and continue to enact that frame within the Dutch culture. This Affirmation Strategy allowed the women to maintain current frames and often reinforced the salience of that frame. This strategy was evident throughout the women's coping: they continually sought American friends and turned to other Americans for advice and support. The existence of a variety of American-based groups and clubs provide additional support for the notion of frame affirmation. These groups, and their facilitation of American friendships and American activities, affirmed the participants' American identity frames and allowed them to maintain this frame even though they lived in a different country.

The Affirmation Strategy encouraged the participants to maintain frames from their home culture, which probably eased some of the discomfort they experienced in the new culture, because it maintained to some degree a sense of consistency among the women.

Deny. Although the women affirmed some frames, they denied other frames. This was particularly the case with negative identity frames (e.g., "ugly American" or "rich snob"); the women denied these frames and preferred to accept and enact other frames instead.

To some extent the women denied frames of Dutch society by not participating and/or acknowledging those aspects of the society. For example, many women commented about the abrupt interaction style of the Dutch nationals. These women recognized this Dutch frame but

refused to participate in it and, in effect, denied its legitimacy; instead, they affirmed an American one.

The Deny Strategy enabled the women to ignore frames that they felt did not accurately reflect their own frames or did not want to incorporate into their frame system. They often used the strategy as a way to reflect what they saw as potentially negative frames.

Recede. As other frames became more salient to the women as they lived out their lives in The Netherlands, some frames from their host country became less salient, or receded. This was apparent most often among women who had returned to The United States, either for home leave or after several years abroad and found that they had some difficulty interacting in the American culture. Such difficulties suggest that some of the "American Frames" that the expatriates had known and enacted had receded during their expatriation. Often, after a few days in The United States, the women felt that they once again understood the culture (the American frames were again salient), but other women commented that there were still differences that existed and that they could not reconcile. In these cases, the prior frames may have become extinct. However, this seemed less of a strategy and more of a result of enacting other strategies. Moreover, an extinction "strategy" did not clearly emerge from the data.

Conclusion

The story revealed by the findings of this study portrays a variety of frames that are enacted and experienced by American women abroad. Sometimes, the frames of the expatriates align with the frames enacted in the host culture, and sometimes there are incongruencies between the frames. Extrapolating from the first-order data findings (the three domains), we can see that the women in this study employed multiple strategies to manage their frames and to deal with these incongruencies, as well as potentially increase the extent of acculturation within Dutch society. These strategies illustrate the core variable of Frame

Management that emerged at a second-order level from the data. This core variable forms the

foundation of Expatriate Frame Management Theory. This theory is the focus of the final

chapter.

Chapter Five: Theory and Implications

Expatriate Frame Management Theory

> So I would say you need to first of all not make the mistake that everything will
> be like it is in the States, because it's not. You need to be able to adapt,
> because you are going to find things that are not the way you are accustomed
> to. That doesn't mean the new way is wrong, it just means it's different and if
> you will bend a little bit, and give a little bit often times that when you make that
> change, to whatever it is that's around you, a lot of times its not a bad way, it's a
> good way and you learn from that. …I think that's the main thing, you've got to
> be flexible.

                    -Joyce, age 53, expatriate spouse in The Netherlands for 14 months

The above comment from Joyce illustrates the importance of being flexible in new

cultural settings. This chapter presents and explains Expatriate Frame Management Theory,

which emerged from the core variable, Frame Management. Expatriate Frame Management

Theory (EFMT) offers insight into the strategies expatriate women employ in attempts to be

flexible and function in their new environment, as well as describes how these acculturation

processes function to help the women reach a level of personal adaptation. In presenting and

discussing EFMT, this chapter also addresses the second guiding question of this research

project:

GQ2: What is the nature of the relationship of these frames [that is, recurring frames

within and/or across the intercultural stories by expatriate spouses] to the cultural

experiences and acculturation of the women abroad?

Overview of Expatriate Frame Management Theory

Expatriate Frame Management Theory describes the process by which expatriate

spouses negotiate their frames to make sense of their new cultural environment and reach a

level of personal adaptation that is comfortable to them (see Figure 5.1). EFMT incorporates

the concept of *Frame Incongruence*, the core variable *Frame Management*, and the relationship

of these components to *Personal Adaptation*. *Frame Incongruence* reflects the idea that there is a misalignment or mismatch among the frames being enacted by each party in a given interaction or context. *Frame Management* is the core variable addressed in the previous chapter, as well as the various strategies used to enact it. *Personal Adaptation* is the level of comfort an individual expatriate experiences within the new culture.

Figure 5.1: Model of the development of Expatriate Frame Management Theory
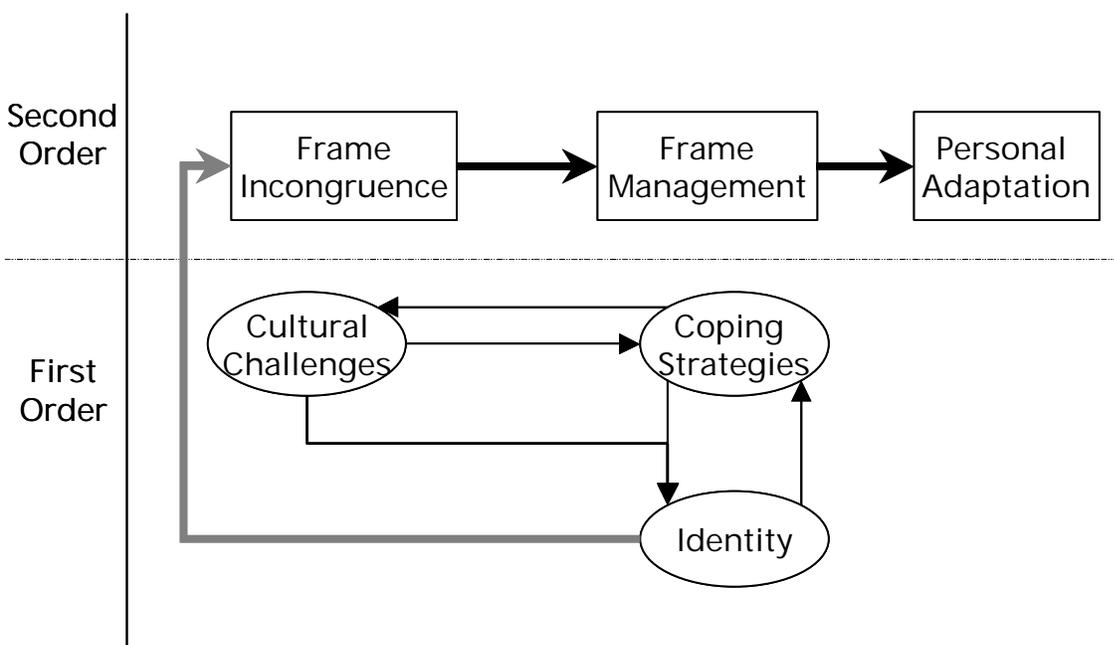
These components emerged from the first-order domains, Cultural Challenges, Coping Strategies, and Identity, reviewed in the previous chapter. These second-order components combine to suggest a process model of expatriate spouse acculturation. The theory captures the manner in which one adapts, creates, and otherwise manages frames to make sense of a given intercultural situation and thereby, increase the likelihood of an expatriate's interacting effectively in the new culture and feeling a sense of personal adaptation. I explain each of these components in more depth below.

Structure of the Model of Expatriate Frame Management. The Model in Figure 5.1 illustrates the relationship between the first-order domains and the second-order findings (i.e., theory component). The lower half reflects the findings from the first-order analysis: the three domains (represented in ovals) and their interrelationships. Consistent with Van Maanen's (1979) typology of data, the first-order results encompass the types and patterns of frames the expatriates discussed and implied within their narratives. The second-order findings are reflected in the top half in the three components (represented in rectangles) implicit in the process of Expatriate Frame Management Theory. Second-order findings, according to Van Maanen, reveal the theory a researcher uses to organize, understand, and explain first-order findings.

Notice that I have altered the formatting of the domains somewhat from their presentation in the previous chapter: instead of lying in a straight line, the Identity domain now falls underneath the Coping Strategies domain. This structural change does not represent any differences among the first-order findings. Instead, I rearranged the domains to show more clearly their relationships to the second-order findings. Frame Management emerged from both the Coping Strategies domain and the Identity domain; therefore, the Frame Management component properly subsumes the domains. Frame Incongruence emerged from the Cultural Challenges domain, hence, I placed the Cultural Challenges domain was placed underneath the Frame Incongruence component.

Encounters within the Cultural Challenges domain frequently were the trigger or spark for the experience of Frame Incongruence. The placement of the first-order domain of Cultural Challenges underneath the second-order component of Frame Incongruencies indicates this relationship. There were also several instances of individuals' experiencing Frame Incongruence in the Identity domain. However, these instances were not as consistent for Frame Incongruence as they were for Frame Management; consequently, I kept the Identity

Domain in the Frame Management section and used a shaded arrow to show the Identity domain's relationship to Frame Incongruence.

Expatriate Frame Management Process. The second-order components reflect the process experienced within Expatriate Frame Management Theory. Specifically, an expatriate will experience some type of *Frame Incongruence*, which may stem from a Cultural Challenge or an Identity domain issue. This *Frame Incongruence* can create a sense of disequilibrium, marked by uncertainty, dissonance, or frustration and create a desire within one to deal with the incongruence. One responds to the incongruence by managing frames via one of the strategies discussed in the previous chapter. If the person is effective in her frame management, she will achieve a level of personal adaptation that allows her to function within the new culture. If she chooses an ineffective strategy, she may continue to try other strategies until she alleviates the incongruence, or until she decides to live with the incongruence and not try to manage her frames, or she may decide to remove herself from the cause of the incongruencies by returning to her home culture.

I illuminate this general description below. However, before I review the specifics, I must note that it is important to understand the underlying assumptions of the model. These assumptions are a focus of the following section and are followed by explanations of the specific levels of data and components discussed above.

Assumptions

As with other theories, Frame Management Theory entails several assumptions that must be understood if one is to appreciate the value of the theoretical insight it offers:

- Every individual has a system of frames s/he uses to make sense of the world around her/him. These are "initial frames."

- Most individuals in every culture and co-culture tend to enact similar sets of frames that help them function and make sense of behavior and communication within that culture or co-culture.

- When individuals interact in a new culture (in this case, become expatriates) some of their initial frames are different (i.e., incongruent) from the frames enacted in the new culture. (For clarity, the frames enacted by nationals in the new country are referred to as "host culture frames.")

- When the differences among frames are *salient* to the expatriate spouse, she is motivated to respond to the incongruence.

The following section explains the components of Expatriate Frame Management Theory and the relationships among those components.

Components of Expatriate Frame Management Theory

The theory consists of three major constructs, *Frame Incongruence, Frame Management* and *Personal Adaptation*. These represent second-order findings culled from the domains presented in Chapter Four. A description of each component follows.

Frame incongruence. The differences among the initial frames of the expatriates and the frames employed in the host culture create *Frame Incongruence* for the expatriates. Frame incongruence can occur in any type of situation or context; the key is that the individual involved has at least one frame that is not shared by the other member(s) in that context. In the case of expatriate spouses, the incongruence most likely stems from the differences between her initial frames, which are largely a product of her home culture, and the frames employed in the host. This incongruence can be frustrating for the expatriate, as it may cause her uncertainty and dissonance, feelings that are compounded by being away from her familiar surroundings.

Frame incongruence acts as a "trigger" for frame management enactment when the incongruence is *salient* for the expatriate. As many of the examples of first-order data illustrated, salience can emerge for many reasons; however it often occurs when the expatriate encounters difficulties doing something in the host country that was relatively easy to accomplish at home (purchase groceries, interact with others, etc). In situations in which the incongruence is relevant or salient to the expatriate, she is motivated to manage her frames in some way to reduce the uneasy feelings arising from the incongruence. If the incongruence is not salient to her, or becomes less salient to her, she may choose not to manage her frames in response to the incongruence, but instead ignore the situation or avoid it altogether in the future.

Frame management. Frame management is the process of altering frames, either in such a way that the expatriate aligns her frames with other frames present in the situation, or in some other manner as a response to frame incongruence. There are five strategies expatriates can enact to manage their frames: Expansion, Creation, Affirmation, Denial, and Recession. If an individual were to use the *Expansion* strategy, she might augment a home culture frame with information to allow the frame to function in the new environment. When using the *Creation* strategy, the individual constructs a new frame when there previously was not one. The *Affirmation* strategy enables the expatriate to confirm an already existing frame and continue to enact that frame in the new environment. Implementation of the *Denial* strategy occurs when an individual refuses to accept a host country frame that is being enacted and continues to utilize the original home country frame without alteration. Finally, *Recession* is the process by which particular frames are no longer salient and may not be enacted in whole or in part.

Each of these strategies can be enacted through a variety of tactics. The choice of which strategy to use and how to enact it varies by preference of the individual, the setting or context of the incongruence, and the incongruence itself.

Personal adaptation. Adaptation is the psychological comfort the individual feels with elements in the new culture and is an outcome of frame management. "Personal Adaptation" reflects the idea that each individual has managed her frames in a way that allows her to be comfortable and feel a fit within the new cultural situation. For some individuals, achieving a level of personal adaptation may involve aligning the majority of their home frames with those of the host through various management strategies; for others, it may involve affirming some home frames and aligning others. For still others, it may entail denying many of the host culture frames and striving to affirm and enact as many of the home country frames as possible. The key, however, is that each individual determines the level of adaptation that allows her to function effectively in the new society.

Of course, not every expatriate will necessarily achieve her comfort level, or do so easily. Some enact multiple frame management strategies will be enacted over time and/or continuously to achieve comfort. Others do not fully achieve comfort and frame incongruence continues to be a part of their intercultural experience. Still others may decide that the expatriate experience and having to managing their frames is too difficult and therefore, may return early. In sum, the feeling of adaptation varies by individual, so the individual can choose if, how, and when to manage her frame incongruencies in order to achieve a feeling of comfort within the new culture

Relationships. The relationships within EFMT function such that *Frame Incongruence* leads to enacting a strategy of *Frame Management,* which leads to various types of *Personal Adaptation.* Specifically, if the frame incongruence is salient to the expatriate, she will decide to enact some type of frame management strategy to deal with the incongruence. Enacting one (or more) of the strategies enables the expatriate to make sense of the situation, which, in turn, leads her to a level of adaptation. The adaptation may be at a level that is "just enough to get by" in the culture, or it may be in closer alignment with Dutch frames, hence, provide for and a

more accurate understanding of the Dutch culture. The expatriate spouse may cycle through

this relationship several times, and, in the process, enact various strategies until she has made

sense of a particular situation. It may also be that the expatriate enacts several frame

management strategies, but all of them fail to help her make sense of the incongruence. In that

case, the expatriate may simply stop trying to manage the incongruence. When this happens,

Frame Management Theory no longer applies, and the expatriate accepts the incongruence.

This sequence, *Frame Incongruence* leads to *Frame Management,* which, in turn, leads

to various levels of *Personal Adaptation,* is the essence of Frame Management Theory.

However, as illustrated in the Model in Figure 5.1, there are other factors that contribute to an

understanding of Frame Management Theory and that provide insight into its utility in capturing

the expatriate experience of interest.

One factor is the relationship between *Cultural Challenges* and *Frame Incongruence*, as

reflected by the position of the *Cultural Challenges* domain underneath the *Frame Incongruence*

component. This position indicates that Cultural Challenges contribute to a sense of Frame

Incongruence for the expatriate spouse. This type of relationship also exists for Identity and

Frame Incongruence. For example, issues within the expatriate's identity domain may also

spark frame incongruence. It is important to realize, however, that while the identity domain

was a source of frame incongruence for some expatriates, it was predominately a location of

frame management for the expatriates (e.g., individuals discussing the growth of their identity).

For this reason, the Frame Management construct subsumes the Identity domain but also

includes an arrow to Frame Incongruence. This suggests a complex notion of identity that sees

identity as both the context for frame incongruencies and the location of frame management.

The fact that this complexity did not become apparent at the first order level may be a function

of the manner in which the participants discussed their identity: they approached identity more

holistically and, thus, were not able to (or perhaps feel a need to) make distinctions between

identity as a context for incongruence and identity as a location for frame management. However, as researchers, we are interested in further understanding the management strategies for particular aspects of identity; thus, knowing that identity has two roles at the second-order level is important in its own right and a possible stimulus for future research.

Scope Conditions

Although Expatriate Frame Management Theory may be appropriate in a variety of intercultural situations, the data source of this study limits the theory to American, female, expatriate spouse experiences. In light of this, there are several conditions necessary for the model to be appropriate for describing the expatriate experience. The first is that the individual must be an expatriate who has not moved to the new country for her own career, but for her partner's career. The second is that the individual must be female. This stipulation is necessary not only because the participants in this study were women, but also because much of the support network within the expatriate community focused on women's needs and concerns. A male expatriate spouse may have different experiences trying to traverse the expatriate support network. Third, the individual must believe that she will live in the country for several months; preferably, the stay will last at least a year with the possibility of up to a five-year stay. Research has shown that short durations of time spent in host countries (less than two months) often do not create a sense of need for acculturation. Instead, the expatriate continues to experience fascination about the country and environment without recognizing the cultural differences (Church, 1982).

Another potential scope condition created by the data source is the location of the expatriation: The Netherlands. This limits the theory to acculturation in Dutch society. Although this is a legitimate limitation, it seems likely that Expatriate Frame Management Theory would contribute to an understanding of expatriate acculturation in other cultures as well. However,

when we look at the broader body of research on acculturation, we see that there are conflicting findings about acculturation processes within different cultures. Some researchers note that cultural novelty added to the difficulties of adaptation (Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985), whereas other researchers have found that difficulties also exist in cultures that are perceived as similar (O'Grady & Lane, 1996). For example, an American woman probably would have difficulty adapting to a traditional Muslim society, as the roles and perceived value of women differ significantly for the two countries (cultural novelty). However, an American might also have difficulties adapting to the British culture because the American *expects* the cultures to be basically the same when, in fact, sharp differences exist. Further study is needed to determine the applicability of Frame Management across cultures, so at this point, limiting it to The Netherlands is reasonable, but not absolute.

The final condition is that the expatriate must have a deeply held frame set or system based on the values, attitudes, beliefs, and actions of her home culture and prior experiences. This condition should be typical of expatriates, as they have a well-developed sense of appropriate and expected values, behavior, and thoughts within their own culture and societal arenas. These deeply held frames are similar to Hofstede's (1997) "collective programming of the mind" (p. 4). This definition implies that members of one culture become socialized or "programmed" to think, believe, and value differently from members of another culture. This is not to say that the expatriate can have no other values and beliefs, except those from the home culture, but only that those must be the most salient frames. This deep structure will stem from both cultural and other socialization and expectations surrounding themselves and their roles. These frames provide the expatriate with a body of knowledge regarding how things "should be" in a given interaction.

In spite of these scope conditions, Expatriate Frame Management Theory provides a strong foundation for understanding the acculturation processes of expatriates. The theory

recognizes the dynamism inherent in confronting unfamiliar, and even unsettling, intercultural situations while providing the basis for understanding the process expatriates use to manage these feelings of uncertainty. While additional research is necessary to further explicate the details of how this theory applies generally across all home and host country frames, the current theoretical model represents an important step forward in our understanding of expatriate acculturation.

Development Areas for Expatriate Frame Management Theory

The current conceptualization of EFMT is grounded in the experiences of the expatriate spouses interviewed for this study. The theory as it stands provides insight into the experiences of these women and offers a theoretical heuristic for understanding their acculturation processes. I believe that the grounded Expatriate Frame Management Theory is a well-structured embodiment of the findings that emerged from the data. However, there may be other theoretical factors that could contribute to strengthening the theory which were not clearly present within the data. For example, the variable of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) may play a role in the choice of whether or not to enact a frame management strategy and, if so, which strategy to enact. However, this variable was not a part of the current study, so I am unable to include it in the grounded model. I am aware that with any theory, there exists the possibility of further refinement, and self-efficacy, as well as other theoretical constructs, may play an important role in the advancement of Expatriate Frame Management Theory.

An additional factor that could be further explored is the notion of frame salience. Specifically, research could focus on determining which frames are salient to which types of individuals under which circumstances. Understanding factors that make frames salient to some expatriate spouses and not to others may provide additional insight into the acculturation process.

Implications of Expatriate Frame Management Theory

The extant body of research on expatriates neglects, for the most part, the experiences of spouses while abroad. In fact, the paucity of research was one of the stimuli for the current study. The current study contributes to the existing body of expatriate research at two levels: a "front-line" understanding of daily expatriate spouse life (the first-order domains), of which little in the past has been rigorously documented, despite much speculation; and a theoretical, second-order understanding of the process of acculturation experienced by expatriate spouses. The implications of EFMT at each of these levels are described in more detail below.

First-Order Implications

The first-order findings offer a variety of insights to researchers interested in understanding the expatriate spouse experience and related interpersonal communication issues. In general, researchers and practitioners have limited knowledge about expatriate spouse experiences (Black et al., 1999). This affects the types, and possibly the appropriateness, of the research they conduct and the training programs they develop. The first-order findings from the present study provide rich information about several domains of the expatriate spouse experience. These findings could have broad implications for numerous facets of potential research, including several area of interest to interpersonal communication scholars.

Coping strategies, in particular the importance of friendship and social support, have been overlooked by many existing expatriate studies. However, in the current study social support emerged as a crucial aspect of the participants' experiences. Friendship and supportive communication have been concerns of communication scholars (Albrecht, Burleson, & Goldsmith, 1994; Cunningham & Barbee, 2000) and are areas in which this study could contribute.

Friendship, in general, played an important role in the lives of the expatriate spouses in this study. However, there are facets of expatriates' friendships that may differentiate their friendships from more typical friendship development. Compared to the typical life cycle of friendships studied within The United States (Fehr, 2000), expatriate friendships appear to develop more quickly, and often more deeply. This distinction could have implications for understanding the lifecycle of expatriate friendships and provide an interesting setting for examining the development of intimacy in these friendships.

Another area of the social support domain that is relevant for future research involves participants predominately befriending other Americans. In addition to reaffirming expatriates' American identity, the tendency of expatriates to make friends with other Americans may also reflect concepts in Uncertainty Reduction Theory (Berger & Calabrese, 1975) and social validation motives in theories of social comparison (Festinger, 1954; Wills, 1981). By seeking out other Americans in similar situations, the participants attempted to deal with the Dutch culture by learning which strategies worked and which did not work for women like themselves in similar situations. This enabled them to reduce some of their own uncertainty about the new culture without having to interact with members of the new culture.

In addition to reducing uncertainty, such women may also be making social comparisons: when one's confidence is shaken, as it often is when interacting in a new culture, individuals turn to others to compare themselves against (Adelman, 1988). Several women commented on the importance of having close friends in similar situations to give them a sense of "not being alone in this situation." Consistent with Adelman's views, for some expatriates, feedback from others about how to interact in the new culture may help remove some of the negative self-doubt surrounding their own interactions in the Dutch culture. The need for social validation and for social support may be the impetus for making friends with others in the same situations.

Several women noted that when they first arrived, they made friends with women with whom they probably would not be friends with in The United States. This may have happened so as to satisfy their needs for social support and validation, which are more urgent upon arrival. However, once their immediate needs for social validation and support were satisfied (e.g., time in-country allowed the women to learn about the culture and customs and thereby further reduce their uncertainty), the women often tried to make friends with women they truly wanted as friends. This reduction in need for information could also reduce pressure to compare oneself to others for positive or negative gain as one feels more confident in her/his own abilities, and, hence, has less need for "any" friend and becomes more concerned with developing more emotional relationships.

Finally, expatriates spouses appear to suffer from the sheer impossibility of engaging in lasting friendships. The need for the women to establish a social support network and develop skills to cope with that network's short lifespan seem to be essential characteristics of managing the expatriate lifestyle. The impact of the condensed friendships on the women's ability to maintain friendships, especially when they return to The United States, is also a potentially interesting area of study.

In addition to these issues of social support and friendship, the first-order results also contribute to our understanding of identity, especially in how identity is enacted throughout the expatriate's life. The majority of the participants experienced some type of identity tensions, often involving their American identities and the host culture identity. Other women experienced tensions in their personal identity. These tensions would be interesting to examine from a dialectical perspective (Baxter, 1988) to understand the pull created from each and how the tensions are communicated and managed.

Identity tensions also seemed to exist within the expatriates' professional identity, specifically in respect to pursuing her career and career development. In line with recent

research on dual career couples (Harvey, 1996, 1997), this study supports the findings that young professional women suffer most from expatriation; that is those expatriate spouses who gave up careers in America to join their spouses in The Netherlands had the most difficulty dealing with shifts in their career-related identities. This highlights one of the most serious problems with respect to expatriates, the decreasing willingness of young women to join their spouses on an expatriate assignment, and indicates that organizations may need to anticipate this difficulty because younger women do not wish to place themselves in "early professional retirement."

These are the several of the key implications from the first-order findings. Pursuing these implications could contribute to a deepened understanding of several theoretical constructs in interpersonal and intercultural settings - in particular, of uncertainty reduction, friendships, and coping. Research in these areas could benefit from the intercultural aspect of support network and friendship formation, as well as provide information about friendship development and maintenance in compressed timeframes.

Second-Order Implications

Frame Management Theory, which surfaced as a second-order finding from this study, contributes to the understanding of the acculturation process in expatriate research. Much of prior research on expatriate acculturation focused on the acculturation of the expatriate employees (with a few studies considering spouses) and the application of prior models of acculturation to the expatriate experience. The current study, however, breaks away from these tendencies and produced results that offer an improved understanding of acculturation based on the experiences of expatriate spouses and led to an emergent theory of acculturation.

The bulk of expatriate research concerns the experiences of the expatriate employee, and provides limited insight into the experiences of the expatriate spouse, despite the fact that

the spouses are often blamed for the failures of expatriate employees. Focusing on the spouses, as in this study, can illuminate some of the difficulties they face, as evidenced through salient frame incongruencies. Realizing that spouses experience many frame incongruencies, often on a more frequent basis than employees, reveals a need for them to have a system that allows them to respond to those incongruencies in a variety of ways. The explication of frame management strategies makes a significant contribution to understanding how spouses can deal with interaction in the culture and how they can reach a level of personal comfort. This type of information is not available in extant literature.

Expatriate research frequently applies prior models of acculturation to the expatriate experience. Although these applications may be helpful to some degree in understanding expatriation, they also can be limiting. The current study eschewed this application in the interest of developing a theory of acculturation specific to expatriate spouses and grounded in their experiences. Instead of force-fitting prior models to expatriate acculturation experiences, this study developed a theory that emerged directly from expatriate experiences. The result was a theory of acculturation that is more dynamic than prior theories, because it allows for multiple strategies of acculturation that fit each individual's needs. Further, these strategies can vary according to the exigencies of the situation and the individual. Further, instead of prescribing a level of acculturation that is appropriate for expatriates to be successful (i.e., the "mastery" stage of previous models), it offers the individuals the choice of personal adaptation to individual levels of comfort.

An additional contribution this theory offers is the notion of a personal level of adaptation, and the idea that this personal level is sufficient if it is acceptable to the expatriate woman and allows her to function in a way seems deems effective within the new culture. Often, expatriate research prescribes that expatriates work towards cultural "mastery," or a similar "final stage" of acculturation. The current project revealed that this was unnecessary for

many of the women; indeed, many of the women had lived for some time, comfortably, in The Netherlands without becoming "full" (or even close to "full") members of the Dutch society. Instead, they were able to function within an expatriate (i.e., American-based) network that permitted them to maintain many of the aspects of their home culture and interact with the Dutch on an as-needed basis.

It may be particularly helpful for an expatriate to strive for a comfort level during her expatriation instead of striving for a "mastery" level; it may be that achieving comfort is more feasible for her and may, therefore, be less likely to induce stress within the woman if she does not understand everything going on around her. The establishment of personal levels of adaptation could be a fruitful area of future study and practice.

Finally, in addition to the development of an acculturation theory that is grounded in the experiences of the expatriate spouses, the theory also contributes to and is bolstered by one of the key acculturation theories in communication, Gudykunst's (1995; Gudykunst & Nishida, 2001) Anxiety/Uncertainty Management (AUM) Theory. AUM focuses on the reduction of uncertainty and anxiety strangers in new cultural environments experience to create a sense of fit within the environment. The parallel can be drawn between the feelings of uncertainty and the concept of frame misalignment; uncertainty may arise as a result of a mismatch of frames. Further, the strategies of frame management often involve steps one takes to reduce the uncertainty by aligning the frames more closely with those of the host nationals. It seems that there could be significant development for both Expatriate Frame Management Theory and AUM Theory if further research was conducted examining both of the theories in parallel within the expatriate context.

Conclusion

Given the paucity of research on the expatriate spouse and a past focus on cultural mastery, the current study affords us the opportunity to understand the expatriate experience in a different light. The first- and second- order findings presented here demonstrate that the spouses of expatriates face their own challenges and have their own strategies for managing those challenges in attempting to acculturate to a new culture. By applying the insight gained from this emergent Frame Management Theory, it is possible for future research and training programs to further advance our understanding of expatriate acculturation and help those individuals and families asked to move to another country for work purposes find their own personal comfort levels.

Future Research

The findings of this study open several avenues for future research. The first-order domains present numerous areas for future studies, particularly for researchers interested in interpersonal and family studies. Many of the categories within these domains highlight the importance of key interpersonal issues, such as the development of social support networks, that invite further investigation. For example, researchers could examine the similarities and differences among friendship development and maintenance in an expatriate setting versus a typical friendship cycle in The United States; the compressed nature of the expatriate friendships could add considerably to current understandings of friendship.

Identity in intercultural settings also provides a rich area for future research. A closer examination of identity tensions experienced by expatriates during their expatriation could provide insight into how our identities develop and change, the influences that prompt these changes, and cross-cultural differences in identity formation and change. Within the broad category of identity, career-related identities and the challenges arising for younger women who

give up their careers to move abroad should be of interest to many of the work-family scholars, as well as to those interested in career identity in general.

Numerous research projects could also arise directly from Frame Management Theory. First, the theory could be further developed through examination of other types of expatriates (e.g., from other cultures; male spouses; employees) to determine what other domains, types of incongruencies and strategies exist. This information would bolster the theory and provide an understanding of acculturation across expatriates. Additionally, attempts could be made to apply the theory beyond expatriate experiences in The Netherlands. For example, researchers could examine the experiences of expatriates in other European countries, or in Asian countries to determine if the frame management strategies are consistent across cultures.

Limitations

As true in any research project, this study had several limitations. The nature of the qualitative data collection and analysis limits the application of Frame Management Theory to the experiences of American women in The Netherlands. The theory may not necessarily generalize to other groups of expatriates in other countries, such as Dutch women in The United States of America. However, focusing on a particular group in a particular country afforded us the opportunity to gain valuable insight into the use of framing during the expatriate experience. Other studies could apply Frame Management Theory to expatriate experiences of other groups in other countries to advance our understanding of this experience further and to modify the theory accordingly. For instance, future studies could incorporate the experiences of male spouses in order to provide a more multi-faceted understanding of the expatriate phenomenon.

The use of a network, or snowball sampling method may have introduced some bias into the types of women interviewed, for example, interviewing friends within a particular social group. However, multiple resources were used to locate initial participants from a variety of

sources ranging from e-mails to American clubs, to flyers in English language bookstores and International Schools, as well as personal contacts. These multiple initial sources, coupled with the wide variety of towns and villages the women lived in, reduced bias to some extent. However, subsequent studies could expand the participant pool and even strive to reach a broader population though the use of quantitative and/or qualitative surveys.

As with any qualitative research project, there were several respects in which a researcher could be misled by both the data and procedures (Van Maanen, 1979). For example, during interviews, the participants may have chosen not to reveal topics of a sensitive nature, such as personal secrets. This would influence the type of information they did choose to share with me. Or, conversely, participants may have misinterpreted questions or mis-remembered interactions. This would also inadvertently influence the results. Finally, the process of self-reflection required by interview participants can be psychologically demanding, which may have limited the participants' willingness to explore their experiences. Obviously, there was no foolproof way to determine a participant's truthfulness, intentionality or levels of self-reflection, but all recommended guidelines were followed in this study to ensure the most accurate and trustworthy data possible.

In any naturalistic research it is possible that the researcher may not push the analysis past the descriptive codes, which can limit the theoretical advancement of the phenomena under study. However, every effort was made to move beyond mere description and draw out relationships among the domains and then move to a higher-level analysis to build a well-thought out and substantiated emergent theory.

There are multiple interpretations of any phenomenon, and this study offers one second-order interpretation of a sample of Americans' interpretation of their experiences. Thus, the results of this study add to our understanding of American expatriate spouses experience in The

Netherlands, yet should be cautiously applied to other settings. Finally, the results can provide important insight and an informative framework for future research.

Conclusion

This research project emphasizes the potential areas of weakness of prior acculturation research while offering a different, more dynamic model of acculturation. This work has the potential to influence theoretical and practical research conducted in the area of acculturation significantly. Frame Management Theory suggests an important relationships among individuals, their experiences, and how they manage their frames continually to adapt to the culture around them.   Understanding FMT and its enactment by expatriate women help us determine methods ways to improve their time abroad, potentially improving the experiences of their spouses and families alike.

References

Adelman, M. B. (1988). Cross-cultural adjustment: A theoretical perspective on social support. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 12*, 183-204.

Adler, N. J. (1997). *International dimensions of organizational behavior* (3rd ed.). Boston: MA: PWS-KENT.

Agar, M. (1994). *Language shock: Understanding the culture of conversation*. New York: Quill/William Morrow.

Albrecht, T. L., Burleson, B. R., & Goldsmith, D. (1994). Supportive communication. In M. L. Knapp & G. R. Miller (Eds.), *Handbook of interpersonal communication* (2nd ed., pp. 419-449). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Anderson, L. E. (1994). A new look at an old construct: Cross-cultural adaptation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 18*, 293-328.

Aycan, Z., & Kanungo, R., N. (1997). Current issues and future challenges in expatriation research. In Z. Aycan (Ed.), *New approaches to employee management* (Vol. 4, pp. 245-260). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Bartlett, F. C. (1932). *Remembering: A study in experimental and social psychology*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.

Bartunek, J. M. (1988). The dynamics of personal and organizational reframing. In R. E. Quinn & K. S. Cameron (Eds.), *Paradox and transformation: Toward a theory of change in organization and management* (pp. 137-162). Cambridge, MA: Ballinger.

Bateson, G. (1972). *Steps to an ecology of mind*. New York: Ballantine.

Baxter, L. A. (1988). A dialectical perspective on communication strategies in relationship development. In S. W. Duck (Ed.), *A handbook of personal relationships* (pp. 257-273). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Berger, C. R., & Calabrese, R.J. (1975). Some explorations in initial interactions and beyond: Toward a developmental theory of interpersonal communication. *Human Communication Research, 1*, 99-112.

Berry, J. W. (1997). Immigration, acculturation, and adaptation. *Applied Psychology: An International Review, 46*, 5-68.

Berry, J. W., Kim, U., & Boski, P. (1987). Psychological acculturation of immigrants. In Y. Y. Kim & W. B. Gudykunst (Eds.), *Cross-cultural adaptation* (pp. 62-89). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Birdseye, M. G., & Hill, J. S. (1995). Individual, organizational/work and environmental influences on expatriate turnover tendencies: An empirical study. *Journal of International Business Studies, 26*, 787-814.

Black, J. S., & Gregersen, H. B. (1991a). Antecedents to cross-cultural adjustment for expatriates in Pacific Rim assignments. *Human Relations, 44*, 497-515.

Black, J. S., & Gregersen, H. B. (1991b). The other half of the picture: Antecedents of spouse cross-cultural adjustment. *Journal of International Business Studies, 22*, 461-477.

Black, J. S., & Stephens, G. K. (1989). The influence of the spouse on American expatriate adjustment and intent to stay in Pacific Rim overseas assignments. *Journal of Management, 15*, 529-544.

Black, J. S., Gregersen, H. B., Mendenhall, M. E., & Stroh, L. K. (1999). *Globalizing people through international assignments.* New York: Addison-Wesley.

Black, J. S., Mendenhall, M., & Oddou, G. (1991). Toward a comprehensive model of international adjustment: An integration of multiple theoretical perspectives. *Academy of Management Review, 16*, 291-317.

Black, S. J., & Mendenhall, M. (1991). The u-curve adjustment hypothesis revisited: A review of a theoretical framework. *Journal of International Business Studies, 22,* 225-248.

Caligiuri, P. M., Hyland, M. M., Joshi, A., & Bross, A. S. (1998). Testing a theoretical model for examining the relationship between family adjustment and expatriates' work adjustment. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 83*, 598-614.

Chafe, W. L. (1977a). Creativity in verbalization and its implications for the nature of stored knowledge. In R. O. Freedle (Ed.), *Discourse production and comprehension* (pp. 41-55). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Chafe, W. L. (1977b). The recall and verbalization of past experience. In R. W. Cole (Ed.), *Current issues in linguistic theory* (pp. 215-246). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Church, A. T. (1982). Sojourner adjustment. *Psychological Bulletin, 91*, 540-571.

Clair, R. P. (1993). The use of framing devices to sequester organizational narratives: Hegemony and harassment. *Communication Monographs, 60*, 113-136.

Cox, T. J. (1993). *Cultural diversity in organizations.* San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Crevier, D. (1993). *AI: The tumultuous history of the search for artificial intelligence.* New York: Basic Books.

Cunningham, M. R., & Barbee, A. P. (2000). Social support. In C. Hendrick & S. S. Hendrick (Eds.), *Close relationships: A sourcebook* (pp. 273-285). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

De Cieri, H., Dowling, P., J., & Taylor, K., F. (1991). The psychological impact of expatriate relocation of partners. *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 2*, 357-394.

Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication, 43(4)*, 51-58.

Fehr, B. (2000). The life cycle of friendship. In C. Hendrick & S. S. Hendrick (Eds.), *Close relationships: A sourcebook* (pp. 71-82). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Festinger, L. (1954). A theory of social comparison processes. *Human Relations, 7*, 111-140.

Fillmore, C. J. (1975). *An alternative to checklist theories of meaning.* Proceedings of the First Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society, Berkeley, CA.

Fillmore, C. J. (1976). The need for a frame semantics within linguistics. *Statistical methods in linguistics*, 5-29.

Frake, C. O. (1977). Plying frames can be dangerous: Some reflections on methodology in cognitive anthropology. *The Quarterly Newsletter of the Institute for Comparative Human Development, 1*(3), 1-7.

Gale, J., Chenail, R. J., Watson, W. L., Wright, L. M., & Bell, J. M. (1996). Research and practice: A reflexive and recursive relationship--three narratives, five voices. *Marriage & Family Review, 24*, 275-295.

Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967). *Discovering grounded theory*. Chicago: Aldine Press.

GMAC GRS/Windham International, N., SHRM Global. (2000). *Global relocation trends 2000 survey report*. New York: GMAC GRS/Windham International.

Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Goffman, E. (1981). *Forms of talk*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Goffman, E. (1997). Frame analysis. In C. Lemert & A. Branaman (Eds.), *The Goffman Reader* (pp. 149-166). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Gray, B. (in press). Chapter 2: Framing of environmental disputes. In R. Lewicki & B. Gray & M. Elliot (Eds.), *Making sense of intractable environmental conflict*. Washington, DC: Island Press.

Gray, B., & Donnellon, A. (1989). *An interactive theory of reframing in negotiation*. Unpublished manuscript, Center for Research on Conflict and Negotiation, Pennsylvania State University, University Park.
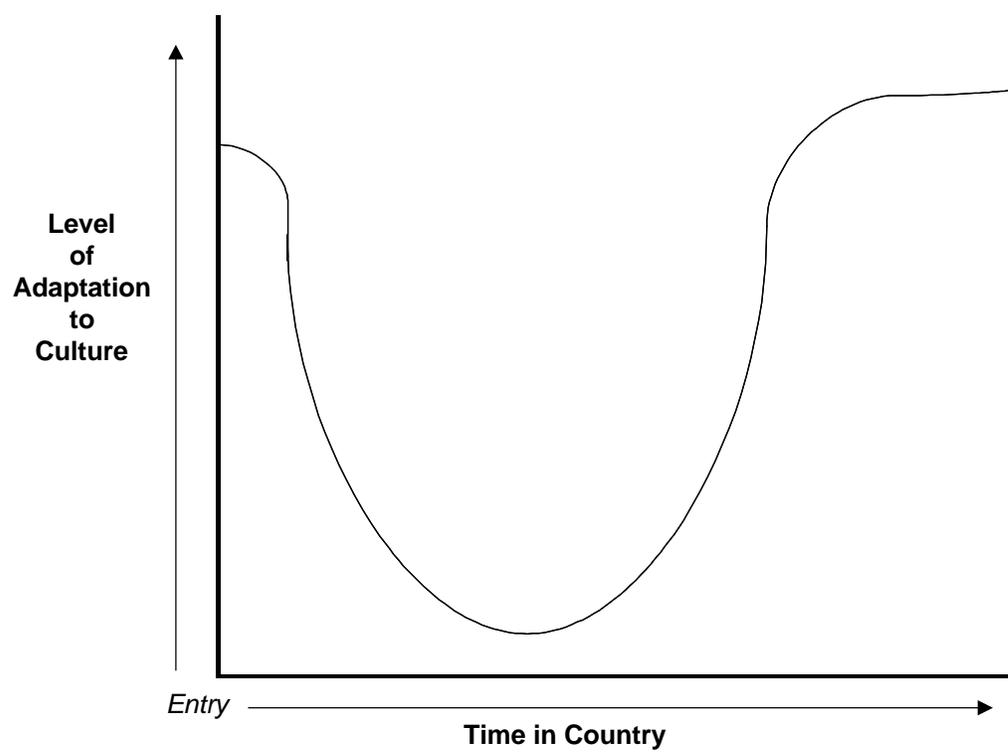
Gregersen, H. B., & Stroh, L., K. (1997). Coming home to the Arctic cold: Antecedents to Finnish expatriate and spouse repatriation adjustment. *Personnel Psychology, 50*, 635-654.

Gudykunst, W. B. (1995). Anxiety/uncertainty management (AUM) theory: Current status. In R. L. Wiseman (Ed.), *Intercultural communication theory* (pp. 8-58). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Gudykunst, W. B., & Nishida, T. (2001). Anxiety, uncertainty, and perceived effectiveness of communication across relationships and cultures. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 25*, 55-71.

Gumperz, J. J. (1982). *Discourse strategies.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Gumperz, J. J., & Cook-Gumperz, J. (1982). Introduction: Language and the communication of social identity. In J. Gumperz, J. (Ed.), *Language and social identity* (pp. 1-21). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Gumperz, J., J. (Ed.). (1982). *Language and social identity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Harvey, M. (1995). The executive family: An overlooked variable in international assignments. *Columbia Journal of World Business, 19*, 84-93.

Harvey, M. (1996). Addressing the dual-career expatriation dilemma. *Human Resources Planning, 19*(4), 18-39.

Harvey, M. (1997). Dual-career expatriates: Expectations, adjustment and satisfaction with international relocation. *Journal of International Business Studies, 28*, 627-658.

Hecht, M. L. (1993). 2002-A research odyssey: Toward the development of a communication theory of identity. *Communication Monographs, 60*, 76-82.

Hofstede, G. (1997). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind.* New York: McGraw Hill.

Hogg, M. A., Terry, D. J., & White, K. M. (1995). A tale of two theories: A critical comparison of identity theory with social identity theory. *Social Psychology Quarterly, 58*, 255-269.

Huberman, M. A., & Miles, M. B. (1994). Data management and analysis methods. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 428-444). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Janssens, M. (1995). Intercultural interaction: A burden on international managers? *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 16*, 155-167.

Kim, Y. Y. (1988). *Communication and cross-cultural adaptation*. Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters.

Koretz, G. (1999, September 13). A woman's place is…Men frown on female execs abroad. *Business Week,* p. 28.

Lewicki, R., Gray, B., & Elliot, M. (Eds.). (in press). *Making sense of intractable environmental conflict.* Washington, DC: Island Press.

Lincoln, Y., & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Locke, K. (1996). Rewriting *The discovery of grounded theory* after 25 years? *Journal of Management Inquiry, 5,* 239-245.

Lord, R. G., & Foti, R. J. (1986). Schema theories, information processing and organizational behavior. In H. P. Sims & D. A. Gioia (Eds.), *The thinking organization* (pp. 20-48). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

MacLachlan, G., & Reid, I. (1994). *Framing and interpretation.* Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press.

Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. (1989). *Designing qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Newbury Park: Sage.

May, K. A. (1990). Interview techniques in qualitative research: Concerns and challenges. In J. M. Morse (Ed.), *Qualitative nursing research: A contemporary dialogue (pp. 188-201).* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Mendenhall, M., & Oddou, G. (1985). The dimensions of expatriate acculturation: A review. *Academy of Management Review,* 10**,** 39-47.

Miles, M., & Huberman, M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Minsky, M. (1979). A framework for representing knowledge. In D. Metzing (Ed.), *Frame conceptions and text understanding* (pp. 1-25). New York: Walter de Gruyter.

O'Grady, S., & Lane, H. (1996). The psychic distance paradox. *Journal of International Business Studies, 27,* 309-333.

Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Pellico, M. T., & Stroh, L. K. (1997). Spousal assistance programs: An integral component of the international assignment. In Z. Aycan (Ed.), *New approaches to employee management* (Vol. 4, pp. 227-243). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Putnam, L. L., & Holmer, M. (1992). Framing, reframing and issue development. In L. L. Putnam & M. E. Roloff (Eds.), *Communication perspectives on negotiation* (pp. 128-155). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Reding, S., M. (1999, November). *Written out of her own story: The current literature on expatriate spouses.* Paper presented at the annual convention of the National Communication Association, Chicago, IL.

Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (1995). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Schank, R. C., & Abelson, R. P. (1977). *Scripts, plans, goals and understanding: An inquiry into human knowledge structures.* Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Earlbaum.

Schatzman, L., & Strauss, A. L. (1973). *Field research: Strategies for a natural sociology.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Schneider, S. C., & Asakawa, K. (1995). American and Japanese expatriate adjustment : A psychoanalytic perspective. *Human Relations, 48*, 1109-1127.

Shaffer, M. A., & Harrison, D. A. (1998). Expatriates' psychological withdrawal from international assignments: Work, nonwork and family influences. *Personnel Psychology, 51*, 87-117.

Shaffer, M. A., & Harrison, D. A. (2001). Forgotten partners of international assignments: Development and test of a model of spouse adjustment. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 86*, 238-254.

Shaffer, M. A., Harrison, D. A., Gilley, K. M., & Lik, D. M. (2001). Struggling for balance amid turbulence on international assignments: work-family conflict, support, and commitment. *Journal of Management, 27*, 99-121.

Shapiro, S. C. (1987). *Encyclopedia of artificial intelligence* (Vol. 1). New York: Wiley-Interscience.

Solomon, C. M. (1996). CEO mom: The tie that binds a global family. *Personnel Journal, 75*(3), 80-93.

Spradley, J. (1979). *The ethnographic interview.* New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Stephens, G., & Black, J. S. (1991). The impact of the spouse's career orientation on managers during international transfers. *Journal of Management Studies, 28*, 417-428.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1994). Grounded theory methodology: An overview. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 273-285). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Tannen, D. (1979). What's in a frame? Surface evidence for underlying expectation. In R. Freedle (Ed.), *New dimensions in discourse* (pp. 137-181). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Tannen, D. (1984). *Conversational style: Analyzing talk among friends.* Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Tannen, D., & Wallat, C. (1993). Interactive frames and knowledge schemas in interaction: Examples from a medical examination/interview. In D. Tannen (Ed.), *Framing discourse* (pp. 57-76). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Taylor, S., & Bogadan, R. (1984). *Introduction to qualitative research methods*. New York: John Wiley.

Torbiörn, I. (1982). *Living abroad: Personal adjustment and personnel policy in the overseas setting*. New York: John Wiley.

Tung, R. L. (1987). Expatriate assignments: Enhancing success and minimizing failure. *Academy of Management Executive, 1*, 118-125.

Tung, R., L. (1988). *The new expatriates: Managing human resources abroad*. Cambridge, MA: Ballinger.

United States of America Embassy, The Hague. (1999). U.S. -Netherlands Investment Relations. Retrieved May 8, 1999 from http://www.usemb.nl/usduinvr.htm.

Van Dijk, T. A. (1980). *Macrostructures: An interdisciplinary study of global structures in discourse, interaction, and cognition*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Van Maanen, J. (1979). The fact of fiction in organizational ethnography. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 24*, 539-550.

van Oudenhoven, J. P., Askevis-Leherpeux, F., Hannover, B., Jaarsma, R., & Dardenne, B. (2001). Asymmetrical international attitudes. *submitted for publication*.

Westwood, R. I., & Leung, S. M. (1994). The female expatriate manager experience: Coping with gender and culture. *International Studies of Management & Organization, 24*(3), 64-85.

Wills, T. A. (1981). Downward comparison principles in social psychology. *Psychology Bulletin, 90*, 245-271.

Witmer, D. F. (1997). Communication and recovery: Structuration as an ontological approach to organizational culture. *Communication Monographs, 64*, 324-349.

Appendix A: Acculturation Models

Stages Model

```
┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────────┐
│  Honeymoon   │ ───> │   Culture    │ ───> │  Adjustment  │ ───> │   Mastery    │
│              │      │    Shock     │      │              │      │              │
└──────────────┘      └──────────────┘      └──────────────┘      └──────────────┘
```

Curve of Adjustment Model

**Level
of
Adaptation
to
Culture**

Entry

Time in Country

Appendix B: Participant Recruitment Letter

Dear [Name]:

My name is Jennifer Jones-Corley and I'm a graduate student at Penn State University, working on my dissertation. I'm interested in learning about the experiences of American expatriates who live overseas because of their spouses' job. I'm contacting you because you may be able to help me get in touch with these American accompanying spouses in The Netherlands. I strongly believe that the stories and experiences of the accompanying spouses are important, but unfortunately, they are not well known outside of the expatriate community. I'm particularly interested in finding out about expatriate spouses' expectations about their overseas move, how they adapted to the culture, and how the whole experience affected their relationships (if it all). I'm hoping you can help me get in touch with some of these expatriate spouses, or give me some ideas about how to go about contacting expatriate spouses.

I will be moving to Groningen, The Netherlands this fall to talk with expatriate spouses and learn more about their experiences. Before I leave the states I'd like to get in touch with as many expatriate spouses as possible, both to learn more about their experiences and to see if they would be interested in talking with me once I arrive in The Netherlands.

I am sure you are busy but I would really appreciate contact information or suggestions you have—however brief or detailed! I think it's really important that people know about the experiences of spouses overseas. I want to make sure that I accurately reflect these experiences so any help you can give me would be great! If you have any questions about the study (or me) please feel free to e-mail me at jaj14@psu.edu or call at (814) 867-7840. Thank you so much for your help-

Jennifer Jones-Corley
Department of Speech Communication
Penn State University

Appendix C: Example Advertisements and Flyers

Are you an

American Expatirate?

I'd like to talk with you!

I am a graduate student from Penn State University. I'm writing my dissertation about American Expatriate Spouses. If you're the spouse of an American Expatriate Employee I'd love to talk with you and learn about your experiences (and I know you've had all kinds!).

 Please call or e-mail me to learn more about my study and find out if you're interested in participating.

Contact information will be listed here

Note:The same wording will be used on flyers and in advertisements

Appendix D: Informed Consent Statement

Title of project: Toward a Framing Theory of Intercultural Adaptation

Researcher: Jennifer Jones-Corley
                234 Sparks, Penn State, University Park, PA, USA
                e-mail: jaj14@psu.edu; (814) 865-3461
        You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to better understand individuals' experiences when they move to a foreign country and live their daily lives in the new country.

Information
        If you agree to participate in this study you will be scheduled for an interview with the researcher. During the interview you will be asked to respond to several questions regarding your experiences living in a foreign country. The interview should take 1 to 1 ½ hours and will be audio-taped by the interviewer. After completion of the interview, the audio-tape will be transcribed verbatim. Upon completion of the study the audio-tape will be destroyed.
Participation
        Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may decline to participate at any time. Responding to all of the questions in the interview is important, but you may decline to respond to any specific question without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study without penalty. If you withdraw prior to completion of the study, your information will be returned to you or destroyed. There are no foreseeable risks to you during the course of this study beyond those normally encountered in the pursuit of daily life. By participating in this study you will be helping to add to the body of knowledge available regarding intercultural experiences.
Confidentiality
        The information collected in this study will be kept confidential. Data will be secured and made available only to the persons conducting the research and to independent typists for transcription unless you specifically give written permission to do otherwise. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study.
Contact
        If you have any questions, at any time, about the study or the procedures, you may contact the researcher listed at the top of this page. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, contact the Office of Regulatory Compliance, 212 Kern Building, Penn State, University Park, USA, 814-865-1775.

Consent
I have read and understand the above information and have received a copy of this form. I understand and agree to the conditions of this study as described and agree to participate in this study.

Participant's signature_____Date_____
Investigator's signature_____Date_____

Appendix E: Interview Guide

*Revisions from the prior expatriates who reviewed the guide are indicated in **bold**.*

1. Please tell me a little bit about yourself, where you're from, how long you've lived abroad and what brought you here.
a.   Are you here because of your spouse's job? Who does s/he work for?
b.   How long have you been married?
c.   Do you have any children?
d.   Did you work at home? What type of work did you do? Are you working now?

2. Have you had any other experiences living abroad?
a.   When, where, for how long, **(and why)**?

3. How did you decide to move to this country?
a.   Where you able to visit the country before you moved here?

4. What were your thoughts once you found out/decided you'd be moving here?
a.   Were you in favor of moving to this country?
b.   **If not, why?**

5. What, if anything, did you do to prepare for the move?
a.   Did you receive any help from your spouse's company in moving and settling in?
b.   Did you go to any classes or read any books to help you prepare?
c. **Did you talk to others who lived there or anywhere abroad before?**

6. Think back to before you arrived here. What expectations did you have about the country and what life would be like?
a.   Why do you think you had these expectations?
b.   When you arrived here, were your expectations met?
c. **Could you give me a specific example of a something that met your expectations? Did not meet your expectations?**

7. Sometimes our expectations are also concerns. Could you describe your greatest concern, if any, when you left home for this country?
a.   Why do you think you had this concern?
b.   Did this concern happen when you arrived in the country?
c.   What happened? How did you handle it?

8. Now, think about the time you've spent in this country. Tell me about the easiest thing for you to get use to overseas.
a.   What happened? Who was involved?
b.   What made this situation so easy?

9. Now, think about the time you've spent in this country. Tell me about the most difficult thing for you to get use to overseas.
a.   What happened? Who was involved?
b.   What made this situation so difficult?

10. Now, think about the time you've spent in this country. Could you describe a specific time when something you expected to happen, maybe in a conversation or other interaction, happened differently?
a.   What happened? Who was involved?
b.   What did you do in this situation?
c.   If you were faced with this situation again, how would you handle it?

11. Do you feel like you understand how things "work" here? For example, things like how to get health care, or social interactions, even something like going to the grocery?
a.   Could you tell me a story about a time when you knew you had interacted in a way that was appropriate for that situation?
b.   How did you know, or learn what was "appropriate" in these situations?
c.   Could you give tell me a story about a time when you knew you had interacted in a way that was not appropriate for that situation?
d.   How did you know, or learn what was not appropriate in these situations?

12. Could you tell me a story about a time when you had a problem interacting with a host national?
a.   Who was involved? What happened?
b.   If you were faced with this situation again, how would you handle it?
c.   Have you done anything to resolve that problem?

13.   Are there any host nationals that you communicate with regularly?
a.   What type of relationship do you have with them?
b.   How frequently do you talk with them?
c.   What types of things do you talk about?

14. I'd like to shift gears a little and talk about who you talk to about your experiences. Do you talk with your spouse about your posting here and your experiences?
a.   Describe the types of things do you usually talk about? Do you feel like your spouse can relate to your experiences?

b.   Are these the same types of things you'd talk about at home? How are they the same/different?

c.   Do you feel like this experience has changed your relationship at all? How so?

15.   Are there any expatriates here from your home country that you communicate with?

a.   What type of relationship do you have with them?

b.   How frequently do you talk with them?

c.   What types of things do you talk about? Do you feel like this person **/these people** can relate to your experiences?

16.   How often do you communicate with people living in your home country?

a.   How do you communicate with them (letter, phone, e-mail)

b.   Who do you communicate with most frequently (family, friend, etc.)

c.   What types of things do you talk about? Do you feel like this person can relate to your experiences?

17.   **What advice would you give to other women who are thinking about moving abroad**?

Are there any other questions that you were expecting me to ask that I didn't, or other information that you'd like to share with me about your experiences here?

Appendix F: Example Self-reflexive Journal Entry

Ik sprek een betcha Nederlands (I speak a little Dutch)

Even though my Dutch is getting worse the longer I stay here, I think the fact that I bothered to learn it at all is helpful in several ways:

1) Personally it gives me confidence and makes my day-to-day living easier. I can read signs and go to the grocery store and know, for the most part, what I'm buying. I can exchange simple niceties with shopkeepers and not feel like a complete moron. I can buy train tickets from the people at the window and from the little yellow machines—and I can understand (now) which cars are going to separate and go in a different direction— so I can make sure I'm actually headed to Groningen and not someplace else. (I remember the first time I actually realized that the conductor was saying "this train splits, car numbers 4321-4323 go to Groningen and car numbers 4318-4320 go to wherever— quite an empowering realization). I can do simple bank transactions and read all the stuff on the ATM's. (The long letters in Dutch-bank-legalese are still problematic). And, I can read menu's in Dutch. JP is impressed by this—he commented that it shows him how much I actually know, and he often forgets that I do understand a lot of the Dutch that is spoken.

2) I think my ability to speak even rudimentary Dutch (a step above the "me Tarzan, you Jane" level) helps to build my credibility with long term expats and women with Dutch partners. I think it shows to them that I am serious about my work and I've made an effort to learn about the Dutch culture. Most of the women are surprised that I speak any Dutch, and I think, are impressed that I learned it knowing I'd be over here for such a short time.

3) Finally, I think it gives me some credibility with my peers in Holland at the university. There are other non-Dutch in the program and they can't speak one word of Dutch (and he's been there for 2 years) and I'm only here for 5 months and I learned a bit of it.

Appendix G: Example Data Analysis and Methodology Memos

Methodological Note: Journals   9.18.00

I've decided to not ask participants to keep journals. I have though about it from several angles, but I still think that not having them do journals is ok. The main reasons I've decided not to ask for journals:

1) Many women I interview have already been in Holland for at least a year, so 1 month of journaling may not add much info. I know it may be interesting (theoretically and experientially) to see what some of the newer expats think, but that leads to the next point…

2) *I feel like asking the women to journal would be <u>really</u> prying into their lives. The women I've spoken with so far have been very generous with their time and other contacts and I think I'd feel like I'd be taking advantage of the women—they've talked with me (some for over 2 hours), they've filled out a questionnaire and they've agreed to fill out a follow-up questionnaire. I don't want to totally fatigue them and make them feel like guinea pigs. I think I'd rather retain their confidences to ask the questions again in the spring (via e-mail or another survey). Also, that amount of time difference may actually make some of a difference—at least for the new expats.

    This is my main feeling—the strongest reason for not doing it. I think this is an issue that's probably more my own, my issues of privacy. However, I also feel like its somewhat of an ethical issue too: if I wouldn't do it, how can I ask my participants to do it?

3) The amount of information I'm gathering has the potential to become overwhelming—and there are several methodological/theoretical facets to that.

    a. First, I'll need to do an analysis of the actual interviews. This is quickly turning into (literally) hundreds of pages of data. Clearly, this is rich data. I've been pleased with the interviews so far as it seems (for the most part) that the women are intelligent and reflective. I think the quality and quantity of info available just in the interviews is substantial. I feel confident I'll be able to unearth all kinds of themes and insights.

    b. Second, I've been collecting various newsletters, journals/magazines and websites re: expatriate women. I'll be including aspects of many of these things in the analysis—these will reflect the types of resources available to expatriate women and provide insight into the types of activities, etc., they can become involved in. So that will add to the expat "story".

    c. Finally, as I've noted, I don't know how much the journals would add, especially in relation to the amount of data collected. I realize that I may never know b/c I didn't ask, but I also feel like (if I can "get over" my own privacy issues) it would be a good idea for a follow-up study, or a study later.

4) Other thoughts: Would having retrospective (and current) data with the day-to-day journals somehow create difficulties in the analysis? I guess I'd have to consider it a "multiple points in time" data collection issue. I'm not sure how to handle that. And, it actually may be more interesting to see what comes from the 2nd survey JP and I send out (need to write more about that later too).

    In sum, I feel that <u>not</u> collecting journals at this point creates no major methodological issues. I have a rich data base to draw from. It may create a <u>limited</u> amount of theoretical issues b/c I don't have a day-to-day perspective from the expats, but I think the data I do have are rich and informative.

Appendix H: Audit Materials and Auditor Report

Audit Trail Materials

Lincoln and Guba (1985) outlined six audit trail categories (pp.319-320). The following list notes each of their 6 categories and the materials given to the auditor of this study. Those items marked (available) were not given to the auditor but were available for her review.

1. Raw Data

   ❑ Audio-tapes and verbatim transcripts of interviews (available)

   ❑ Observation notes from American Women's Club meeting, Mom & Tots Playgroup, Women with Dutch Partners coffee hour.

   ❑ Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ) survey data and demographics spreadsheet (available). Actual surveys are in The Netherlands.

2. Data Reduction and Analysis Procedures

   ❑ Write-ups of field notes and theoretical thoughts: typed and handwritten notes in folder

   ❑ Preliminary coding of data, and summaries of notes well as theoretical notes, model, and speculations are present in the "Dutch Days" paper.

3. Data Reconstruction and Synthesis Products

   ❑ Relationships between categories and the structure of domains, second-order interpretations of the data

      i Printouts of all coded nodes (my categories) from N*Vivo, elegantly clipped and rubber-banded together into domains. List of each domain and its category included for reference.

      ii List and description of all categories and their resulting domains.

      iii Handwritten notes on the top of each domain pile contain comments about each domain and highlight the main understanding revealed by each domain.

      iv Handwritten notes in the margins of several categories indicating codes that were collapsed into larger categories (e.g., sections of "social support general" were collapsed into "social support from the expat community", etc. (Coding done this way because N*Vivo was crashing)

      v I have two types of second-order, theoretical data—the domains, which correlate with existing interpersonal communication theories, and the overarching concept of frame management that weaves through every domain (similar to a Strauss & Corbin's idea of a core category). I noted the presence of the concepts within frame management in two ways:

- ° I began coding examples of "frames changes" and "frames about the country" in N*Vivo. I also reviewed existing categories and realized that several of these categories actually reflected the frames of the spouses well and could be used as exemplars for frames and frame management.

- ° In the margins of each of the domain groups I made notations where I saw frame changes, shifts, growth, denial, and loss (again, done largely because N*Vivo was crashing and I didn't want to risk recoding again).

- ° These two methods helped me outline the strategies for frame management.

❑ The final report of the data, including its relationship to other research is in the last two chapters of my dissertation, available March 1, 2001 (yee-haw!)

4. Process Notes

❑ Methodological notes

i Main methodological notes (1) not collecting journals and (2) including women with Dutch partners in the data collection printed-out in folder.

ii Information on question revision included in "instrument development" section

5. Materials Relating to Intentions and Dispositions

❑ Personal e-mails and journal entries (on disc)

6. Instrument Development Information

❑ Development of the interview guide, how observations were made, and survey development (folder)

i Print-out of development of questionnaire from my dissertation.

ii Notes on adaptations made while abroad.

Auditor Report

OFFICIAL AUDITOR'S RESPONSE

JENNIFER JONES-CORLEY RESEARCH AUDIT

"DUTCH DAYS"

This audit assessed the thoroughness and logic of Jennifer Jones-Corley's investigation of intercultural adaptation of American expatriate spouses in The Netherlands. The framework for assessment in this audit is provided by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and outlined in the document labeled, "Audit Trail Materials" (see this Appendix).

As Jennifer indicates in her dissertation, an audit is a technique used to ensure that the methods and results of a given study are trustworthy and confirmable. An audit trail is a "trail" of documents that provide a clear and defensible link for each step from the raw data to the reported findings. This trail of documents are evaluated or audited for thoroughness and flaws in the defense of the study's claims. An audit does not challenge the interpretation of the data, it assesses if the choices made throughout the research process are documented, if those documents are complete, and if those choices are defensible given the data. Given these goals of an audit, the following are my comments and suggestions.

<u>Kudos</u>

First, Ms. Jones-Corley has done a superb job in compiling her audit materials, Her documentation of raw data, data reduction and analysis procedures, data synthesis, process notes, self-reflections, and instrument development has been amassed and organized in a coherent fashion. It is clear that she has taken care from the conceptualization of this study to the completion of her analysis to attend to the details of documenting her data, analytic choices, and providing the rationale for her developing model. The following areas outline my reactions to each step of Ms. Jones-Corley's research process.

<u>Raw Data</u>

Gathering a variety of data types such as interview data, observational data, and survey data enhanced the credibility of this research. A sampling of interview transcripts and observational notes revealed consistency with the claims of this research. This audit did not include the evaluation of quantitative data sources. The interview schedule was also consistent with the goals of the study and elicited responses directly addressing intercultural adaptation as well as raising many "unexpected" issues of concern that informed Ms. Jones-Corley's final interpretation of the data. Jen is a skilled interviewer who was sensitive to her participants' needs and concerns. In her interviews she appeared to listen closely for responses that were contradictory to previous responses, observations, revelations and she pursued that contradictory information to increase her understanding. Had Ms. Corley merely collected her survey responses, she would not have had the opportunity to further investigate contradictions and emergent issues. The observational data also contributed to the ecological validity or credibility of this study. Her field notes were complete and, for the most part, richly detailed, they focused on the issues at hand, providing insight into emergent and a-priori constructs.

Data Reduction, Data Reconstruction, Process Notes, Procedures

Jennifer provided the following for this audit: theoretical memos, themes, conceptual definitions of the themes and underlying categories were provided as well as a narrative description of the analytic process undertaken. Although software such as N-Vivo or NUD*IST provide data management tools that enable a researcher to develop, store, and print typed text of all data and memos, sometimes technology fails. Ms. Jones-Corley provided the auditor with both handwritten and typed theoretical notes, field notes, and memos. These documents were thorough, provided clear evidence of her thinking and provides the link necessary to understand her movement between data and theorizing. For example, her codes were plainly labeled on the hard-copy documents of raw data and these were linked directly to her theoretical notes and conceptual definitions of codes.

It is often difficult to document the creative process wherein patterns are identified among a grouping of independent codes to form clusters or themes. However, Jen's documentation illustrates how field observational and interview data can be compared and contrasted, codes identified and defined, and then combined and collapsed into core themes that account for all codes. Her themes were clearly articulated and the links among codes and themes defensible. Moreover, her documentation regarding the discovery of "love immigrants" as a key population that might inform the understanding of acculturation is interesting and clearly presents a case for the inclusion of a sample of love immigrants in future research efforts. I do recommend however that she try and purchase software for data management. It might make life easier in the long run.

Instrument Development

I did not assess her materials on the written survey because that is not within the scope of this analysis of qualitative documentation. The materials documenting the evolution of her interview questions and focused observations clearly illustrate the flow of her study, decisions to pursue new information, and directions that she went with this study. I do recommend that she track the addition and omission of key questions more closely, not for the sake of an audit, but to evaluate her own decision-making processes more completely.

In all, Jennifer Jones-Corley provided ample documentation of her research to make a clear and defensible link for each step of the process. The outcome of this audit supports the trustworthiness of this research and argues that the results are confirmable and defensible.

VITA

Jennifer Jones-Corley

Jennifer Jones-Corley completed a Bachelor of Arts in Speech Communication and a minor in Spanish at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio in 1993. She then completed a Master of Arts, also in Speech Communication, at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana in 1994. Her thesis focused on conflict management strategies and perceptions of the communication competencies of those strategies between men and women. She completed her Ph.D. in intercultural and organizational communication in the Department of Communication Arts & Sciences (formerly Speech Communication) at the Pennsylvania State University in the spring of 2002.

Ms. Jones-Corley's research focuses on the intersection of intercultural issues in organizations, including globalization, expatriate managers and their families, and diversity in teams. Her dissertation research examined the experiences of female American expatriates adapting to international postings. She spent the fall semester of 2000 in Groningen, The Netherlands interviewing Americans for her dissertation. Her work has been presented at several international conferences including the meetings of the International Communication Association, the National Communication Association, and the Academy of Management. She and her co-author Dr. J.P. van Oudenhoven recently published the first paper from her dissertation in *Gedrag & Organisatie* (Behavior and Organization), a Dutch psychology journal. Additionally, her research on educational outcomes and communication environment, with Dr. Susan Messman, was recently published in *Communication Monographs*.

In addition to research, Ms. Jones-Corley has led classes in group dynamics, training and development, organizational communication, and communication theory. She has also conducted training seminars on various communication topics, including conflict management, cross-cultural communication, and communication in teams. In 1999 she received the Katherine DeBoer Distinguished Teaching Award from the Department of Speech Communication, Penn State University.

Ms. Jones-Corley has accepted a visiting assistant professor position at the University of Waikato, New Zealand for the 2002 academic year.