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Multiculturals in organizations : Their roles for organizational effectiveness

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► **To cite this version:**

Hae-Jung Hong Hong. Multiculturals in organizations : Their roles for organizational effectiveness. Business administration. Cergy-Pontoise, Ecole supérieure des sciences économiques et commerciales, 2012. English. NNT : 2012ESEC0005 . tel-01085747

HAL Id: tel-01085747

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**MULTICULTURALS IN ORGANIZATIONS:
THEIR ROLES FOR ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

A dissertation submitted for the degree of

**DOCTEUR EN SCIENCES DE GESTION
DE L'ECOLE DOCTORALE
« ECONOMIE, MANAGEMENT, MATHEMATIQUES DE CERGY »
ED 405**

FROM ESSEC BUSINESS SCHOOL

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Abstract

This dissertation explores multiculturals in global corporations. To date, limited research helps us understand the role of multicultural individuals in facilitating the effective functioning of global teams. To investigate this under-examined phenomenon, this dissertation presents the first empirical study of the roles of multiculturals in organizations by facilitating 10-month ethnographic field work in two MNCs: a leading cosmetic MNC and an auditing and consulting MNC. This dissertation comprises three papers. The first paper develops the theoretical model of *bicultural competence and its impact on multicultural team effectiveness*. I define bicultural competence, determine its antecedents, and identify two roles that bi/multiculturals might play in promoting multicultural team effectiveness: boundary spanner and conflict mediator. The second paper examines *multiculturals' cultural brokerage role* for team work processes in global new product development teams: *how* multiculturals influence teams' knowledge processes and handle cross-cultural conflicts (not only collocated but also virtual between corporate headquarters and local subsidiaries). Multiculturals play a critical role that influence knowledge processes and cross-cultural conflict management within global teams where cultural and national heterogeneity seems more complicated than organizational researchers have recognized to date. The third paper investigates *boundary conditions* and *how* they impact multiculturals to enact their roles. I compare and contrast multiculturals in two MNCs in different industries. In particular, I identify boundary conditions that have impact on multiculturals in three levels of analysis: organizational; team; individual. Furthermore, I propose what factors challenge or enable multiculturals and accordingly, how multiculturals overcome challenges and use given opportunities in order to perform effectively or yield such challenges in organizations.

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BICULTURAL COMPETENCE AND ITS IMPACT ON TEAM EFFECTIVENESS

This paper develops the concept of bicultural competence and explores its impact on multicultural team effectiveness. Biculturals are individuals who have deeply internalized two cultural schemas. A cultural schema is a set of knowledge about values, norms, and beliefs for a given culture. Biculturals are an increasing workforce demographic, and hence a growing part of multicultural teams. Their innate skills that result from being bicultural may help solve central problems in multicultural teams, including managing conflicts and boundary spanning across cultures. Specifically, this paper defines bicultural competence, determines its antecedents, specifies its impact on the two main roles bicultural individuals play in teams, and explores their impact on multicultural team effectiveness. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

Keywords: multicultural team effectiveness, bicultural competence, boundary spanner, conflict mediation

In today's globalized world, multicultural teams accomplish a significant proportion of organizational work. Multicultural teams are formed because they improve organizational effectiveness in the global business environment (Cox, 1993; Galbraith, 2000; Kirchmeyer and McLellan, 1991; Kirkman and Shapiro, 2001; Tung, 1993). As such, multicultural teams offer huge potential to organizations. However, ironically, cultural diversity often prevents such potential from being realized. The most critical and practical challenge multicultural teams face is managing conflicts across members' national cultural boundaries (Joshi et al., 2002; Marquardt and Horvath, 2001; Mateev and Nelson, 2004). Other cultural challenges in multicultural teams include dealing with coordination and control issues, maintaining communication richness, and developing and maintaining team cohesiveness (Joshi et al., 2002; Marquardt and Horvath, 2001). For multicultural teams to be effective, members must learn to address the challenges that arise from team members' differing nationalities and cultural backgrounds.

Biculturals are individuals who have internalized two cultural schemas (Hong et al., 2000). A cultural schema is knowledge about the values, norms, and beliefs of each culture. Researchers have not yet recognized that bicultural employees are a growing, yet unexploited workforce with latent skills that could play a role in addressing challenges within multicultural teams.

Are bicultural individuals an often-ignored asset that could transcend the paradox described above? Can they be important members who promote multicultural team effectiveness? Recent research has shown that certain biculturals have agile responses to cultural and situational cues (called cultural frame switching; Hong et al., 2000). Biculturals have also been found to possess more cognitively complex cultural representations (Benet-Martinez and Haritatos, 2005; Benet-Martinez et al., 2006) and are better able to adapt their behavior in cross-cultural settings than are monocultural people (e.g., Friedman and Liu, 2007; Nguyen and Benet-Martinez, 2007; Padilla, 2006). LaFromboise, Coleman, and Gerton (1993) suggested that biculturals possess specific abilities such as cross-communication skills; knowledge of cultural beliefs and values; and dual cultural role repertoires. In addition, Brannen, Garcia, and Thomas (2009) found that many biculturals have higher levels of cultural metacognition than monoculturals. Cultural metacognition is defined as the ability to monitor and regulate one's knowledge processes and cognitive and affective states in relation to an objective and to abstract knowledge from a specific experience to broader principles for future cross-cultural interactions (Thomas et al., 2008).

For the field of international business management, this paper suggests that biculturals' rich abilities may constitute a specific type of competence that could make them key members of cross-cultural teams. Moreover, the construct of bicultural competence this paper develops does not merely apply existing competence constructs

to a new domain. Rather, it proposes that bicultural competence is a unique construction of biculturals' cultural intelligence in the service of effective cross-cultural interactions that benefit organizations, specifically multicultural team effectiveness. As such, this study extends the existing biculturalism research developed by social psychologists and the literature of cultural intelligence.

This paper has two aims. First, this paper develops the construct of bicultural competence. Second, it identifies the roles that biculturals play in promoting team effectiveness by using their bicultural competence in multicultural teams. This paper proceeds by defining bicultural competence and outlining the main dimensions in the model (see Figure 1). It then explains the relationship between bicultural competence and the two critical roles biculturals play in multicultural teams: 1) boundary spanner and 2) conflict mediator. Finally, the theoretical and practical implications of the model are discussed.

Recognizing Bicultural Competence

Two literatures impact the construct of bicultural competence: cross-cultural psychology and international management. The literature in cross-cultural psychology emphasizes the antecedents of biculturalism rather than measuring its applications in cross-cultural business contexts. For example, LaFromboise et al. (1993) found that biculturals possess knowledge of cultural beliefs and values; positive attitudes toward majority and minority groups; bicultural efficacy; communication ability; a wide role repertoire; and a sense of being grounded. In particular, LaFromboise et al. (1993) focused on a bicultural's psychological well-being when living in a bicultural context (e.g., immigrants and Native Americans in the US). In addition, by the virtue of internalizing and being able to switch between dual cultural schemas, biculturals tend to have more complex cultural representations (Benet-Martinez et al., 2006) and greater integrative complexity (Tadmor and Tetlock, 2006;

Tadmor et al., 2009). Although these researchers provide useful insights into developing the construct of bicultural competence, their definitions are culture-specific; that is, they are limited to cultural knowledge and skills of certain national contexts such as Chinese versus American.

Little research on bicultural competence is found in the international management literature. However, Friedman and Liu (2009) suggested two main elements of bicultural competence: adaptability and boundary spanning. Although their definition was narrow and culture-specific, it emphasized that biculturals have the ability to use their dual cultural schemas to behave appropriately in cross-cultural business contexts. Several researchers have recently suggested that biculturals have higher levels of culture-general skills such as cultural metacognition than do monoculturals (Brannen et al., 2009; Thomas et al., 2008). This metacognitive ability to manage complexity in cross-cultural interactions helps biculturals interact more effectively in multicultural contexts (Brannen et al., 2009; Thomas et al., 2008). Cultural metacognition is culture-general (relating general frameworks to groups of cultural characteristics and attributes) and is a critical dimension in constructing the bicultural competence this paper defines.

Previous conceptualizations of biculturals have not adequately provided an understanding of bicultural as a function of both culture-specific and culture-general skills. As such, this paper posits that bicultural competence, the combination of culture-specific (e.g., cultural frame switching) and culture-general (e.g., high levels of cultural metacognition) skills, is an important construct developing theory related to multicultural team effectiveness because biculturals possess a unique competence to interact across cultures.

Cultural frame switching (CFS), a bicultural's ability to switch between cultures, is the core of the bicultural competence construct. It is a dynamic link between cognitive cultural knowledge and the ability to adapt and communicate. In other words, biculturals switch

between languages and social interactions when dealing with friends who share their culture or with a host-culture acquaintance. For effective cross-cultural interactions in multicultural environments, biculturals must also possess culture-general skills such as a high level of cultural metacognition. With this skill, biculturals become adept at cognitively using appropriate interaction strategies that specify when, why, and to what degree one cultural value should prevail over another (Tetlock et al., 1996: 28). For example, consider the case of a Korean businesswoman shaking hands with her Western male counterpart who is older than she. In Korean culture, shaking hands with a male or with an older colleague is neither customary nor appropriate in public, including business-related environments. To a Korean monocultural woman, this interaction would entail behaviour that conflicts with deeply rooted cultural values. However, if the Korean businesswoman was a bicultural with both highly internalized Korean and Western cultural schemas and cultural metacognition, shaking hands might not entail such value conflicts. Instead, she might understand dual sets of social cues and could transcend Korean-specific cultural values regarding male-female and old-young interactions and respond more agilely in that moment of interaction. This careful and metacognitively demanding approach is how biculturals acknowledge the legitimacy of both cultures; behave appropriately not to offend; and gain positive impressions from interacting parties in cross-cultural contexts.

Defining Bicultural Competence

The lack of a broadly accepted definition of bicultural competence requires investigating the definition of competence itself. Sundberg and his colleagues (1978) defined competence as the personal characteristics (knowledge, skills, and attitudes) leading to achievements that have adaptive payoffs in significant environments. The notion of adapting points to the need to assess both the person's motives and the environment's demands and resources (Sundberg et al., 1978: 196). Thus, defining bicultural competence calls for relating

biculturals' capabilities to contextual and situational demands. In this paper's context, this entails the challenges of multicultural team effectiveness.

Considering bicultural competence from an international management perspective, therefore, raises numerous questions. In which situations can a 'bicultural person' best function? What things can a 'bicultural person' do in various organizational environments? (Sundberg et al., 1978: 196). We need to move from the *how much* question of traditional psychology to questions of *where* and *which* that consider the surroundings bicultural people encounter, their resources for coping, and their active interests (Sundberg et al., 1978). As noted, this study focuses on the context of multicultural teams. A multicultural team is a cross-cultural situation in which bicultural individuals have much to offer organizations. Because multicultural teams often face challenges in managing diversity and conflicts, biculturals should be able to use their abilities to initiate activities that address such challenges.

To summarize, based on previous literature and considering the cross-cultural environment of international business, the following definition of bicultural competence is proposed for the international management field:

Bicultural competence is a bicultural's ability to draw upon cultural knowledge and cross-cultural abilities (such as adapting one's behavior and communicating across cultures) to effectively switch cultural frames and apply cultural metacognition to disparate cultural contexts in order to work successfully with people from different cultural backgrounds toward a desired organizational outcome.

This definition is broad, yet straightforward. Bicultural competence results from behavioral flexibility gained from multiple cultural experiences that these individuals then use

to interact effectively with people from different cultures in cross-cultural contexts. Figure 1 illustrates this conceptual model, which this paper describes in detail in the next section. It differs from previous definitions (e.g., LaFromboise et al., 1993) in that it focuses on how successfully a bicultural individual exploits knowledge, cultural abilities (behavioral adaptability and cross-cultural communication skills), cultural frame switching (Hong et al., 2000) and cultural metacognition (Brannen et al., 2009; Thomas et al., 2008) that he or she must possess for effective cross-cultural interactions.

While this paper's definition of bicultural competence emphasizes biculturals' performance-focused attributes in multicultural business contexts, it has distinct differences from the traditional literature on cultural competence. A summary of how bicultural competence is distinct from related concepts of cultural competence is presented in Table 1 and discussed in the following section.

First, cultural frame switching, a linking function in the construct of bicultural competence, is a unique ability bicultural people have that monoculturals do not. Second, cultural metacognition also plays a critical role in conceptualizing bicultural competence as a linking function. Metacognition is sharp perceptual awareness in a specific domain; in this case, cultural experiences and strategies (Thomas et al., 2008). For effective cross-cultural interactions in multicultural contexts, biculturals must also leverage culture-general knowledge. In other words, biculturals transfer culture-specific knowledge into broader principles. This ability is the outcome of reflective observation, analysis, and abstract conceptualizations that create new mental categories and re-categorize cultural characteristics that have accumulated through ongoing culturally-complex experiences in a sophisticated cognitive system (Thomas et al., 2008:131). Consistent with the cultural intelligence literature, yet applied specifically to biculturals' high level of cultural intelligence, the construct of bicultural competence this paper develops emphasizes how cultural frame

switching (culture-specific skills) and cultural metacognition (culture-general skills) make biculturals highly competent in effective cross-cultural interactions in multicultural contexts. Third, bicultural competence is a dynamic, interacting construct. On one hand, constant cultural frame switching actively links the knowledge dimension and cross-cultural abilities (behavioral adaptability and cross-cultural communication skills). On the other hand, cultural metacognition allows bicultural competence to emerge from the interaction of its dimensions (Thomas et al., 2008:132). Fourth, the majority of literature on cultural competence addresses how monoculturals can improve their cultural competence. Research on cultural competence has focused on monoculturals' knowledge and abilities rather than how they can successfully use their skills to respond to situational cues in cross-cultural interactions that will benefit their organizations. However, bicultural competence, as outlined in this paper, deals with biculturals who have higher levels of each dimension than monoculturals: culture-specific knowledge, behavioral adaptability, cross-cultural communication skills, and cultural metacognition. Finally, this paper's concept of bicultural competence highlights biculturals' contribution to multicultural team effectiveness by playing roles such as the boundary spanner and conflict mediator.

In addition to highlighting the distinct features of bicultural competence, it is also noteworthy to describe how cultural frame switching theory and cultural metacognition literature differ yet complete this paper's construct of bicultural competence. The bicultural competence construct in this model identifies how biculturals can benefit multinational organizations; more specifically, multicultural team effectiveness. As such, the cultural frame switching literature is limited in explaining biculturals in multicultural contexts. Cultural frame switching is a unique ability that allows biculturals to competently interact cross-culturally, yet operate cognitively based on his or her two specific cultures (original and adopted). This prevents biculturals' competence in cross-cultural interactions from being

considered a culture-general skill. In addition, cultural frame switching theory was developed by experimental lab studies using limited samples (e.g., bicultural university students in Hong Kong and immigrants in the US and Canada). On the contrary, but complementary to bicultural competence, cultural metacognition is a core concept of cultural intelligence that describes how individuals in general effectively interact with culturally different others. Cross-cultural interaction requires an individual to understand other cultures' reasoning and thinking processes and use this information to create effective interaction strategies. Biculturals' cultural metacognition for understanding him- or herself is critical such that potential overlaps (and conflicts) among cultures are identified and used to the best advantage. In other words, biculturals' verbal or non-verbal behaviors depend on the situation that must be regulated and accommodated for ultimate outcomes. In addition, cultural metacognition explains how biculturals transfer their abilities based on cultural frame switching experiences (culture-specific skills) to broader principles (culture-general skills), which can be used in future interactions in other settings such as multicultural teams. Thus, cultural metacognition is more broadly applicable to biculturals in organizations, complimenting the limitations of cultural frame switching theory.

Developing a Model of Bicultural Competence

With bicultural competence defined, this paper explains the logic for including each dimension of the model (construct validity; Schwab, 1980), and provides propositions. The nature of the dynamic interaction among these dimensions linked by cultural frame switching and cultural metacognition is also described. These discussions result in bicultural competence emerging as a unique construct. Also discussed are the dimensionality, level of analysis, and how a nomological net would be established. All dimensions of the construct are described to highlight the effectiveness of biculturals in multicultural teams.

Culture-specific knowledge

Cultural knowledge works in a cognitive system that includes knowledge content and cognitive processing (Earley and Ang, 2003). Culture-specific knowledge involves the degree to which a bicultural is aware of and knowledgeable about a culture's history, institutions, rituals, and daily practices. Furthermore, culture-specific knowledge is crucial to the bicultural's self-image, is highly self-relevant, and is similar to other personality traits; thus, it is highly accessible to memory (Markus, 1977; Nowak et al., 2000). Several aspects of acculturation suggest culture-specific knowledge may be essential to the biculturals' self-definition. Thus, culture-specific knowledge is the foundation of bicultural's cultural frame switching because it is required to comprehend and decode the behavior of others and themselves. Previous research suggests that cultural knowledge positively relates to cultural adjustment (Black and Mendenhall, 1990; Wiseman et al., 1989).

The construct of bicultural competence includes culture-specific knowledge that biculturals must possess to switch cultural frames effectively in response to situational cues. Culture-specific knowledge is composed of both explicit (factual and conceptual) and tacit knowledge (Bird et al., 1993). Explicit knowledge relates to the country's history, its political and economic systems, institutions, and social structure. Tacit knowledge includes the culture's values and beliefs and their impact on behavior. While explicit knowledge is easy to document, tacit knowledge involves awareness of appropriate behavior. Tacit knowledge means understanding techniques and processes that are learned through socializing and interacting within an organization and with society. It is deeply embedded in a person's consciousness and is difficult to access (Brannen, 2009). Tacit knowledge, therefore, is difficult to convey in a formal environment such as classroom-based training (Johnson et al., 2006). Monocultural people may achieve a certain level of explicit cultural knowledge through education and training, but will not gain the tacit knowledge that bicultural people

have developed naturally. Culture-specific knowledge also includes basic knowledge of the environment in which international businesses operate and within the economic, political, legal, social, financial, and technological systems that co-exist (Johnson et al., 2006).

Internalizing more than one system of culture-specific knowledge and switching between them frequently in response to situational cultural cues, biculturals develop cognitive complexity (Benet-Martinez et al., 2006). Doing so further develops their cognitive ability to manage CFS complexities effectively (Brannen et al., 2009; Thomas et al., 2008). In this way, a more elaborate, cognitively complex culture-specific knowledge structure is positively related to understanding the aspects of another culture, and in turn, to adaptive behavior (Porter and Inks, 2000).

In addition, based on accumulated experiences of quickly switching between cultural cues and learning specific experiences with culturally different others, biculturals may create general knowledge of new cultures (beyond the two cultures in which they specialize: the original and the host). That is, cultural knowledge gained from culture-specific experiences is recoded for general frameworks that include comparing/contrasting differences across cultures. These activities require a higher order cognitive process, which is described under cultural metacognition (Thomas et al., 2008).

The culture-specific knowledge dimension of bicultural competence has an important implication for effective knowledge transfer in multicultural teams. Knowledge-intensive work is often project-based and is carried out by multicultural teams in multinational corporations (MNCs) (Gibson and Cohen, 2003; Kirkman et al., 2001; Snow et al., 1996). Boundary spanning activities inside and outside of a team are critical for accumulating knowledge, information, and political resources that help maintain the team's effectiveness (Ancona, 1990; Ancona and Caldwell, 1990, 1992a, b; Gladstein, 1984). The boundary-spanning role of knowledge transfer in multicultural teams requires the abilities to understand

both decontextualization and anticipate recontextualization of tacit knowledge being translated from headquarters (Brannen, 2004). In addition, biculturals' high level of cultural metacognition may allow them to effectively interact with other culturally different members whose levels of understanding of such knowledge may differ. Ultimately, the team's process of applying knowledge acquired for a given project will be more effective.

Cross-cultural abilities

The cross-cultural abilities dimension builds on the culture-specific knowledge dimension. This dimension includes behavioral adaptability and cross-cultural communication skills. Ability refers to specific skills that have been acquired over time (Dunnette, 1976). The concept of ability is inherent to bicultural competence because biculturals have spent considerable time and effort to understand their new culture and the best ways to adapt. An example is children of immigrants who have acquired and developed competence by overcoming challenges to fit into two cultural worlds: their home (original) culture and the society in which they currently live (their host culture). While the knowledge dimension is a cognitive component of bicultural competence, the cross-cultural abilities dimension is a behavioral component.

Behavioral adaptability. Behavioral adaptability refers to one's ability to appreciate and detect culture-specific aspects of social behavior. It requires a high level of culture-specific knowledge. Behavioral adaptability helps biculturals regulate and produce culturally appropriate verbal and nonverbal behavior in cross-cultural business contexts (Earley and Ang, 2003; LaFromboise et al., 1993). Behavioral adaptability is an important qualification for multicultural team members because team effectiveness is often hindered by misinterpreting and misunderstanding different cultural backgrounds. Overt verbal and nonverbal behavior that interacting parties express represent the most salient features of any social interaction (Earley and Ang, 2003). Behavior appropriate in one culture may not

naturally reflect the same meaning or level of propriety in another culture (Giacalone and Beard, 1994). As such, people are often frustrated by miscommunication, misattribution, and misevaluation by interacting parties in a cross-cultural context (Giacalone and Beard, 1994). Behavioral adaptability enables bicultural members to reduce tensions among members by correctly interpreting the behavior of culturally different colleagues, and by appropriate self-presentation depending on the context (Earley and Ang, 2003). In this way, biculturals are more likely to be accepted and respected by members with different cultural backgrounds. As a result, they span the cultural boundaries that exist in a multicultural team, and mediate conflicts created by cultural diversity, and consequently promote effective knowledge transfer. However, for this to occur, biculturals must have well-developed cross-cultural communication skills.

Cross-cultural communication skills. Skill in cross-cultural communication refers to a bicultural's ability to communicate appropriately and effectively in a given situation as one interacts, both verbally and non-verbally, in each culture in a cross-cultural context (LaFromboise and Rowe, 1983). Cross-cultural communication skills require knowledge of the specific culture, language, and behavioral adaptability that allow an individual to competently interact in cross-cultural contexts (Black and Gregersen, 2000; Mendenhall, 2001; Gudykunst, 1998; Spitzberg, 1983). Being multilingual can be a major building block for effective cross-cultural communication. Biculturals are often multi-lingual and their linguistic capabilities may promote effective cross-cultural communications in multicultural contexts.

Major challenges to multicultural team effectiveness include different communication styles such as direct versus indirect communication and trouble with accents and fluency (Brett et al., 2006). These problems arise from different cultural norms and the individual members' communication abilities. This attests to the role of biculturals in multicultural teams

to solve such problems and contribute to team effectiveness. For example, successful knowledge transfer requires a high degree of communication ability in a multicultural team (Mateev and Nelson, 2004). As noted, knowledge and information are often tacit and re- or decontextualized in distinct social cultural environments (Brannen, 2004). A cross-cultural and communicatively competent team member, such as a bicultural, can therefore explain such knowledge and information while facilitating an interpersonal network among culturally diverse members. This can result in a successful exchange of knowledge and information (Spitzberg, 1983) in multicultural teams. Furthermore, a team with a high level of cross-cultural communication likely has bicultural team members who recognize different communication styles and interpersonal characteristics among members. As such, they demonstrate their flexibility in resolving conflicts that may arise from these differences and feel confident when communicating the team's goals, roles, and norms (Mateev and Nelson, 2004). In this way, biculturals are able to increase a team's level of cross-cultural communication, which in turn, positively influences its performance (Mateev and Nelson, 2004).

To summarize, high levels of cross-cultural abilities (behavioral adaptability and cross-cultural communication skills) are positively related to effective cross-cultural interactions. To realize this, biculturals must translate high levels of culture-specific knowledge into behaviors that are appropriate to cross-cultural interactions. Cultural frame switching requires knowing what to do and how to do (culture-specific knowledge) and having tools in one's behavioral repertoire to respond appropriately and effectively to cross-cultural situations (cross-cultural abilities). These two antecedents are essential for and interact dynamically through cultural frame switching, which are the first necessary conditions for bicultural competence. This leads to a proposition that proposes a link between culture-specific knowledge and cross-cultural abilities and cultural frame switching.

Proposition 1a: Given high levels of culture-specific knowledge, individuals with higher cross-cultural abilities will engage in more effective cultural frame switching.

Proposition 1b: Given higher levels of cross-cultural abilities, individuals with higher culture-specific knowledge will engage in more effective cultural frame switching.

Cultural frame switching

Biculturals shift between interpretive schemas rooted in their culture-specific knowledge by responding to cues in the social environment (LaFromboise et al., 1993; Hong et al., 2000). To capture how biculturals switch between cultural schemas (the original culture and the adopted culture), Hong and her colleagues (2000) conceptualized an internalized culture as a network of discrete, specific constructs that lead to cognition when they come to the forefront of an individual's mind. That is, particular pieces of culture-specific knowledge guide how an individual constructs meaning so that they respond promptly and appropriately to cultural situational cues. In the context of bicultural competence, cultural frame switching (CFS) is a linking function between culture-specific knowledge (the cognitive or "knowing" part) and cross-cultural abilities (the behavioral or "doing" part).

Benet-Martinez and her colleagues (2006) proposed three reasons why biculturals' CFS functions as link between culture-specific knowledge and cross-cultural abilities. The first reason is the accessibility of self-relevant cultural knowledge. Culture-specific knowledge is a critical part of biculturals' self-definition (Markus, 1977; Nowak et al., 2000). Because biculturals have spent considerable time and effort fitting in to the society in which they currently live, these cultural experiences may become an inseparable part of their biographical memories (Benet-Martinez et al., 2006). As such, culture-specific knowledge is not only more

accessible in biculturals' memory but also more intricate (Markus, 1977; Nowak et al., 2000). By definition, CFS is the ability to cognitively switch between two sets of culture-specific knowledge when responding to cultural cues. This allows biculturals to behave and communicate appropriately to specific cultural situations. As such, a high level of culture-specific knowledge is essential for high levels of cross-cultural abilities, and in turn, CFS. The second reason is expertise in analyzing each culture-specific system. Through frequent CFS experiences, biculturals are mindful that cultural norms and values vary depending on the context, creating a new insight to comprehend the relativism and multidimensionality of each culture-specific system (Gutierrez and Sameroff, 1990). Thus, biculturals will be more able to adapt their verbal and nonverbal behaviors appropriately for interacting with culturally different others. The third reason is a control process to apply culture-specific knowledge to cross-cultural abilities: by switching cultural schemas (including languages and social scripts) biculturals use a "supervisory attention system" that controls which cultural schemas should be used and when (Benet-Martinez et al., 2006). That is, their cross-cultural analytical skills dictate which cultural norms and values should be applied depending on the cross-cultural context. Biculturals deliberately and effortfully process the cognitive cues that trigger or signal appropriate behavior. These activities require higher order cognitive process, cultural metacognition described ahead. This explains how CFS functions in the construct of bicultural competence by dynamically linking the culture-specific knowledge to the cross-cultural abilities dimension. Ultimately, biculturals who effectively switch between cultural frames are more likely to have a higher level of bicultural competence. This discussion suggests the following proposition.

Proposition 2: Individuals with higher effective cultural frame switching will have higher bicultural competence.

Cultural metacognition

Biculturals' constant CFS can impact their higher cultural metacognition. As Brannen et al. (2009: 9) noted,

The more complex cognitive representations that biculturals develop as a result of internalizing more than one set of (sometimes conflicting) cultural schemata suggest that they will also develop higher order cognitive processes required to manage this complexity. That is, they will, of necessity, engage in more active monitoring and regulation of cognitive activities in the cultural domain. Thus, biculturals should have higher levels of cultural metacognition.

According to Thomas et al. (2008:131), cultural metacognition refers to “the ability to consciously and deliberately monitor one’s knowledge process and cognitive and affective states and the ability to regulate these processes and states in relation to an objective”. This also includes the ability to relate knowledge gained from a specific experience to broader principles for future interactions in other settings (i.e., abstraction).

Cultural metacognition is a link that allows bicultural competence to emerge from the interaction of its constituent dimensions (Thomas et al., 2008). Cultural metacognition is what makes bicultural competence dynamic, just as CFS does. Yet cultural metacognition complements what CFS lacks in conceptualizing bicultural competence with regard to metacognitive experiences (active monitoring) and metacognitive strategies (consequent regulation) for effective interactions across cultures (Thomas et al., 2008:132). Moreover, cultural metacognition allows more general principles (culture-general knowledge) to be retrieved or abstracted from specific cultural experience because it actively creates new categories and considers new perspectives associated with this categorization of knowledge. Knowledge encoded in memory in this way is more generalizable and less bound to the specific experience that created it (Thomas et al., 2008).

It is this aspect of cultural metacognition that explains how biculturals, although switching cultural frames within culture-specific knowledge, are more likely to be sensitive to

cultural similarities and differences beyond their two specialized cultures. They instinctively pay more attention to new cultural cues and thus behave in an appropriate manner during cross-cultural interactions in a multicultural context rather than being reactive or scripted (Thomas et al., 2008:134). This explains that a high level of cultural metacognition positively relates to bicultural competence. This discussion therefore suggests a link between cultural metacognition and bicultural competence as reflected in the following proposition.

Proposition 3: Individuals with higher levels of cultural metacognition will have higher bicultural competence.

Bicultural Competence and Multicultural Team Effectiveness

Now that we've unpacked the antecedents of bicultural competence, the construct, as explained in the model, transitions to explicatively explain how biculturalism is related to multicultural team effectiveness.

MNCs exist to achieve worldwide innovation, global integration, and local differentiation in order to perform and compete successfully (Barlett and Ghoshal, 1989; Nohria and Ghoshal, 1997). A multicultural team is a team where two or more cultures are represented among the team's members (Adler, 1997). MNCs seeking to exploit the potential of foreign markets use multicultural teams because they promise flexibility, responsiveness, and improved use of resources to meet the dynamic demands of a global business environment (Mowshowitz, 1997; Snow et al., 1996). Today, in most MNCs, multicultural teams have become a reality, and this trend is certain to produce more such teams in the future (Adler, 1997; Hambrick et al., 1998). For example, top management teams have become more multicultural in order to be more effective in the increased globalization and diversity of the workplace (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1989).

Team effectiveness results from multiple practices and many dimensions working together. However, no singular, uniform measure of multicultural team effectiveness exists (Guzzo and Dickson, 1996; Senior, 1997). Thus, defining team effectiveness is a challenging task. Following Hackman (1993) and Sundstrom et al.'s (1990) broad definition of team effectiveness, Guzzo and Dickson (1996: 309) define team effectiveness as: 1) team-produced output (quantity or quality, speed, customer satisfaction and so on); 2) the consequences that participating in the team has for its members (satisfaction and interdependence); and 3) enhancing a team's capabilities to perform effectively in the future.

Gibson and Cohen (2003) took a different approach to identify the conditions that promote team effectiveness. They suggested three enabling conditions for teams to perform well: shared understanding, integration, and mutual trust. In multicultural teams, differences in cultural norms and values challenge these enabling conditions.

Although the differences in cultural values offer potential for multicultural teams to perform well (e.g., Ling, 1990; McLeod and Lobel, 1992; Watson et al., 1993), they also influence members' preferences for norms of social interaction (Bettenhausen and Murnighan, 1991; Earley 1993; Zander 1997). For example, members tend to interact most comfortably and extensively with people who are like themselves (Lincoln and Miller, 1979; Marsden, 1988; Tsui and O'Reilly, 1989). Multicultural teams are likely to have structured gaps, or *faultlines*, among cultural groups (Lau and Murnighan, 1998, 2005; Li and Hambrick, 2005). Members often face challenges in cooperative decision-making (e.g., Anderson, 1983; Fiedler, 1966, Kirchmeyer and Cohen, 1992; Watson et al., 1993), which makes teams unable to cultivate trust or break down often formidable communication barriers (Govindarajan and Gupta, 2001). Brett and her colleagues (2006) summarized three main challenges regarding communication: 1) direct versus indirect ways of communicating; 2) trouble with different accents and fluency; and 3) different attitudes toward hierarchy and authority. They also

suggested four strategies to solve these problems: 1) adaptation (acknowledging cultural gaps openly and working around them); 2) structural intervention (changing the shape of the team); 3) managerial intervention (setting norms early or bringing in a higher-level manager); and 4) exit (removing a member). Thus, most research on multicultural teams has focused on team-level solutions (e.g., Brett et al., 2006; Earley and Mosakowski, 2004, Elron, 1997; Ng and Tung, 1998; Watson et al., 1993).

However, researchers have yet to explore the potential of bicultural members to contribute to team effectiveness. As discussed, biculturally competent members help teams engage in more effective cross-cultural communication and conflict resolution by playing two roles – boundary spanner and conflict mediator. These roles can help avoid imposing approaches based on a single-culture in multicultural situations (Brett et al., 2006). It is this aspect through which bicultural members may help the team build shared understanding, integration, and mutual trust.

It is important to note that the bicultural's contribution to team effectiveness is also related to the team's cultural composition and how closely it resembles the bicultural's two cultures. For example, a French-Korean would work best in a team with other members from these two cultures. However, this raises the question regarding how people who are merely biculturals can be effective in multicultural teams. As described, highly biculturally competent individuals should be capable of managing the complexity that often arises during interacting cross-culturally in multicultural contexts. Furthermore, evidence suggests that if a person possesses a certain level of competence in one domain, such as bicultural competence, it will transfer to some degree to other domains, such as multicultural competence. This is particularly true if the two domains share key components, such as cultural knowledge, behavioral adaptability, cross-cultural communication skills, CFS, and cultural metacognition (Streufert and Swezey, 1986). The logic is that the more functional similarities exist between

the original context (e.g., the bicultural context) in which some components were reinforced and the new context (e.g., a multicultural team) (Markman and Gentner, 1993; Tadmor et al., 2009), the more biculturals are likely to develop their bicultural competence to function effectively in a new multicultural context (Holyoak and Koh, 1987). Further, linguistic research shows that individuals who master more than one language (bilingual) are able to acquire a third language (multilingualism) with a much less time and effort. For example, highly biculturally competent people use inductive and analogical skills to step beyond their existing knowledge. They do so to fully understand what is happening around them, inductively mapping the new cultural setting to function effectively (Earley and Ang, 2003: 123). Thus, they may be better equipped to facilitate cross-cultural interactions among members who are not from one of their two own cultures. One reason for this is that they may be perceived as a trustworthy third party with fair judgment regarding other cultural subgroups in a multicultural team. So, while the cultural composition of multicultural teams may be an influential structural characteristic, highly biculturally competent members can engage actively in integrating activities that result in multicultural team effectiveness.

Bicultural Members' Roles in Multicultural Teams

For a multicultural team to perform more effectively, it should synergistically combine individual input to influence collective actions and outcomes. For example, one member's bicultural competence can be used to effectively integrate members for enhanced communication and conflict resolution (Kozlowski and Klein, 2000; Steiner, 1972). This requires the team to exploit a cross-level (individual and team-level) linking mechanism; that is, the concept of "role." A role is defined as behaviors that are interrelated with the repetitive activities of others and the characteristics of a person in a particular setting (Biddle, 1979; Forsyth, 1990; Katz and Kahn, 1978). Expectations, including norms, beliefs, and preferences generate roles (Biddle, 1986). In other words, roles reflect constant patterns of behavior at the

individual level, while role configuration reflects collective interactions at the team level (Kozlowski and Klein, 2000; Morgeson and Hofmann, 1999). When a biculturally competent individual works in a multicultural team, he or she faces the challenges of cross-cultural communication and conflicts caused by cultural differences among members. He or she thus has the potential to adopt the role of an intermediary between two or more culturally divergent groups. That is, bicultural competence can strongly indicate the roles a bicultural member may adopt in a multicultural team. The actual roles adopted and the relative importance of each of role are influenced by situational demands to solve challenges in a multicultural team (Stewart et al., 2005). For example, biculturals' propensity to span boundaries should promote team effectiveness (Ancona and Caldwell, 1992a, b). At the individual level, biculturals' boundary spanning capabilities can also benefit the biculturals themselves; indeed, it may give the bicultural more access to a team's strategic decision-making and greater opportunities for promotion (Aldrich and Herker, 1977). As Thomas (1994) noted, while spanning cultural boundaries internally and externally, biculturals acquire significant role benefits; they can obtain resources, status, and information that other team members cannot. These role benefits, in turn, increase biculturals' job satisfaction, encouraging them to engage further in boundary spanning activities (Thomas, 1994; Au and Fukuda, 2002).

Highly biculturally competent people are more likely to play a role such as cultural broker: they become a boundary spanner and conflict mediator to meet the team's expectations, particularly when their team faces challenges caused by cultural diversity. This discussion suggests the following proposition.

Proposition 4: The higher level of bicultural competence an individual has, the more likely he or she will engage in boundary spanning and conflict mediating roles in multicultural teams.

Biculturals as boundary spanners

Boundary spanners are essential to the efficient and effective operation of organizations (Aldrich and Herker, 1977; Bradach and Eccles, 1989; Thomas, 1994; Thompson, 1967). Ancona and her colleagues showed that boundary spanning activities inside and outside a team at both team and individual levels are critical for gathering knowledge, important information, and political resources that help maintain the team's effectiveness (Ancona, 1990; Ancona and Caldwell, 1990, 1992a, b; Gladstein, 1984). However, we still do not know specifically how bicultural members play boundary-spanning roles in a multicultural team.

In MNCs, teams typically carry out knowledge-intensive work. Creating, disseminating, and using knowledge beyond each member's cultural background are critical issues for team performance (e.g., Grant, 1996; Kogut and Zander, 1993). Knowledge is transferred in two ways: acquiring and applying (Haas, 2006). More specifically, Ancona (1990) identified four activities of boundary spanning in knowledge transfer: 1) the ambassador activity, which builds support from powerful outsiders; 2) the task coordinator activity, which requires more focused communication than general scanning; 3) the scout activity to obtain competitive market and technical ideas from different parts of the organization (fulfilled by those with access to information about external competitive trends, for example); and 4) the guard activity, which controls the information flow out of the group.

Although Ancona (1990) explored neither the context of multicultural teams nor biculturals, the boundary spanning activities she identified can be applied to biculturals in multicultural teams. Biculturals' tacit knowledge increases the team's effectiveness in acquiring external knowledge that is often de- or recontextualized by social process. Biculturals with a high level of behavioral adaptability and cultural metacognition (for an effective cross-cultural interaction strategy) may span different cultural groups better than

monocultural members. This results in improving a team's ability to apply the acquired knowledge to a given team task. In other words, individuals with extensive work experience in diverse cultural contexts and with high cross-communication skills acquire more knowledge from external sources and thus enhance a team's knowledge transfer. Accordingly, multicultural teams with bicultural members are more likely to perform better (Haas, 2006).

Beyond individual roles, the team must have a shared meaning system or collective integration process to transfer knowledge effectively. In spanning boundaries, biculturals may facilitate such a shared meaning system. This may accelerate the integration process among culturally different members, even at an early stage of the team's life cycle. Biculturals recognize members' differences in communication and interpersonal styles that may inhibit the team's ability to share knowledge and information and manage verbal and non-verbal behavior appropriately when interacting with culturally different members. In this way, biculturals are more likely than monocultural to understand and emotionally relate to members from different cultures. Thus, they are more likely to fit in and win the respect, trust and friendship of colleagues. With trust and respect, biculturals help bridge the team's communication gaps caused by language and style differences by encouraging members to express their ideas and debate how to complete tasks. In addition, teams are less likely to use redundant information (Gruenfeld et al., 1996) or make premature decisions (Schulz-Hardt et al., 2000). It is this aspect of biculturals' boundary spanning role that promotes a team's shared meaning system and integration process that leads to effective knowledge transfer.

The bicultural's boundary spanning role may also help develop more densely connected intra-team connections. Because biculturals are more likely to build positive relationships with different cultural subgroups, they may subsequently create positive relationships among these subgroups. Such network density should enhance the team's psychological safety (Edmondson, 1999), allowing members to engage more deeply in discussing how to explore

and exploit knowledge with fewer relational conflicts (Jehn and Mannix, 2001; Simons and Peterson, 2000). Although many researchers have argued that trust building is critical for team effectiveness, the question of who can help culturally different members smoothly and efficiently remains largely unanswered. However, biculturally competent members, underrecognized to date, appear to help others in a multicultural team perform effectively beyond cultural boundaries.

Biculturals as conflict mediators

While spanning multicultural boundaries, biculturals actively engage in enhancing a team's cross-cultural communication and building trust among culturally different members. As noted, this results in a team effectively transferring knowledge for given and future tasks. At the same time, biculturals' ability to span cultural boundaries may lead to success in mediating conflicts, which are often created by cultural differences in norms and values.

Although cultural differences among members do not always create conflict (e.g., Salk and Brannen, 2000), they do increase the likelihood of conflict (Armstrong and Cole, 1996). Any team must resolve conflicts and build trust in order to perform well. Team conflict is defined as perceptions among team members that they hold discrepant views or have interpersonal incompatibilities (Jehn, 1995). Jehn and Mannix (2001) proposed that conflict in working teams can be categorized into three types: relationship conflict, task conflict, and process conflict. Relational conflict (affective and cognitive) means being aware of interpersonal incompatibilities and includes affective components such as feelings of annoyance, frustration, and irritation. Task conflict means being aware of differences in viewpoints and opinions pertaining to a team task (Amason and Sapienza, 1997). Process conflict (Jehn, 1997; Jehn et al., 1999) means being aware of controversies related to how to

proceed in accomplishing a task. For example, when team members disagree about who is responsible for completing a specific duty, they are experiencing process conflict.

According to Jehn and Mannix (2001), these three types of conflicts are dynamic over the life of the team. While high-performing teams experience different levels of process and task conflicts, they are not always detrimental, but instead can be beneficial to the team's performance. Based on their research, Jehn and Mannix (2001) discovered that high-performing teams are characterized by lower levels of process conflict and higher levels of task conflict at the midpoint in the team life cycle than at the beginning and end of team interaction. In addition, teams performing well have lower relationship conflict across all phases of team interaction than do lower-performing teams. Relationship conflicts are least likely to benefit the team at any point. Thus, teams must work to lower relational conflict to maximize team effectiveness. In multicultural teams, culturally different members' core values and beliefs differ, and interpersonal tension and emotional upsets are more likely to occur (Bar-Tal, 1989; Schein, 1986; Schneider, 1983), creating relational conflict. For example, if members have pre-established work ethics such as valuing detail or working long hours (see Brannen and Salk, 2000 for an example of a German and Japanese joint venture case) that differ from their teammates, they are less likely to be satisfied with their team (Jehn, 1994). In addition, as noted, multicultural teams often face communication problems that generate conflicts that are difficult to resolve. As a result, teams with relational conflicts often work toward a competitive rather than a cooperative goal (Amason and Sapienza, 1997; Jehn and Shah, 1997).

Jehn and Mannix (2001) found that because biculturally competent members have more cultural knowledge of work ethics and are more effective interacting across cultures, they are more likely to engage in resolving relationship conflict and promoting group-consensus values. Group-consensus values define the extent to which members have similar values

regarding work, such as innovativeness, carefulness, autonomy, adaptability, and informality (Jehn and Mannix, 2001: 241). From the early stages of team interaction, biculturally competent people must help the team operate under polite norms (low levels of relational conflict) that allow cultural sub-groups to become more familiar with one another (Jehn, 1995; Shah and Jehn, 1993). Once team members have increased their familiarity with one another beyond cultural differences, they are more likely to agree on group work ethics and share knowledge and information for a given task. In this way, the team promotes harmony (Nemeth and Staw, 1989), decreases relationship conflicts, and performs effectively (Gruenfeld et al., 1996; Jehn and Shah, 1997; Shah and Jehn, 1993).

In multicultural teams, members are likely to have different interests that create conflicts, but also different approaches to solving those conflicts (Karambayya and Brett, 1989; Karambayya et al., 1992). For example, Asians tend to be more indirect in managing conflict than are Westerners (Earley and Ang, 2003). Asians do not approach the other party explicitly to argue their case, because they innately respect the quality of the relationship that may be hurt by direct comments. For example, “losing face” (an intense form of public humiliation) is a mortifying experience for the Chinese; therefore, no one is confronted directly in a meeting in Chinese society. However, in French society, direct confrontation occurs frequently. Thus, if a team has French-Chinese bicultural members who understand the logic and emotions that contribute to the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral tendencies of the different cultural parties, the process of resolving conflicts will occur more effectively.

Biculturally competent people must analyze how each party thinks when conflict occurs. They must be careful not to attribute the members’ actions and statements to bad intentions. As such, they are less likely to accelerate conflict between the parties and more likely to gain trust. This allows biculturals to play a role as a third party in disputes (Karambayya and Brett, 1989; Karambayya et al., 1992). For example, when the French and

Chinese work together in global project teams based in Shanghai, it is a common to have bilingual French-Chinese members with extensive life or work experience in both countries acting as go-betweens. When problems or conflicts emerge, it is relatively easier for these biculturals to approach both parties to affect a resolution.

To summarize, this model encompasses two important roles that highly biculturally competent individuals play that contribute to multicultural team effectiveness. These roles are the behavioral outcomes of bicultural competence as conceptualized in the model and are critical functions for multicultural team effectiveness. A multicultural team is defined as a cross-cultural social interaction setting that requires highly biculturally competent people, who are keenly aware and fully responsible for the impact of their behaviors and those of others. They then must engage in roles that promote effective team functioning such as boundary spanner and conflict mediator. The positive relationship between multicultural team effectiveness and bicultural competence is the focus of the construct of bicultural competence developed in this article. This discussion thus suggests the following proposition.

Proposition 5: The more bicultural individuals are given the opportunity to play boundary spanning and conflict mediating roles, the more effective multicultural teams will be.

Discussion

This paper has defined the construct of bicultural competence and its impact on multicultural team effectiveness. Bicultural competence is a set of dynamic interacting dimensions consisting of knowledge, cross-cultural abilities (behavioral adaptability and cross-cultural communication skills) linked by CFS and cultural metacognition. Each dimension is a critical feature so that biculturals can play the roles of boundary spanner and conflict mediator to promote multicultural team effectiveness. This definition differs from

related competence concepts in its dimensions; the manner in which these dimensions interact (in particular the role of CFS and cultural metacognition); and the relationship between bicultural competence and the critical roles they play for multicultural team effectiveness.

Bicultural competence, as defined in this article, is based on the literatures of biculturalism and cultural intelligence and opens a new door to research on biculturalism in organizations. Consistent with prior research, yet applying bicultural competence, biculturals' high levels of cultural intelligence in cross-cultural interactions lead to multicultural team effectiveness.

Previous research has documented bicultural competence, focusing in particular on the psychological well-being of immigrants and native-Americans in multicultural environments (e.g., LaFromboise et al., 1993). Systematically analyzing the performance of biculturals' competence in cross-cultural interactions in organizations (such as multicultural teams) has received less attention. This article contributes to this research stream by introducing the concept of bicultural competence; providing a conceptual model of the construct; and describing its impact on multicultural team effectiveness.

This paper has identified the critical dimensions of bicultural competence in cross-cultural interactions. In doing so, it has made a positive association between bicultural competence and two potential roles biculturals play in a multicultural team that promote its effectiveness: boundary spanner and conflict mediator. Because cultural diversity makes it difficult for a team to perform effectively, biculturally competent people must engage in these two roles to promote their teams' knowledge transfer and accelerate the integration process for better performance. Role theory supports how individual level effectiveness impacts team level effectiveness (Kozlowski and Klein, 2000).

In highlighting biculturals' roles in multicultural teams, this paper makes a second contribution by defining bicultural competence in international cross-cultural management.

This paper's definition differs from those previously presented in biculturalism literature regarding the manner in which each dimension interacts dynamically and how it is applied in international business organizations. In addition, its distinct focus on both biculturals' unique cultural frame switching abilities and their high levels of cultural metacognition distinguishes this research from the biculturalism literature by focusing on biculturals' CFS ability and culture-specific skills. It is also distinct from similar work such as cultural intelligence by focusing on cultural metacognition, culture-general skills, cross-cultural competence, intercultural competence, and cross-cultural adaptability. This paper posits that bicultural competence, defined as the combination of culture-specific (cultural frame switching) and culture-general (high levels of cultural metacognition) skills, is an important construct developing theory about bicultural competence and its impact on multicultural team effectiveness.

A third contribution of this approach is that it offers practitioners informed choices regarding how to compose and manage multinational teams. It helps them recognize and understand biculturals and their bicultural competence in increasing the effectiveness of a multicultural team. The approach this paper presents should also encourage the cross-cultural training of bicultural employees to enhance their competence further. By using this model to guide selecting employees and to design customized training, organizations can make more informed investments in their human cultural capital.

Future research

This paper's model and the perspective developed suggest many directions for future research. One would be to test the dynamics in the model, assessing the dimensions of bicultural competence; that is, knowledge, behavioral adaptability, cross-cultural communication skills, and cultural metacognition. Although measuring the dimensions has already been well developed (see for example, Thomas et al., 2008; Johnson et al., 2006 for a

good review), the challenges now are to measure how cultural frame switching dynamically links the three dimensions. More importantly, measuring how bicultural competence applies to effectiveness-promoting roles in multicultural teams should be further explored. Future work should empirically examine the relationships between bicultural competence and the roles they play in the context of a multicultural team. In order to develop a sufficient number of valid scenarios, researchers should seek extensive support and input from practitioners.

Mixed methodologies (qualitative and quantitative) would be an appropriate way to measure this paper's model (e.g., Brannen and Peterson, 2009; Brannen and Salk, 2000; Haas, 2006). First, a deep contextual understanding of biculturals' functioning in multicultural teams requires ethnographic research. Because the model and perspective developed here is a nascent theory (Edmondson and McManus, 2007: 1162), "openness to input from the field helps ensure that researchers identify and investigate key variables over the course of study. Data collection may involve the full immersion of ethnography or, more simply, exploratory interviews with organizational informants". This inductive approach should focus on the process of how bicultural members function in multicultural team settings rather than testing the model.

A quantitative approach would then be useful to measure the dimensions (knowledge, behavioral adaptability, cross-cultural communication skills, and cultural metacognition) of bicultural competence (e.g., Brannen et al., 2009). Empirical analysis could also be applied to the pattern of social networks among biculturals to understand their boundary spanning roles in transferring knowledge and in mediating conflict (e.g., Cohen and Levinthal, 1990; Salk and Brannen, 2005; Tsai, 2001). This quantitative approach could also be applied to measure team performance (e.g., Ancona, 1990; Gladstein, 1984; Reagans and Zuckerman, 2001). With a mixed methodology approach, the model presented here will have increased practical value with valid and reliable data.

The effect of Bicultural Identity Integration (BII; Benet-Martinez et al., 2002) on bicultural competence and their roles for team effectiveness would also be an interesting area to explore. BII refers to the extent to which bicultural people perceive their two cultural identities as either compatible (High BII) or oppositional (Low BII). BII can be an important personal variable that influences bicultural competence and its impact on multicultural team effectiveness; more specifically, in terms of the boundary spanner and conflict mediator roles (Benet-Martinez and Haritatos, 2005; Benet-Martinez et al., 2002; Brannen et al., 2009; Cheng et al., 2006). For example, some research has shown that individuals with high BII exhibit higher levels of innovation in tasks that require identity-related knowledge, which ultimately increases team innovation (Cheng et al., 2008b). Individuals with high BII may directly boost the team's performance by contributing positively to both the task and the team's relational dynamics (Cheng et al., 2008b). Bassett-Jones (2005) argued that higher BII individuals might be able to alleviate team conflict that is often prevalent in multicultural teams. For example, higher BII members may serve as ambassadors (Ancona and Caldwell, 1992b) and facilitate communication between other members.

Another study suggests that low BII biculturals are more cognitively complex due to the inner conflict required to maintain dual cultural identities (Benet-Martinez et al., 2006). As a result, they become more systematic and careful in processing cues from cultural situations, resulting in more complex cultural representations than high BII biculturals (Tadmor et al., 2009). Recently, Brannen et al. (2009) found that the extent to which biculturals experience conflict between their two cultural identities (Low BII) was positively associated with cross-cultural skills such as tolerance for uncertainty, relational skills, empathy, and cultural metacognition. Thus, low BII biculturals may be better equipped to handle the demands of ambiguous, complex, and fast-changing cultural situations (Benet-Martinez et al., 2006: 402).

Psychologically managing multiple cultural identities has an important impact on an individual's psychological well-being, professional achievement, and social networking (Cheng et al., 2008). The degree of BII may moderate for biculturals to be more or less effective in employing their bicultural competence for certain multicultural team roles in a multicultural team. However, research on the effect of BII on bicultural competence has yet to be explored more empirically. Although it is challenging to clearly connect the degree of BII and team task, Table 2 summarizes how different types of biculturals (High BII and Low BII) can contribute more effectively to specific team tasks such as a boundary spanner and conflict mediator.

In addition, research on team effectiveness suggests many other moderating factors on the ability of bicultural competence to influence individuals' roles in multicultural teams. For example, Gladstein (1984) suggested the factors of team composition, team structure, organizational resources available, organizational structure, team process, and group task may be influential. The degree of BII is less likely to be a one single moderating factor; therefore, the conceptual model developed in this paper continues without any moderating factors.

The bicultural's unique ability to use CFS as a linking function between cultural knowledge (cognition) and cross-cultural abilities (behaviors), and its effect on bicultural competence also requires further empirical examination. In the conceptual model this paper develops, biculturals' CFS ability is one of critical dimensions that drive bicultural competence. Alternatively, biculturals' CFS and its cognitive, dynamic interaction with cultural metacognition may be a facet of bicultural competence. Because the conceptual model this paper outlines is tentative, and the relationships among constructs are complex, it is subject to further development and testing. That is, for biculturals' to be effective in cross-cultural interactions requires not only the ability to switch cultural frames, but also high levels of cultural metacognition. Future research should explore the relationship between cultural frame switching and cultural metacognition, and its effect on bicultural competence.

The value of biculturals and understanding their roles in team effectiveness in a multicultural context also offers implications for theory about virtual teams. Research on issues such as the need for face-to-face meetings, cross-cultural communication, and trust building could be reinterpreted through the lens of bicultural competence as developed here. For example, given biculturals' competencies, new ways can be identified to span cultural boundaries, improve a team's cross-cultural communication, and mediate conflicts. In turn, these could improve the team's knowledge transfer and promote trust building.

Beyond the cross-cultural context, highlighting the roles of biculturals can contribute to the literature of organizational knowledge and learning by showing that human capital characteristics can facilitate knowledge transfer. Prior theory and research have found that knowledge is more difficult to transfer if it is more tacit or causally ambiguous (Brannen, 2004; Szulanski, 1996; Zander and Kogut, 1995). Explicit knowledge, on the other hand, can be transferred more easily with well-designed document databases (Hansen and Haas, 2001). This paper focuses attention on biculturals who can acquire and transfer such implicit and re-contextualized knowledge. Future examining these skills would offer further insight into the roles biculturals play in transferring tacit knowledge. In addition, recent research on biculturalism has found that bicultural people are more creative (Cheng et al., 2008a; Leung and Chiu, in press; Leung et al., 2008). For example, Cheng and her colleagues (2008a,b) focused on high BII individuals in multicultural teams in terms of their greater creativity in team innovation and Leung and Chiu (in press) have shown that simultaneously combining two cultural networks, not merely being exposed to cultural knowledge, is essential for elevating creativity. This indicates that biculturals can capitalize on the benefits of their multicultural experiences (Tadmor et al., 2009). Future research should empirically examine this possibility.

Prior research on team composition (e.g., Janis, 1982) has suggested that a mix of monoculturals (locals), bi- or multiculturalists, and other team members is important to avoid potential biases that may arise if multicultural teams are dominated by too many similar-minded individuals (Haas, 2006). Haas (2006) also found that too many monoculturals or too many biculturals reduces team effectiveness. For example, if the team is composed mainly by monoculturals (e.g., A and B cultures) and biculturals (e.g., A+B cultures), it might not be a good fit in terms of building trust. This is because the biculturals' effectiveness on cross-cultural interaction may be perceived as too flexible and difficult to trust. Thus, multicultural team composition and its impact on biculturals' effectiveness in cross-cultural interaction and team effectiveness would be an interesting field to explore.

Practical implications

For MNCs, the theory of bicultural competence and its impact on multicultural team effectiveness is useful for composing teams. Certain features in a cultural context may be more or less challenging for some biculturals given their particular personal attributes such as personality, skills, and cultural experiences. Thus, management should consider the fit between the demands of a team and the characteristics of its bicultural employees.

Researchers have recently emphasized the importance of specificity in training (Mendenhall and Stahl, 2000). This model can help multinational companies customize training to the specific needs of bicultural employees. Training should focus on developing a particular dimension (for example, behavioral adaptability) or on one of the roles (for example, the boundary-spanning role) in which a particular bicultural presents less competence. The first step for successful training is, of course, to evaluate a bicultural employee's level in each dimension of bicultural competence and in the two roles that contribute to team effectiveness. By using the model this paper presents as a blueprint for intervention and for teaching the bicultural workforce, MNCs will help biculturals improve

their competence through tailor-made training. This investment will ultimately improve business performance.

MNCs that use project-driven multicultural teams face challenges in managing cultural diversity that can critically affect team performance. Clearly, biculturals can improve team effectiveness, which ultimately contributes to an organization's success. Still, further empirical studies should reinforce the conceptual model this paper develops.

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Figure 1-1 A conceptual model of bicultural competence and its impact on multicultural team effectiveness

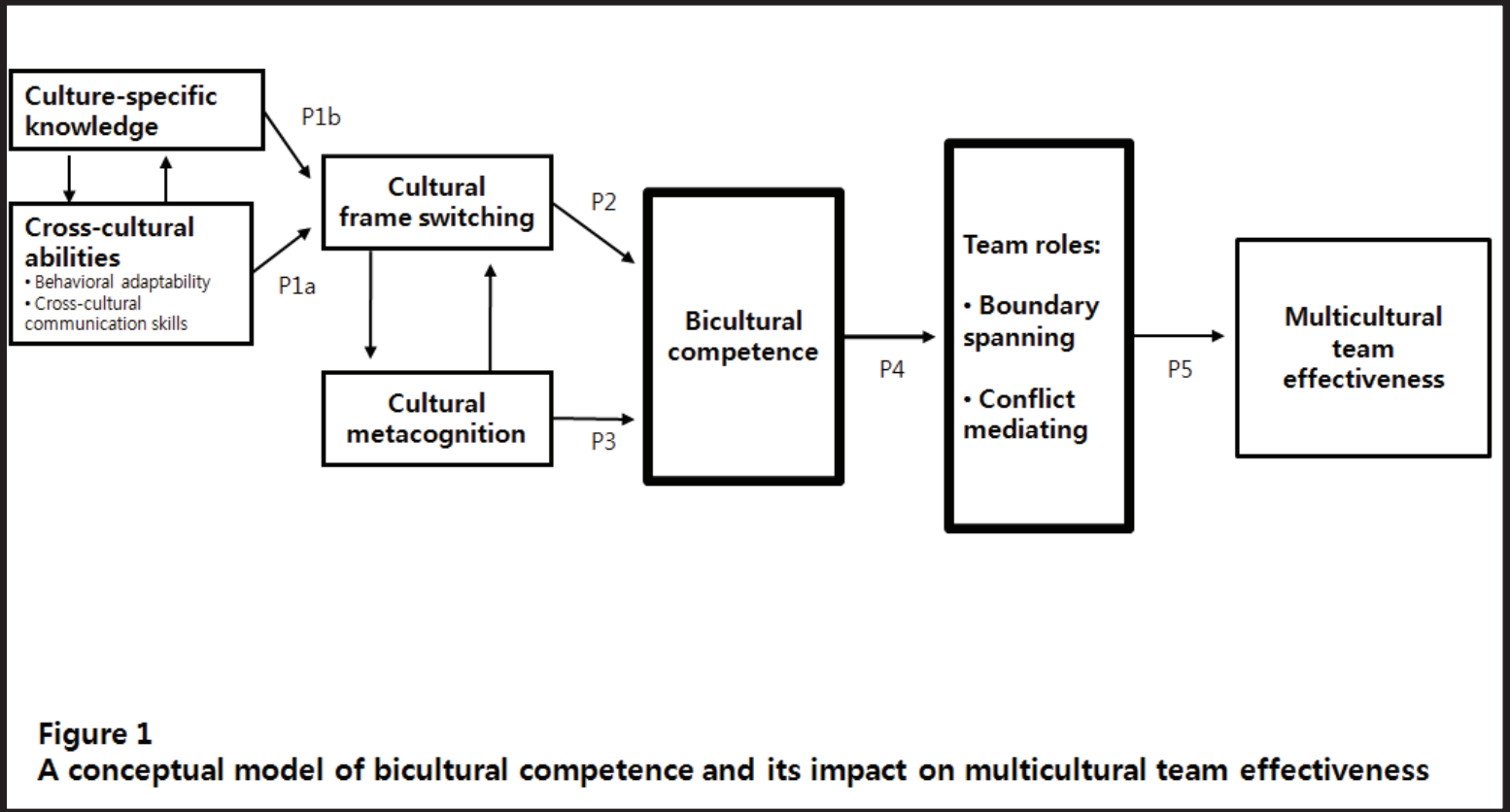


Table 1-1 Comparisons among bicultural competence and other cultural-related competences

Concept	Field	Authors	Definition	Content
Cross-cultural competence	International business	Johnson, Lenartowicz, & Apud, 2006	Cross-cultural competence in international business is an individual's effectiveness in drawing upon a set of knowledge, skills, and personal attributes in order to work successfully with people from different national cultural backgrounds at home or abroad.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knowledge ▪ Skills ▪ Personal attributes
Intercultural competence	Intercultural management	Abe & Wiseman, 1983; Friedman & Antal, 2005; Gertsen, 1990; Hammer, Gudykunst, & Wiseman, 1978	Intercultural competence is the ability to explore one's repertoire and actively construct an appropriate strategy. It involves overcoming the constraints embedded in an individual's culturally shaped repertoire, creating new responses, and thereby expanding the repertoire of potential interactions and behaviors available in future intercultural interaction. (Friedman and Antal, 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communicative Behavior ▪ AffectiveCognitive (Gersten, 1990)
Cultural intelligence	International business	Thomas et al., 2008	A system of interacting knowledge and skills, linked by cultural metacognition, that allows people to adapt to, select, and shape the cultural aspects of their environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knowledge (content and process) ▪ Skills ▪ Metacognition
Cross-cultural adaptability	Psychology	Kelley & Meyers, 1999	Cross-cultural adaptability inventory was developed to measure cross-cultural adaptability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Flexibility ▪ Emotional resilience ▪ Perceptual acuity ▪ Personal autonomy

Table 1-2 Bicultural Identity Integration (BII) and Bicultural employees' roles in multicultural team tasks: Adapted from Ancona and Caldwell's (1992b) four boundary-spanning activities and Jehn and Mannix's (2001) three types of conflicts.

Team roles	Team task	Types of bicultural		Specific contribution to the task
		High BII	Low BII	
Boundary spanning	Knowledge acquisition		Better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developing contacts externally ▪ Obtaining competitive market and technical ideas from a different part of the organization (those with access to information about external competitive trends (<i>Scout activity</i>, Ancona & Caldwell, 1992b))
	Knowledge application (sharing)	Better		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developing team's network density ▪ Facilitating more focused communication than the more general scanning done through scout activities; <i>Ambassador and Task coordinator activity</i>, Ancona & Caldwell, 1992b)
Conflict mediation	Mediating relational conflict	Better		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promoting group value consensus ▪ Building trust
	Mediating process conflict		Better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Delegating well ▪ Clarifying responsibility and task ▪ Handling the demands of ambiguous, complex, and fast-changing situations (Brannen et al., 2009)
	Mediating task conflict	Better		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promoting decision-making ▪ Creative ideas ▪ Clarifying goals

MULTICULTURALS AS CULTURAL BROKERS: THEIR ROLES IN NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT TEAMS

Through a 10-month ethnographic field study of multicultural workforce in global new product development teams, I build theory about cultural brokerage role. Specifically, I examine how multiculturals influence team work processes and outcomes by managing knowledge processes and handling conflicts. Multiculturals' cultural brokerage in global teams was identified through bringing new local product and market knowledge, translating cultural nuances, and connecting geographically diverse knowledge and skills for a team's knowledge processes; reducing inter-regional misunderstanding and displaying flexible behavior to do with people from diverse regions and cultures for a conflict management. Implications of my findings for both theory and practice are discussed.

Keywords: Cultural Brokerage, Multiculturalism, Global Team Effectiveness, New product development process in Cosmetic Multinational firms, Ethnography.

Global teams in multinational corporations (MNCs) have become the network where people from diverse cultures must find ways to work together effectively. The ability to leverage diversity is one of the most significant challenges MNCs face in today's environment. Indeed, sources of learning are becoming more dispersed both geographically and organizationally, and workforce demographics echo society's increasing multicultural complexity. Particularly in today's knowledge-intensive global industries, managers must excel at the softer, collaborative skills that facilitate co-learning and engage in knowledge sharing across differentiated contexts. Critical to operationalizing these new mandates is the ability to negotiate strong, effective, and synergistic working relationships within and across diverse organizational and cultural contexts.

In practice, the cross-cultural skill sets needed to manage multicultural collaboration and integration effectively are displayed most vividly in global teams within MNCs. To date, however, limited research has examined such teams, with even fewer studies on multicultural

individuals in multinational corporations. Further, virtually no research has sought to understand the role multicultural individuals play to ensure that their teams function effectively. Increasingly, people with multicultural origins—biculturals and multicultural individuals—are numerous in the MNCs, and they constitute a rich research resource to bridge and integrate across culturally diverse contexts (Brannen, Thomas, & Garcia, 2009).

The purpose of the present study is to build and enrich theory around the cultural brokerage role (Geertz, 1960) that multicultural project managers play in global teams. To accomplish this aim, I conducted a 10-month ethnographic field study in a leading cosmetic and consumer goods MNC. I examined the cultural brokerage in the context of new product development teams. Specifically, I examined how multiculturals influence knowledge processes and handling conflicts in global teams. I define “multicultural” as an individual with more than one cultural identity (Hong, Morris, Chiu, & Benet-Martinez, 2000), with latent skills gained through (often) life-long cultural experiences working and living with culturally different people (Benet-Martinez, Lee, & Leu, 2006; Brannen et al., 2009). I found that multiculturals play a critical role in team work processes within global teams where members’ cultural/national heterogeneity seems more complicated than organizational researchers have so far recognized (e.g., Argote & McGath, 1993; Elron, Shamir, & Ben-Ari, 1998; Jackson, May, & Whitney, 1995; Jackson, et al., 1992; Lawrence, 1997; Snow, Snell, Davison, & Hambrick, 1996). In the present study, my aim is to advance our understanding of the implications of employing multicultural workers by exploring how they interact and what makes them more or less successful at integrating diverse members who may not share similar cultural traits, norms, values, or ways of approaching tasks.

PERSPECTIVES ON MULTICULTURALS IN GLOBAL TEAMS

Little research has examined the roles of multiculturals in global teams, yet an amalgamation of perspectives draw on psychology, sociology, anthropology, and international

management (Benet-Martinez et al., 2002, 2006; Brannen et al., 2009; Hong, 2010; Hong et al., 2000; Geertz, 1960; Press, 1969). These perspectives share a focus on the evolving, intertwined relationship between multiculturalism and its social-cultural/institutional contexts. Thus, one way to understand multiculturals in global teams is to examine how they influence team work processes and outcomes.

Team Heterogeneity

Theories on the impact of heterogeneity on team effectiveness are also relevant to the present study, which focuses on the roles multiculturals play in global teams, where multiculturals enact their brokerage role for work processes. (For an excellent review on team heterogeneity, see Earley & Mosakowski, 2000.) Three literature streams inform how team heterogeneity impacts performance: the cultural diversity literature (e.g., Cox, 1992; Larkey, 1996; Maznevski, 1994; Watson, Kumar, & Michaelson, 1993); organizational demography research on team composition (e.g., Hambrick & Mason, 1984; Ibarra, 1992; Lawrence, 1997; O'Reilly, Caldwell, & Barnett, 1989; Pfeffer, 1983; Tsui, Egan, & O'Reilly, 1992); groups research (e.g., Hackman, 1976, 1987; McGrath, 1984; Moscovici, 1976; Nemeth, 1986; Tajfel, 1982; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner, 1985). Generally, these three perspectives all suggest that a moderate level of heterogeneity can balance a homogeneous team's performance (Amabile, 1988).

In contrast, Earley and Mosakowski (2000) recently suggested that both homogeneous and highly heterogeneous teams will be more effective than moderately heterogeneous teams. Two aspects of Earley and Mosakowski's (2000) study motivate the present study on the roles of multiculturals in global team. First, at the individual level of analysis, Earley and Mosakowski paid less attention to individual cultural background. Some team members in their field work must be multiculturals (e.g., see the American and British in Team 4 of Study 1, p.32). Second, at the team level of analysis, in high performance teams—low and high

heterogeneity teams—have multicultural members. Integrating these two perspectives might logically lead to postulating that the roles multiculturals play as cultural brokers is an important function for team work processes and outcomes. The teams (i.e., global team in Figure 1 Diverse team vs. Global team) that emerged from my ethnographic field work looked much more complicated than diverse team (See Figure 1) in terms of individual and team-level cultural heterogeneity. In contrast to previous research, while the present study integrates literature on multiculturalism and cultural brokerage, it also pays careful attention to individual cultural backgrounds (i.e., multiculturalism) in analyzing team heterogeneity. Indeed, the present paper opens new discussion on the importance of individual roles on team effectiveness.

Cultural Brokerage

Brokerage involves boundary spanning roles (Ancona, 1990; Ancona & Caldwell, 1992a, 1992b; Au & Fukuda, 2002; Thomas, 1994) across communities. Organizational researchers have examined brokerage from three main perspectives: structural, practical (relational), and cultural. From the structural conception of brokerage, brokers are structurally central (Gould & Fernandez, 1989; Burt, 1992; Fernandez & Gould, 1994) conduits for accessing information and thus can obtain information, power, and control benefits directly from their individual use of that information. In contrast, from a practical or relational conception of brokerage, brokers connect disparate people, knowledge, or ideas (Hargadon & Sutton, 1997; Baker & Obstfeld, 1999; Obstfeld, 2005). In this role, they must integrate different ideas, innovations, and contributions from others and synthesize them into a coherent whole to obtain both individual and mutual benefits.

While structural and practical views on brokerage invoke the use of brokerage activities in knowledge processes for innovative work, for Anthropologists, a cultural broker lives on tension and attempts to serve both local and national groups. That is, culture brokerage, the

process of bridging cultural, social, political and often-opposite perspectives into an innovative whole is common to a wide variety of contexts: a local Moslem teacher in post-revolutionary Indonesia (Geertz, 1960); local teachers in a Yucantan peasant community (Press, 1969); modern African chiefs (Fallers, 1955); a Maya Indian community (Nach, 1966); a chiropractor (Wardwell, 1951/2); medical doctors (David, 1960; Lo, 2010, see Lo & Stacey, 2008 for a comprehensive review); and nurses in Bostwana (Barbee, 1987).

Wolf views the “cultural broker” as an individual who “is capable of operating within both the community and national spheres. Cultural broker stands guard over the crucial junctures of synapses of relationships which connect the local system to the larger whole.” (1956, p. 1072). Cultural brokers must have mul(bi)ticulturalism (true competence rather than just exhibiting a few behavioral elements and mastery of a language) as an insider and an outsider. The empirical evidence to date has suggested that culture-straddling brokers developed their innovator role by connecting the local and national levels of socio-cultural integration and have fostered effective communication networks among sophisticated culture and folk culture, even in a socially and culturally heterogeneous country such as, for example, Indonesia (Geertz, 1960). Despite the prevalence of cultural brokerage across social and organizational contexts, theoretical conceptions have not kept pace with this phenomenon with multiculturals in global teams, where managing cultural heterogeneity among members becomes a critical challenge.

Multiculturalism

Scholars examining multi- or biculturalism often focus on the antecedents of (bi)multiculturalism; for example, more complex cultural representations (Benet-Martinez et al., 2006) by switching between dual cultural schemas (called Cultural Frame Switching [CFS], Hong et al., 2000), greater integrative complexity (Tadmor & Tetlock, 2006; Tadmor, Tetlock, & Peng, 2009), and the effect on bicultural identity integration (Benet-Martinez &

Haritatos, 2005; Benet-Martinez et al., 2002; Cheng, Lee, & Benet-Martinez, 2006) on bicultural competence and psychological well-being. Furthermore, several researchers in international management have recently suggested that multiculturals have higher levels of culture-general skills such as cultural metacognition than do monoculturals (Brannen et al., 2009; Thomas et al., 2008). Finally Hong (2010) defined bicultural competence as a set of dynamic interacting dimensions consisting of cultural knowledge, cross-cultural abilities (behavioral adaptability and cross-cultural communication skills) linked by CFS and cultural metacognition. Most of these scholars suggested applications of multiculturalism in cross-cultural business contexts (e.g., Hong 2010; LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993). How multiculturals exploit such skills in the global work place are as yet largely unrecognized or unanswered.

METHODS

With the present research, I sought to understand how multiculturals influence work processes and outcomes in global teams based on how they exploit skills acquired from multicultural experiences. To generate novel, theoretically grounded insights (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Vaughan, 1992), I selected 25 multinational companies (MNCs) operating in Paris that employ a multicultural workforce based on information gathered from their websites and reputation. Selection criteria included the number and locations of foreign subsidiaries, the company's ranking in related business, and the company's Human Resource policy related to valuing diversity. After the first selection, I discussed my choices with my five thesis supervisors, who have conducted research with various MNCs, and senior professors who have conducted extensive research on MNCs both in France and worldwide. Together, we narrowed down the list to seven companies in different industries that represented the most appropriate research contexts. I sent my research proposal (two-page summary) and my CV to the seven selected firms. Subsequently, four of the companies

contacted me. Two companies are cooperating with this research: a leading cosmetic and consumer goods multinational and a leading auditing and business consulting multinational. The present study was completed with the help of the cosmetic and consumer goods multinational, using the pseudonym BEAU.

BEAU was an ideal site to study the roles of multicultural companies in global teams. Most important, it employs many multicultural employees working in divisions such as new product development, international marketing, and international recruiting. As the world's largest fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) MNC, BEAU needed employees who could develop products that led global markets. Beginning in late 1990, BEAU realized that French project managers were limited in their ability to develop products to satisfy local consumers. BEAU thus started to recruit other individuals who were more qualified to develop products for global consumers. The recruits were called '*international talent*' at the company's headquarters (HQ).

Research Site

As a non-participant observer, I conducted a 10-month ethnography at BEAU at their Paris location. BEAU has 67,500 employees in 130 subsidiaries worldwide. The present study focused mainly on the company's new product development division and international recruiting division at the company's HQ. Most of the company's multicultural employees worked at the Paris HQ. The new product development division employed 160 project managers. Of these 160 project managers, 40% were recruited directly from local subsidiaries and 60% were recruited in France. Overall, 40% of the project managers are multicultural. BEAU has maintained this recruitment strategy in new product development for approximately 10 years.

A basic description of multicultural project managers in new product development is a prerequisite to understanding how they influenced teamwork processes and outcomes. The

work of new product development at BEAU progressed in phases, from creating new product concepts and into promoting those products. Each new product took one and half or two years to progress from being conceptualized as a new product to the manufacturing phase. In the concept development phase, multicultural project managers developed a new product concept by working with an experienced team leader (i.e., directors with more than five years of experience as a team leader and a project manager). They also worked with other organizational groups such as research and development (R&D), the market research team, the international marketing team, and local subsidiaries (See Figure 2 Individual and Team Cultural Heterogeneity). Developing new product concepts was a complicated process. It involved various organizational groups within HQ and across regional offices so that projects would have novelty in either local or global markets. At the same time, the newly created concept had to be coherent with existing product lines (e.g., hair care products that used only natural plants) and the product's public reputation (e.g., environmental-friendly and people-tested). Finally, the novelty had to be feasible for manufacturing without attracting any global legal problems. Developing new product concepts lasted from six months to a year depending on the product's level of novelty. In developing a new product concept, multicultural project managers had to present their work process to top management on a regular basis, both formally and informally. After they obtained approval for their new product concept, they presented their project at the '*la journée mondiale*', BEAU's largest and most important yearly event at HQ. This event attracted all regional directors from all around the globe who came to evaluate future products (i.e., those that would hit the market in one or two years). If feedback was positive from the regional directors attending this event, the multicultural project managers moved to the next phase of actually designing the product.

In the design phase, multicultural project managers composed ingredients, chose product colors, and designed packaging for the product. Their offices and work spaces were

decorated with product samples (e.g., previous and current products), packaging samples (e.g., boxes, cases, and bottles), and competitors' product samples and even some non-related products (i.e., Perrier in aluminum cans), all of which helped them choose colors for packaging. Their work spaces looked like a small supermarket corner where people bought shampoos and lipsticks. During this phase, multicultural employees also worked with different organizational groups within HQ and across local subsidiaries, much as they did in the first phase. In addition, they started working with the packaging team (often outsourced) and manufacturing team (called Factory).

At the final phase, the multicultural project managers involved employees who executed promotional campaigns through television, the Internet, and other advertising activities. They set up all visual images of products, articulated the products' selling points, and chose the best way to promote the products they developed. Team leaders with more experience led the promotion campaign directly. More specifically, experienced team leaders travelled to local subsidiaries and directed all processes of promotion. Product promotion also involved various new tasks were often outsourced to new groups. For example, to promote a make-up product for Chinese women, the promotion team hired a famous local movie star, local make-up and uniform team, local stage setting team, and a professional camera crew (which was a French team). Television commercials are typically expensive and take months to complete.

Data Sources

My objective with the present study is to examine the roles of multicultural employees and how they are engaged in the team work processes and outcomes in global teams. As such, the design of the present study is open-ended, which allows unplanned themes to emerge from the data among firms in different industries. In this way, I can cross-check internal consistency and reliability (Denzin, 1978).

Ethnographic field work

BEAU designated one senior professional as my main contact person who was responsible for planning meetings, interviews, and observations for my field work. Before I met this individual face-to-face, I sent each firm's senior professional the selection criteria for interviewees and consulted with my contact concerning ideal interviewees and the firm's ability to fulfill my request. In a two-page description of selection criteria (see Appendix A The Ideal Profiles of Interviewees and Team Observation), I provided details concerning what defines multiculturals and monoculturals, multicultural team working experience, and how many of interviewees I needed with multiculturals, monoculturals, and managers.

Because I knew little about multiculturals in organizations when I began this study, I started by conducting interviews with top management, six regional directors, and one HR professional. My goal was to learn whether they were aware of the firm's multicultural workforce, why they think that multiculturals are important for their business, and how they use multiculturals.

I elicited their views and observations regarding multiculturals and their personal experiences in working with and managing multiculturals in teams. Through these interviews, I learned that firms recognize a multicultural workforce and have tried to use their unique competencies for various business purposes. For example, they use multiculturals' experience in new product development, knowledge transfer within and between HQ and subsidiaries, team effectiveness, international market development, and international recruiting. Most agreed that it is fundamental that organizations employ a multicultural workforce in order to develop their business globally.

I then conducted 36 *in situ* interviews (27 multiculturals and 9 monoculturals; see Table 1 for Interviewee Profile and Team Composition, Table 2 for Demographic Details of Interviewees) in a variety of hierarchical and functional positions. Most multicultural

interviewees have lived abroad at least two years. On average, each had lived in three different countries. Most of them participated in an exchange program abroad during their school days and travelled extensively both professionally and privately. All speak more than two languages. Most of the teams were composed of at least three different nationalities. I also conducted nine interviews with French (monocultural) managers to understand their perspectives on multiculturals and their working experience with multiculturals. Interviews typically lasted 100 minutes, ranging from 60 minutes (team leaders/managers and HR manager) to more than two hours (most multiculturals). All interviews were audio-recorded and were transcribed in verbatim. Although I modified interview protocols during each signal of emerging themes (Spradley, 1979), common to each interview were a set of protocol questions addressing: (1) how individual cultural identities are formed, (2) how they identify themselves culturally, (3) what are critical incidents in their identity(ies) formation process, (4) how cultural identity(ies) have impacted work performance and interacting with (culturally different) others in teams (Appendix B for Interview Protocol).

I also conducted a semi-structured interview with the director and manager in the Human Resource department. During the interview, I mainly asked when BEAU started recruiting multiculturals (the HR manager called such employees '*international talent*'), why BEAU decided to hire a multicultural workforce, and how BEAU recruited and managed these employees once they were recruited. In addition, in terms of managing a multicultural workforce, I asked about multiculturals' overall performance, the challenges of managing them, and the challenges a multicultural workforce faces, and the company's future recruitment strategy. I also had several informal discussions with directors and managers in charge of DIVERSITY at BEAU. During these discussions, I asked them about BEAU's current and future strategy for a diversity policy in recruitment.

Most team meetings at BEAU were confidential because they discussed the process of

developing new products. I, however, observed various team meetings in the new product development department, including brainstorming sessions, bi-weekly meetings, and meetings with other functional departments. Because I wanted to observe more team meetings in other departments, I also attended team meetings in the international recruiting department. I selected a team with a multicultural project manager and members with diverse cultural backgrounds. Team observation lasted two full half days. Each day, I stayed in their office to observe how they worked and attended a three-hour meeting. This team had a regular meeting every two weeks. After the team meeting, I usually joined them for their coffee break. In addition, I visited the site at least twice per week during the ten-month data collection process. This way, I could observe employees in the company cafeteria and other public places (e.g., waiting areas, and libraries). In addition, I observed employees' activities at company-sponsored activities, conferences, and presentations. Some of the multicultural project managers also invited me to lunch and to dinner and parties after work, which I often attended.

Other important sources of data included written materials. The documents included curriculum vitae (CVs) that described the details of multiculturals' working and living experiences across countries, project pamphlets, organizational magazines, and press and media publications. The CVs of the multicultural project managers were one of the key elements that helped me understand their multicultural experience and how they formed their cultural identities. I usually asked multicultural project managers to send me their CV before meeting with them, and I studied these documents carefully to prepare for the interview. I also took some pictures of them, the products they developed, and their office decorations. Taken together, these secondary sources of data provided a richer context for understanding interviewees' responses and sparked new questions for interview protocols that could be addressed in subsequent interviews with informants.

Data Analysis

My data analysis followed an inductive, grounded theory development process (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Eisenhardt, 1989; Sutton, 1991). I wrote memos on reflections within a day after each interview and observation, open-coded transcribed interviews and my observation journal, and created a list of emerging themes. In order to visualize relationships between different parts of the data and between the data and theoretical ideas (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 44), I, in addition to manual coding, used Nvivo9, a qualitative data analysis program. This approach required an iterative process of theoretical sampling and comparing and contrasting examples from the data to build theoretical categories that were compared and interrelated to form the basis for the present study. At the same time, I updated my interview protocol and research agenda for the next day of field work.

I analyzed data and adjusted categories periodically throughout the fieldwork to confirm the test categories and further focus my study. When the field work concluded, I reanalyzed field notes, memos, and interview transcripts to determine how my understanding and the practices of multiculturals working in global teams differed and the impact that this had on teamwork processes and outcomes within the new product development process. In the present study, I begin by describing the work contexts of the multiculturals and their teams, including multiculturalism in practice, locus of practices, and team cultural heterogeneity. Because of the cultural heterogeneity in individuals and teams and the complexity of the product development process, multicultural project managers could develop a culture-straddling broker role across organizational, cultural, and regional boundaries.

Local Work Context

Multiculturals, Biculturals, or International Talent. Beginning with their recruitment, multicultural project managers at BEAU gained credibility for new product development by being labeled '*international talent*' by the Human Resource department. Most had at least five

years of working experience in sales and marketing in local subsidiaries prior to being recruited for an overseas assignment. Most recruited in France had at least 12 months of intensive training in product development at HQ and were graduates of top business schools in France. At BEAU, they were called *'the stars'* or *'crème de la crème'* (meaning the best out of the best). BEAU designated an HR manager who managed the performance and career development of these employees who were anticipated to be top performers.

To identify multiculturalism, during the interview, I asked participants about their cultural backgrounds, including their parents' cultural backgrounds and foreign experiences, whether it was living, studying, or working in a country other than their home country. I also let them position themselves within a scale of cultural identity(ies) (see Figure 3 Cultural Identity Definition). The results were surprising. Most self-identified as multiculturals, not a bicultural, because they felt their cultural experiences were beyond biculturalism. After this finding, I changed the focus of my research from 'biculturals' to 'multiculturals'.

Locus of practices. Through all product development phases, multicultural project managers worked with their colleagues in teams within and across departments at HQ and local subsidiaries. Multicultural project managers worked with other organizational members on three levels. On the first level, they worked in their own team (called the 'unit team'), where they managed informal relationships among other product managers. One product development team was composed of two or three product managers who were responsible for developing different products for the same region. For example, for Latin America, one team (Lebanese-Spanish-American) was in charge of women's hair coloring, while another (French-Irish-Cambodian) was in charge of women's hair care (hair damage). They shared physical space so that they could exchange ideas, information, and feedback. At BEAU, therefore, the levels of cultural heterogeneity within individuals and teams seemed more

complicated than the concept of a diverse team as described by the diversity literature as I described above.

On the second level, multicultural project managers worked with their direct boss (called *N+I*: N standing for Niveau in French meaning level) and organizational members within HQ. Although more than 40% of the project managers in the new product development division were multiculturals, the majority of their direct bosses were monoculturals. Interestingly, this trend became even more obvious higher in the hierarchy: the higher in hierarchy, the more monoculturals of a dominant culture were found. Each multicultural project manager worked closely with the international marketing department, which was in charge of marketing the same projects. Although marketing managers focused on overall marketing strategy, project managers focused on creating products. By the nature of the work, they worked very closely; sometimes, marketing managers pushed project managers to advance their work in order to meet the project deadline as promised to local subsidiaries. Most of the unit teams did not set a regular meeting schedule. Project managers met their direct boss quite freely any time they needed or *vice versa*. Regular divisional team meetings with top management were held with other unit teams (for the same product line, such as hair care Asia and hair care international), other functional departments, and teams in local subsidiaries. Irregular meetings with other functional departments (e.g., R&D, supply chain, advertising, and packaging) were held based on the phase of the product development process.

On the third level, multicultural project managers worked with local subsidiaries, via email, phone calls, and video conferences. They also visited local offices regularly. It was the project managers' direct bosses, however, who visited local subsidiaries more frequently—at least once a month—due to various phases of each product development process. This occurred because a team was in charge of developing several products at the same time. In addition, because multicultural project managers were mostly operating within a tight

schedule, they accompanied their direct boss depending on the urgency and importance of the work.

These detailed descriptions are vital to analyzing multiculturals' work at BEAU, as they suggest the dynamics of frequent interaction between multiculturals and other members of different groups in a global work context. As described above, understanding team heterogeneity at an individual level (i.e., multicultural members) and at the team level (i.e., various teams at HQ and local subsidiaries) was distinct from multicultural team literature. These understandings are important for accomplishing work within this specialized use of a multicultural workforce that has previously been taken for granted within organizations. It was difficult to discern, therefore, the differences within multicultural project managers. When members of different communities needed to interact to fix problems, however, and monoculturals had a difficult time understanding local knowledge, multiculturals became vital to smooth work processes. Below, I describe how multiculturals influence work processes and outcomes in global teams, in which I identify two critical roles: managing knowledge processes and handling conflicts.

CULTURAL BROKERAGE IN GLOBAL PRACTICE

Figure 3 illustrates the structure and ordering of the data from specific, first-order categories used by informants to more general, researcher-induced second-order themes. Because of their direct relevance to roles played multiculturals at BEAU, the second-order themes served as the basis for the subsequent grounded theory of multiculturals' roles. Figure 3 is not intended to be a causal model but, instead, is a representation of the core concepts and their relationships that served as the basis for the emerging theoretical frame-work and a full grounded theory model.

Table 3 presents representative quotations that substantiate the second-order themes I identified. The first three roles in managing teams' knowledge processes-brining new local

product and market knowledge, translating cultural nuances, and connecting geographically diverse knowledge and skills-occurred more-or-less sequential and were associated with each other. The latter two roles in managing teams' conflicts-reducing inter-regional misunderstanding, and displaying flexible behavior to do with people from diverse regions and cultures-were recurrent and occurred sequential fashion. Together, these sequential and recurrent roles led to the development of the grounded theory, articulated after the findings narrative.

At BEAU multicultural project managers in the new product development department worked with various organizational groups within HQ and across regions. They worked at the boundaries of the creative process, brokering relationships among several teams at HQ, including market research, on/offline international communication, merchandizing, R&D, and local teams. To develop a creative product successfully for a global market, multicultural project managers operated in an area of continuously changing market trends, which form and dissolve with the appearance and disappearance of new economic opportunities. Multicultural project managers worked on tension between and attempted to serve both HQ and local teams. They acted as a focal point for relating the local or HQ-oriented culture to the global and the local-oriented members to the HQ-oriented culture or *vice versa*. In navigating this tension, I found that multicultural project managers played a unique role in two areas: managing knowledge processes and handling conflicts in global teams.

Role 1: Managing Knowledge Processes in Teams

In creating new products, multicultural project managers at BEAU manage two kinds of knowledge: product-related knowledge and organizational/practical knowledge. The multicultural project managers' challenge was to integrate the creative options to be pursued, while transforming local-oriented knowledge to global-product knowledge for higher quality products. Multicultural project managers also introduced new ways to solve problems for

effective work processes. To bring a creative product to fruition, they moved through three phases during all stages of new product development: (1) bringing new local product and market knowledge, (2) translating cultural nuances, (3) connecting geographically diverse knowledge and skills. Throughout these phases, multicultural project managers strove to cultivate ideas across cultural boundaries to build generative possibilities for new product concepts and then select or reject options from the possibility set.

Bringing new local product and market knowledge

At BEAU, the first mission for multicultural project managers is to create a new product concept, which must have novelty. The obvious source of novelty was new customer needs. New market trends were locally oriented, may cross regions, or be globally oriented as well. For example, a locally-oriented trend would be an Asian male's interest in a skin care product in Asia. A concept that crosses regions might be a Western female's interest in an Asian female's skin care know-how or product ingredients in American and European markets. A global issue might be increasing public concerns for environmentally friendly products using natural ingredients (e.g., oriental medicine). In this industry, the source of novelty has two characteristics: it changes quickly and it flows across cultural/regional boundaries as shown by the examples above. Multicultural project managers at BEAU were expected not only to know what these attributes were but, more importantly, generate new market trends. In addition, to secure the new product concept, they worked with other members (e.g., team leaders, regional directors, R&D, and local subsidiaries) by reviewing differing opinions of the commercial viability of new product concepts. In response to these challenges, multicultural project managers: (1) bringing new local product and process knowledge and (2) bringing local market knowledge. Their goal was to improve the project's quality and secure the support needed to move forward.

Bringing new local product and process knowledge. To create an engaging commercial success for new products while differentiating current products (including competitors' products), multicultural project managers at BEAU collected large volumes of information about local and global market trends for inspiration. The source of novelty was achieved by cultivating knowledge across national cultural boundaries. However, in the product development process, when novelty arose (e.g., new customer interest in oriental medicine or opportunities in former Communist countries), collaboration among members was required to share and assess such novelty. Multicultural project managers at BEAU were brought onto teams to compensate for shortfalls in deep local, contextual knowledge that monocultural product managers may not have had. In other words, they reduced team members' misunderstandings between HQ and local subsidiary cultures by co-creating common ground, which transformed members' understanding of the local culture and market trends. It was not an easy task to develop new products in existing markets. More difficult yet was to develop a new market and at the same time develop new products for that market. For example, a Hong Kong-Canadian-Singaporean multicultural project manager, who explained the use of Chinese oriental medicine, which has never been introduced to Western countries. A French director noted the following:

People are more and more interested in Chinese oriental medicine. For example, the effect of ginseng is quite well known to worldwide consumers. Our team tries to find some natural ingredients for new hair care product. J (Hong Kong-Canadian-Singaporean) knows all the Chinese medicine that has no translation either in English or in French because it's so authentic. J does not only explain these ingredients but also suggest some ways we (team) can use for our new products. (French director)

This multicultural manager improved her team's knowledge about the meaning and use of underexploited ingredients, which helped members develop new hair-care products using specific oriental medicine. The fact that more Westerner consumers appreciate products using

Chinese (oriental) medicine stands for change, as consumer choice and behavior are major factors in market trend change.

Bringing local market knowledge. To infuse novelty into their new products, multicultural project managers at BEAU combined several ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ characteristics. For example, when BEAU organized a new team to explore new markets in Eastern European countries, it hired a Polish-French project manager for this particular project. As a team leader, an American-French regional director emphasized not only the Polish-French manager’s in-depth knowledge of consumers in the region, but also the way this multicultural project manager helped generate a richer understanding of local culture. The team was in charge of developing cosmetics for the East-European market. Here, a regional director noted:

The Polish-French project manager was raised in Poland until age 20. She described her life under the communist regime and after in terms of how she evaluates and appreciates make-up products. She told us that she still loves certain products because she used to get them on black markets. As our target consumers are about her age, everything she shared with other members is valuable for developing markets and products. And for me and other members who have never lived in Poland and other countries in the region, she is actually educating us to get a better understanding of consumers in the region. (American-French regional director talking about Polish-French project manager)

BEAU multicultural project managers anticipated and provided for innovative personalities and associated roles in developing new products by gathering ideas across the boundaries of the organization, cultures, and regions and transforming product-related knowledge to teams.

Another example relates to men’s interest in skin-care products that is quite trendy in the European and North American markets, it seemed too unfamiliar (or unfit) for Asian males. Indeed, Asian males were more traditional and deeply rooted in Confucian culture. An Indian-American-French project manager, however, thought that younger generations (unlike fathers or grandfathers) in Asia who favor and quickly adopt Western culture might be

interested in their skin care habits. He thus started to develop male skin care products for the Southeast Asian market. This Indian-American-French project manager noted:

When developing new product concept, you have to understand quickly what your target market and at the same time other markets are doing. Markets in different parts of the world are changing fast and reacting differently to even a same product. I often get inspired from, for example, market trends in Europe and use the inspiration to develop new products in Asia. (Indian-American-French project manager)

This multicultural project manager understood a local market trend; beyond that, he saw the potential market in another region and created a market trend for male skin-care in Asia. He was capable of doing this because he had deep contextual knowledge from a multiplicity of living experience in different countries. Being familiar with local knowledge, however, does not guarantee creativity. According to BEAU's history, the company started recruiting multiculturals because they realized the limitations of French project managers who were attempting to develop products for global markets. Bringing the novelty to new product development requires intellectual flexibility. That is, according to a French director who had been working with multiculturals for five years, "*Multiculturals have a kind of gymnastic intellectual training to think as if they were French, American, or Chinese and all together inside them.*" Such 'gymnastic intellectual training' resulted in the manner in which multicultural project managers acted as culture-straddling brokers, arising to innovate in new product development at BEAU.

Translating cultural nuances

Even if a common syntax or language is present, interpretations are often difficult not in processing the information, but learning about the sources that create the semantic differences that exist at cultural boundaries. The problem then shifts to who interprets what. A French manager who planned a test of a new shampoo in a laboratory in Germany explained how his French-German-British multicultural manager who used to work in Germany helped him:

If we say 'dry hair', dry hair on this floor (HQ) doesn't mean as same as German 'dry hair' means. So, it is much safer to check with B who knows two cultures (French and German) and translate exactly what I mean as 'dry hair'. (B is German-British-French director)

This French manager shared that he once failed his lab testing because he asked a German staff in the same laboratory to translate. He later he discovered that there was a discrepancy between what he meant and what the German staff translated. It was a very delicate, nuanced difference. He had to run the test again, which cost him a significant amount. Since that time, he has become more careful to find the right person to translate. This German-British-French manager became a 'specialist' who was specifically concerned with decoding any semantic nuances caused by cultural differences between HQ and the local office in Germany. Beyond decoding semantic nuances, this multicultural manager used to work in the German office and knew work practices within the German local team. What she really tried to do was to generate the same interests from both parties.

Connecting geographically diverse knowledge and skills

Biculturalism literature tends to assume that multiculturals have accumulated 'integrative flexibility' through reflective observation and analysis facing culturally-complex situations (e.g., cross-cultural interactions, Benet-Martinez et al., 2006; Tadmor & Tedlock, 2006). To generate creative ideas so that they can be implemented, multicultural project managers must be able to access expertise and draw analogies from one cultural group (e.g., local) to other cultural groups (e.g., other regions or globally). One of the multicultural project managers who successfully launched new men's skin care products in the Southeast Asia market where BEAU launched these products for the first time emphasized this skill:

The most important skill I need in order to develop and launch this product line successfully is to exploit what I've got from one part to other parts of the world, which brings something innovative in the market. I am able to do this because I have a kind of stock of references in different languages—English, Hindi, and French. I read books in three different languages, meet people from different

countries, eat food from different countries, and so on. I cannot think things in one way. That's not my way. (Indian-American-French project manager)

This Indian-American-French manager can think only in two or more ways (i.e., multiple ways), which suggests greater openness and transparency at the boundary between or among domains (e.g., perspectives as Indian and French or Indian and American or Indian and American and French).

BEAU's organizational system as a leading beauty industry player accommodated the rise of innovative behavior inherent to multicultural project managers. The beauty has Janus characteristics: Whereas beauty is perceived differently across regional, cultural boundaries, it has absolute value beyond these boundaries. Multiculturals must have the Janusian thinking: the ability to constructively join two or more sets of culturally different perspectives and ideas (McCasky, 1988). For example, European women have become more interested in Asian women's beauty know-how. A French-Cambodian-Irish multicultural project manager in charge of the French market was always interested in market trends in booming Asian markets such as China and Thailand. He noted:

Relating different cultural aspects on beauty helped me to create product concept that French consumers like to buy. I am able to do this because I had have to make my parents (father is a Cambodian and mother is an Irish) satisfied with me since young. (French-Cambodian-Irish project manager)

This Cambodian-Irish-French product manager lived on tension and attempted to serve both parents who were quite different in their cultural backgrounds (Cambodian versus Irish). He acted as a focal point for relating Asian-oriented concepts to Western-oriented consumers. As a result, he balanced universalistic-beauty and local-kin group expectations, introducing something familiar from one area (Asia) to new to contexts (Europe).

Multicultural project managers have a privileged position in global organizations because they occupy cultural broker roles as spanning cultural boundaries. They exhibit

Janusian thinking ability to synthesize ideas and combine their expertise. Multiculturals, therefore, function as an innovator. More important, perhaps, is that they have organizational permission to innovate.

Combining knowledge from various geographies to create new locally customized products. Multicultural project managers who have ‘*intellectual flexibility gymnastically trained*’ ideas synthesize those ideas from multiple sources—diverse cultural perspectives—for innovative products. A Venezuelan-French-American director noted:

It is important to bridge different cultural perspectives in beauty business for worldwide consumers. What is more important is that based on knowledge integrated, you develop new products that are enough innovative to hit the market. For an example of wrinkles, for Asian women, no wrinkles are the best; for French, no wrinkles means so artificial; for Americans, some wrinkles are the most appropriate. Now, the challenge is how to make an innovative concept of wrinkle cream for Asian women that no competitors can beat us.” I am sure project managers like me or those with similar backgrounds handle such challenges better than monoculturals. (Venezuelan-French-American Director)

For example, a French-Cambodian-Irish project manager described how he overcame such a challenge. He used the specificity of Asian women’s skin care (reducing wrinkles) to develop a new product for the French market. He noted:

While researching Asian skin-care products, I found that in Asia, some tinted cream (skin colored cream for make-up face) used ‘face lifting effect’, in France and Europe, none of tinted creams used face lifting effect. I developed a new tinted cream with face lifting effect for French market. It was a big success! (Team: French-Cambodian-Irish project manager, a Chinese-French and two French)

This French-Cambodian-Irish project manager was capable of operating within both the community he has lived and the cultural national spheres of his prior residences or his parents’ home, all of which influenced his multiculturalism. He understood well that women in Asia pay particular attention to reduce wrinkles on their face. He caught the same beauty sense in European women and created a new cream. As a cultural broker, he developed new products for European women as a focus for synthesizing the local community-oriented ideas (i.e.,

cream for Asian women) to the global (or other region)-oriented idea (i.e., cream for European women).

Leveraging skills from diverse geographies. Multicultural project managers worked at BEAU improved their expertise as they contributed to the new product development process: from creating a new product concept to launching the product. Working with multiple sets of perspectives and ideas involves possibilities for alignment among them; it can also lead to integration that privileges one area of expertise over another beyond multicultural competence. Here, three facets of expertise emerge: 1) access to the sets of ideas concerning the issue to be decide, 2) control over the means of interpreting this information, and 3) the ability to disseminate interpretations of idea sets from other groups (Borum, 1995, p. 89). One area in new product development that requires such expertise is television advertising or a visual campaign for a new product. Successful advertising through different media was as critical as creating the new product concepts. It therefore challenged project managers and required expertise. For example, television commercials involved several organizational groups: new product development, international marketing, local teams, public relations (PR) agencies (often outsourced from HQ and the local office), and television actors and actresses. It also included different cultural groups: the local team, the HQ team, the local PR agency (including the stars), and a professional camera crew from Paris. Television commercials also incur significant costs; therefore, project managers felt more pressure in case top management disapproved of the commercial's quality. Thus, to lead a television commercial, the project managers must have a variety of knowledge: the selling points of the product, camera schemes, color and lighting effects, overall storyline of the commercial, and shooting points.

Senior project managers who had more than five years of experience in new product development usually coordinated television commercial production. A Hong Kong-British-

Canadian-French director working with a French PR agency noted her contribution to better shooting:

I think in terms of the knowledge of Chinese consumer insights of the minds, I can have a better understanding than monoculturals. For example, in terms of judging aesthetics, I can pick up which camera angle Chinese women look more beautiful on the advertising. Asian beauty is quite different from Western beauty, so those contributions I definitely do for my team. (Hong Kong-British-Canadian-French director)

Expertise in picking up the most effective camera angle for the best shot of an Asian face does not come to this project manager without experience; indeed, she must have learned such knowledge over years of experience. It requires knowledge of the new product, specifications of the Asian face, the French way of shooting, a sense of aesthetics, and knowing market trends. In addition, the project manager should be able to find the balancing point for the product between location adaption and worldwide brand image. Only then can the product attract local customers who have confidence in BEAU. Although the French PR team has top world-class expertise, shooting the Asian face was a challenge for them. This multicultural project manager incorporated ideas into a creative product development process by synthesizing culturally disparate ideas for advertising.

BEAU's multicultural project managers also possess work practices and organizational knowledge that may lead to innovative solutions for efficiency in work processes. Their cultural brokerage activity creates an effective juncture between one cultural pattern and another and is in many ways the most essential pre-requisite for team effectiveness both in one country and elsewhere.

Research on biculturalism assumes that multiculturals switch their behaviors by responding to cultural situational cues (called *Cultural Frame Switching*, Hong et al., 2000). From my field work, I found that BEAU's multicultural project managers also engage in counter-cultural frame switching when necessary for team work process. The following

example regards a Dutch-Belgian-American manager who used to live and work in environments where hierarchy was perceived as less important. Now, he is working at BEAU whose organizational culture respects hierarchy. When his team faced a serious production delay, he surprised his co-workers by breaking the norm of hierarchy:

At that time, we desperately needed help from top management right away. R just took the phone and called one of the top managers and explained the situation. We got the solution. Everyone was surprised by his behavior. It may sound easy, but if you work in a very hierarchical organization, you'd never pick up the phone to call top management for help even in such a situation. (French director about R, Dutch-Belgian-American project manager)

This multicultural project manager should know which behaviors are or are not appropriate for current settings. In the above case, until picking up phone, this multicultural manager might experience frustrating decision making: 'no' on the one hand and 'why not' on the other. He drew analogies and contrasts from one cultural setting to another cultural setting and decided the best way to solve the problematic situation. Multiculturals' brokerage work has a repertoire of work actions that solve problems teams face, which in the example above was considered innovative because none had dared to do as he did.

One of biggest challenges that multicultural teams at BEAU face is to facilitate effective cross-cultural communication among members who have different levels of language proficiency. Multilingualism, therefore, is an important competence that BEAU multicultural project managers contribute to teams. They are able to span boundaries formed by language barriers among members. However, multilingualism does not necessarily facilitate effective cross-cultural communications in teams. More important is to generate novel and appropriate ways to ensure all members understand what is going on in teams. A Mexican-German-Italian multicultural manager used to work for an NGO in Italy where people did not speak the same language at the same time, even among the Italians. This created a serious communication

problem because of different levels of education. He described how he managed effective cross-cultural communications in his current team:

I systematically organize my team meetings; set the schedule, send out agenda before meeting and etc. And I am very aware of different level of English proficiency among members. So in meetings, I usually ask, 'Andrea could tell me what Pietro has just told us?' In this way, I minimize any miscommunication among members. I learned this when I worked for a NGO in Italy to help homeless people with whom I had difficulty to communicate either English (none spoke English except me) or Italian because of my poor Italian at the time and their grammatically wrong Italian. (Mexican-German-Italian Director, Team: Romanian, Italian, French-Spanish)

This multicultural manager transferred the practical knowledge he had learned while working for a NGO. He was aware of his members' cultural backgrounds and their challenges working in culturally complex settings. When I observed this team's meeting, he assigned one of the members to keep meeting notes and to send them to all after the meeting. Every member had his or her own project, yet at the same time, some projects required the team to cooperate. In such a highly complex working environment, it is critical for members to share ideas and exchange feedback for their on-going projects. I was impressed by how well this multicultural project manager managed his team where members had different cultural backgrounds: Romanian, Italian, and French-Spanish.

In sum, I have thus far described how multiculturals acting as a cultural broker influence new product development processes by managing knowledge processes: (1) bringing new local product and market knowledge, (2) translating cultural nuances, (3) connecting geographically diverse knowledge and skills. BEAU's multicultural project managers transform culture-specific knowledge to high-quality global product knowledge.

While managing different types of knowledge and their processes for the new product development, multicultural project managers at BEAU maintain interpersonal relationships within teams and across organizational groups by spanning cultural boundaries. In turn, they respond to different expectations that members of one cultural identity group have of another

identity group. Multicultural project managers are particularly willing and able to tailor their behaviors that members of another group find appealing. This subsequently led to another role multiculturals played regarding team work processes when developing new products: conflict management.

Role 2: Managing Conflicts in Teams

As shown in Figure 2 (Individual and Team Cultural Heterogeneity), new project development existed as a kernel of an idea and a relationship among team members in HQ and local subsidiaries, other organizational groups, and some external agencies. Albeit a challenge, multicultural project managers at BEAU attempted to make work processes function effectively despite high levels of demographic heterogeneity among team members and other organizational groups. Cultural differences among members do not always create conflict (e.g., Salk & Brannen, 2000). Yet they do increase the likelihood of conflict (Armstrong & Cole, 1996). Next, I describe different types of conflicts as relational, process, and task adapted based on Jehn (1997). These conflicts are related. For example, relational conflicts cause process and task conflicts. BEAU's multicultural project managers, as cultural brokers, managed conflicts in teams by: (1) reducing inter-regional misunderstanding, (2) displaying flexible behavior to do with people from diverse regions and cultures.

When multicultural project managers at BEAU perceive any discrepant views or interpersonal incompatibilities with other members, they attempted to anticipate others' expectations and adjust behaviors accordingly. For example:

Since I was young, I have educated, lived, and worked in different countries, meeting culturally different others in neighborhood, at schools, and at work places. By the conscious effort of mind I preempt the actions and their consequences when interacting with someone with a different cultural background. This helps me a lot working in this particularly, multicultural work place. (Hong Kong-Canadian-British-French director)

The knowledge multicultural project managers at BEAU gained through their multiple cultural experiences helps them be particularly sensitive and responsive to interpersonal and situational specifications. As a result, multicultural project managers could ease any tension by preempting potential conflicts. In other words, they were less likely to create cross-cultural conflicts; rather, they were more likely to foster interpersonal relationship with others who have different cultural backgrounds.

Reducing inter-regional misunderstanding

At BEAU, project managers on collaborative interorganizational product developments must gain cooperation from their counterparts: project managers at HQ and local subsidiaries. BEAU multicultural project managers mitigated the potential negative effects of group boundaries on developing trust between HQ and local subsidiaries.

Managing cross-regional tensions. In a product development department at BEAU, a unit team at the HQ in charge of developing a range of products (e.g., men's skin care) for a specific region (e.g., Southeast Asia) works closely with its local counterparts, virtually on a daily basis. Because local members (most of them monoculturals) know what up-to-date local market trend is and will drive product sales, their contribution is critical to develop the new product successfully. All members at the HQ and the local subsidiary should agree on every process in the new product development. However, both parties challenge each other. Local members feel pushed by HQ members who want to advance the work progress as quickly as possible without understanding the local situation. HQ members tend to think that local members demand too much and expect too much from them because new product plans often got rejected by local managers. At BEAU, multicultural project managers handled such tension between local and HQ. For example, a French-Chinese project manager was assigned to handle a highly demanding local team in Shanghai. BEAU multicultural project managers know how to ease these tensions by interpreting cultural information that HQ members often

misinterpret or do not understand. For example, an HQ team working with an Indian local team had to ask local members to find special ingredients for a new product. However, the Indian local team seemed to have a problem with the HQ team's request. This situation could have generated process conflict that pertained to issues of duty and delegating resources. The Indian-American-French project manager tried to ease the tension. He noted:

If Indian local members said, 'India might have an issue with this (a certain ingredients for a new product), because there's no written piece of communication where this plant can be used to please our consumers.' Actually, what they tried to tell me is, 'No, I won't do what you asked us to do and lower your expectations.' But I didn't make any negative comments on that. Instead I said, 'Okay, how about I discuss with R&D at HQ and find out the way we solve this problem?' I didn't want to make an uncomfortable situation. Instead, I got respect from them, which as a result had a positive influence on our work progress. (Indian-American-French manager; Team members at HQ: Chinese-French, French; Local teams: India, China, & Thailand)

This Indian-American-French project manager interpreted 'I'll try my best' (Indian local team) as 'It's going to be difficult, or No, I am not going to do it.' He knew that for Indians, it was very hard to say 'no' to others. Between the HQ and Indian local team, there had not yet been sufficient time for the social structure to be stabilized such that they could relate the two sorts of work practices. If a member understands the surface meaning of 'I will do my best', they prejudged that the Indian local team did not fulfill its responsibilities, and trust in the Indian team was lost. Furthermore, although other members have learned that the real meaning of 'do my best' is 'no', they may not provide any negative comments immediately, but still hold a negative impression of the Indian. This may not cause a problem right away, but it may be a root for relational conflict that eventually harms the trust between HQ and local teams. This Indian-American-French multicultural manager preempted potential conflict and tried to avoid risky situations where the local team felt pushed by HQ. In this way, he could develop interpersonal trust between these two groups.

Fostering cross-regional understanding. BEAU's multicultural project managers also engaged actively in mediating different opinions on projects. Their mediation was not compromising per se, but was designed to make an effective decision. For example, a Venezuelan-French-American director was in charge of product development for the Latin America region. He was engaged to solve a task conflict in which members have different opinions about the visual for a new product campaign. He noted:

For the visual for a new campaign of products, our Brazilian counterpart disagreed with the HQ people. She told us, 'Well, this visual is not going to work here because Brazilians are more built than European women.' But no one (at the HQ) agreed with her. So, I finally said to my team, 'Look, I totally agree with her (Brazilian). When I go to Venezuela, all my friends are more built than I and they told me, 'You're so skinny!' At the same time, I know you (HQ people) think that I'm normal, not skinny at all. Remember, this commercial will be released not here but in Brazil!' I often face this kind of problem regarding different cultural perspectives on beauty. I have to listen to both what locals say or what HQ people say, but, rather than just try to compromise for each party, I try to help them make a right decision for the best result. (Venezuelan-French-American director, current team: French (3) and Hungarian-French, previous team: French, Russian, and Serbian)

This Venezuelan-French-American manager understood the difference in cultural views on beauty: Brazilian versus European (e.g., France). He helped members make the right decision for the project rather than following the premature decision by the HQ. HQ people, who had less local knowledge, accepted his mediation of interpreting cultural information. At the same time, the Brazilian counterpart also acknowledged that he explained his personal experience in the region where the campaign would be targeted. The Venezuelan-French-American multicultural manager thus bridged the discrepant views of both parties, wherein the team not only made the right decision, but also built mutual trust.

If this director had not tried to mediate conflict, more subtle forms of conflict might occur as HQ people maintain their views and local team would be unwillingly to agree. This could position both groups to emphasize negative characteristics. If teams encounter severe conflict among members, the team must be recomposed in the worst case. BEAU's

multicultural project managers stand guard over the crucial junctures of relationships that connect the local system to the HQ system or *vice versa*.

Displaying flexible behavior to deal with people from diverse regions and cultures

Adapting to deal with different cultural behaviors. Once conflicts occur in teams, however, multicultural project managers at BEAU handled those conflicts with tolerance. In other words, they were more accepting of different cultural values, less disturbed by them, and accordingly better at handling conflicts due to valuing cultural differences among members. For example, a Hong Kong-British-Canadian-French multicultural director whose team members were Dutch-Chinese, Taiwanese-French, and Korean-British and whose boss was French noted how members handled process conflict (e.g., time management), which was created by different work values regarding meetings:

In terms of meeting time, we all seem to have different principles. For example, my French boss never starts meetings on time and quite often postponed or cancelled them. H (Dutch-Chinese) is very strict on time and deadline (meeting is time for checking-up on each other's work process). I and K (Taiwanese-French), were a bit flexible regarding meeting time. So, whenever we have meeting with my French boss, or ourselves, we face frustrating moments. But, what is important for us is how to handle this frustrating moment. As we are conscious about each other's differences, we come to compromise when such moments occur. For example, with my French boss, I need to be really flexible with time. With my team members, if I am behind my meeting schedule with my team members, I make sure to tell them in advance why I am behind and ask them next availabilities. Conflicts may still exist in my team. But we handle them much more tolerant level. (Hong Kong-British-Canadian-French director, Team: Dutch-Chinese, Taiwanese-French, Korean-British and French boss)

Even when the team members worked on the same project, have mutual interest in completing it, and have similar ideas of how to complete the project, they may still experience conflict (Jehn, 1997, p. 530). Although conflict exists, how to handle conflicts is as important as anticipating it and preventing it. This director and her members are very well aware of each other's cultural backgrounds and differences (e.g., Dutch versus French) and similarities (e.g., French and Chinese). Once conflict occurred, they tried to rationalize the cause and effect, for

example, a Dutch-Chinese member said, “*G (team leader, Hong-Kong-British-Canadian-French) is late for the meeting because of her previous meeting extended. I am in French context where being late is a kind of norm. So it can happen.*” In this way, she and other members focused more on the project and less on peripheral issues (i.e., conflicts from cultural different perspectives).

When I observed this team (e.g., two brainstorming sessions, two meeting for checking-up on work process, and one meeting with another functional team such as the packaging agency), members (all multiculturals) seemed to feel ‘bonded’ to one another. They tried to help each other by sharing information and exchanging feedback on each other’s projects. Team leaders gave members feedback and advice in terms of not only projects, but also life in general. This may happen in other teams. However, the similarities of their cultural backgrounds - multiculturalism and sharing such a common culture as Chinese speaking- may make them feel bonding one another. As a result, they agreed that they worked faster than teams whose members were monoculturals. Below, I will describe more how multicultural project managers build relationships with culturally different others.

At BEAU, multicultural project managers often work with members with whom they share such a bond. For example, a new product television commercial shoot involved teams with professionals in related industries from outside the company such as photographers, PR agencies, and local celebrities. A Hong Kong-British-Canadian-French project manager worked with different monocultural groups—a team whose members were Chinese and Korean and a team whose members were French. From the beginning, she found that no respect was extended to her. People treated her as a translator, even though she was a project leader. She noted how she handled relational conflict based on lack of respect surrounding interpersonal relationships between her and other members:

At the beginning, I was aware that I was not respected as a project leader; for them, I was a little translator. I knew that I could not change their mindset at once. I tried to adapt and support both teams as much as I could. It required constant emotional effort in order not to prejudge them, but to understand their sides. Now it's been three times working with them. Their attitude working with me has been changed. I have gained the respect from both teams. (Hong Kong-British-Canadian-French manager with teams: French, Chinese, and Korean)

At BEAU, people work with people who have different cultural backgrounds on a daily basis. This often causes conflicts that challenge members to proceed with their work. Although multicultural project managers are known to be open to cultural difference, this project manager felt it was challenging to work in an environment in which she was stereotyped as a translator. However, she accepted individual differences in the level of understanding of cross-cultural situations, controlled her negative emotions, and regulated their behaviors for the best fit to the situation. As a result, her perception of conflicts did not evoke negative stereotyping among members, where the opportunity to develop such attitudes was quite obvious.

In this section, I have described three ways multiculturals manage conflicts in teams: (1) reducing inter-regional misunderstanding, (2) displaying flexible behavior to do with people from diverse regions and cultures. Multiculturals developed interpersonal relationships across organizational cultural boundaries by spanning these boundaries. As a cultural broker, they remain open to social cultural stimuli and information and are responsive to different expectations that members of one cultural identity group have of another identity group. Indeed, they were particularly willing and able to tailor their behaviors such that group members find appealing.

My findings indicate how multiculturals influence teams' knowledge processes and handling conflicts. The data structure in Figure 4 displays all the key concepts (the five second-order roles) that emerged from the study. Yet a grounded theory needs to show not only the concepts but also their dynamic interrelationships. I present a theory of multiculturals'

cultural brokerage role, as represented in figure 5, grounded in the data emerged from the study. Figure 2 situates the five second-order concepts I identified in a process model that lends the requisite dynamism to the relationships among these five concepts and show how BEAU's multiculturals play cultural brokerage roles in global team contexts. The core of the model is a dynamic interrelationship among roles in managing knowledge processes and managing conflicts. Next, I discuss the theoretical and practical implications of my findings and suggest future studies.

DISCUSSION

The present research began by questioning how multiculturals function in global teams by demonstrating their innate competence. To date, few studies have examined multicultural individuals in global teams, and virtually no research has tried to understand the role of multicultural individuals in facilitating team effectiveness. This research makes a distinct contribution in this direction by examining how multiculturals influence knowledge processes and manage conflicts in global teams. I further identified two roles multiculturals played: managing knowledge process and handling conflicts. In doing so, I not only build a new theory, but also connect disparate research on multiculturalism and its impact on social, organizational, and teamwork that other theories have offered. In turn, the present paper offers new insights for practitioners.

Theoretical Implications

Reviewing three sets of theories that touch on multiculturals in global teams introduced the present study. I turn now to these three sets and discuss how the present study builds or extends these theoretical areas as they relate to multiculturals in global teams. My ethnographic research showed how multicultural project managers effectively bridged organizational, cultural, and regional gaps to integrate disparate knowledge and mitigate conflicts into an innovative, coherent whole.

Multiculturalism. Finally, my ethnographic approach adds to the literature on multiculturalism and its implications for team effectiveness (Hong, 2010). In some ways, the question of whether multiculturals contribute to the critical processes of applying and acquiring knowledge is evidenced in the literature on cosmopolitans and expatriates (Au & Fukuda, 2002; Haas, 2006). The present research, however, sheds new light on this issue by going beyond multiculturalism developed through lab experiments by cross-cultural psychologists to examining what multiculturals bring to the team (e.g., bicultural competence and knowledge transfer). Collectively, these contributions offer a deeper understanding of the specific “multiculturals’ tactics as real socially and *culturally* skilled actors used to induce cooperation” (Fligstein, 2001, p. 113, *italics* added) on projects that unite contributors from various groups across organizational, cultural, and regional boundaries.

Cultural brokerage in managing knowledge process and conflicts. The current study bridges other studies that comprise the literature on cultural brokerage. To my knowledge, although others have started to outline the factors important to cultural brokerage, My ethnographic approach is the first to detail how this process occurs in new product development in a global context. That is, the present study is the first to discuss specific roles of managing knowledge processes (e.g., integrating ideas, fostering knowledge innovation, and introducing new work practices) and managing conflicts (e.g., anticipating conflicts, cultivating relational contexts, and diffusing conflicts across cultural systems). Nevertheless, important similarities emerge between this study and other treatments of cultural brokerage. For example, I see the nexus work-brokerage requiring synthesis and integration of ideas-between multiculturals and other organizational members (Long & O’Mahony, 2010) is important to identify multiculturals’ cultural brokerage in the creative process of developing new products that lead local and global markets (e.g., Fleming & Waguespack, 2007; Hargadon & Sutton, 1997; Lingo & O’Mahony, 2010). Similarly, I see boundary spanning

roles (Ancona, 1990) as critical to cultural brokerage among different organizational group members across cultural boundaries (Au & Fukuda, 2002; Geertz, 1960; Thomas, 2002).

More generally, I add to this work by turning scholars' attention toward multiculturals (see also Hong, 2010; Press, 1969). In doing so, I take lessons from research on "conflict mediation" related to how multiculturals handle different kinds of conflicts to the extent that it reflects the implications of multicultural competence in a global workplace (Brannen et al., 2009; Earley & Ang, 2003; Earley & Mosakowski, 2004; Hong, 2010; Jehn & Mannix, 2000; Thomas et al., 2010). And, as Geertz (1960) noted, multiculturals as a cultural broker develop the work stage where members facilitate effective communication and cultivate relationships beyond culturally and socially heterogeneous global teams. Building on this research, I have argued that multiculturals play a crucial role for work processes and outcomes in global teams.

Team heterogeneity: New meaning for diversity. The present research builds and extends research related to team heterogeneity and diversity in two ways. First, in discussing the correlates of team heterogeneity on nationality and effective performance, I complement the work of Earley and Mosakowski (2000) by revealing the details of team dynamics in terms of how the roles multiculturals play impact team work processes and outcomes. This is perhaps not surprising given that Earley and Mosakowski focused on hybrid team culture within transnational teams as facilitating group interaction without paying attention to team members' cultural backgrounds. This interplay may explain the different level of analysis as multicultural workforce is still under-recognized by practitioners and research focusing on their roles in organizations is an emerging area (Brannen & Thomas, 2010). By treating multiculturals as facilitating global team interaction, however, I see that their roles are related to the team's performance. For example, among the five teams in study 1 (Earley & Mosakowski, 2000, p. 32) and in high performance teams (Teams 1, 2, 4), some team

members must be multiculturals because they have substantial experience in Thailand. On the contrary, in the low performance teams (Teams 3 and 4), in which members were composed of two national parties, Thai and American, the Americans had limited experience in Thailand. The current paper's findings suggest that multiculturals influence knowledge processes and handling conflicts for team performance. Perhaps multiculturals play a critical role in creating a hybrid team culture over time in global teams.

Second, I build on Earley and Mosakowski's research by describing team cultural diversity that might influence how multiculturals adapt themselves in the workplace. Nationality is suggested as a superordinate determinant of a person's self-identity; therefore, the term "multicultural team" refers to a team in which two or more nationalities are represented among members (Adler, 1997). The teams that emerged from my ethnographic field work, however, appear much more complicated in terms of individual cultural backgrounds. That is, measuring team heterogeneity by nationality seems no longer valid because many multicultural members have difficulty identifying themselves with a single nationality. These individuals self-identified as multiculturals based on their multicultural experience such as parents' different nationalities and working/living/education abroad, for example, Venezuelan-French-American or French-Cambodian-Irish. In the global team settings in my field work, some teams were even composed of only multiculturals (e.g., the team leader identified as Hong Kong-British-Canadian-French and team members identified as Taiwanese-French, Dutch-Chinese, and Korean-British). Their interaction dynamics across organizational and regional boundaries seemed much more culturally complicated as they worked with other functional teams at the Paris HQ (including monocultural teams) and various regional offices. In summary, I believe that subsequent research on team diversity needs to focus on a wider set of factors than simply individual cultural background.

Practical implications

The present study has practical implications for composing teams in MNCs. To perform and compete successfully, multinational organizations must accomplish worldwide innovation, global integration, and local differentiation simultaneously (Bartlet & Ghoshal, 1989; Nohria & Ghoshal, 1997). For example, although certain work contexts may be more or less challenging for multiculturals depending on particular personal attributes such as personality, skills, and cultural experiences and the nature of task, management should consider multiculturals in the global team composing. I suggest that multinational organizations concerned about multiculturals' potential outcomes should look at alternative ways to encapsulate their members in terms of matching the fit and demands of a team with the various characteristics of multicultural employees.

Perhaps more important, my research sheds light on training multiculturals as well as monoculturals. Researchers have emphasized the importance of specificity in training (Mendenhall & Stahl, 2000). The present research can help MNCs customize training to the specific needs of employees. Indeed, the lessons that MNCs learn from employing multiculturals for particular projects should be used to train other multiculturals and monocultural employees for similar tasks. The first step for successful training is, of course, evaluating an employee's level of competence and traits toward two roles this paper suggested that contribute to team effectiveness. Using the present research as a blueprint for intervention and for teaching the workforce, MNCs will help not only multiculturals, but more important, they will help monoculturals improve their competence through tailor-made training. This investment will ultimately improve business performance (Mendenhall & Stahl, 2000).

Limitations and Future Research Directions

The two roles multiculturals play in global teams give us confidence that the present study's observations may be generalizable. However, I focused on highly skilled, specialized

occupations. Future research should investigate how multiculturals enact these two roles in other industries to determine what contextual factors (organizational and team) are reproduced in different industries. Moreover, we must also be careful about the unique nature of the setting. I have argued that a global new product development team is particularly relevant for multiculturals, as they demonstrate their competence in creating new products and facilitating the development process across organizational, cultural, and regional boundaries. Although this investigation into how multiculturals influence knowledge processes and handling conflicts in global teams has implications for theorists and practitioners, my findings may also apply to the broader corporate strategist and HR policymakers with issues associated with managing this new workforce demographic.

This study only analyzed multiculturals without considering their individual differences in the way in which people experience their multicultural identities. Future research should develop a typology that will help us understand whether different types of multiculturals bring different types of skill sets to global teams and the MNC. The issue of how individuals develop a sense of national, cultural, ethnic, and racial group membership becomes particularly meaningful in situations where cultural values clash, mix and integrate. Multicultural individuals, by definition, internalize more than one cultural schema. An individual's cultural schema is comprised of a set of knowledge of values, norms, and beliefs of each culture. In fact, more and more people find that conflicts between different groups stem from different cultural values, attitudes, and expectations within themselves (Phinney, 1999). For individuals to know how to feel about others, they must define themselves through a process of self-categorization (Turner, 1987), in which they classify themselves and others according to nationality, ethnicity, race, cultural origin, organizational membership, age, status, and religion. Categorizing people into groups, however, can lead to perceptions of "out group" members as being less trustworthy, honest, and cooperative than members of an

individual's own group (Brewer, 1979; Tajfel & Turner 1986). Furthermore, individual and contextual factors influence how an individual makes sense of his/her multicultural experiences. Ultimately, to unpack how individuals experience their multiculturalism, the present research identifies the antecedents and organizational consequences. This will inform better management and use of multicultural skills in handling conflict, coordination and control issues, and maintaining communication richness and team cohesiveness (Joshi et al., 2002; Marquardt & Horvath, 2001).

Finally, future research should explore individual and contextual factors regarding what has been termed "the dark side of multiculturals," (author, year, p. xxx) or, more specifically, the relationship between psychological challenges in organizational contexts. Although involvement with two or more cultures in all likelihood facilitates acquiring cognitive and social skills as well as wider behavioral repertoires and competencies, multicultural individuals often face challenges related to psychological adjustment (e.g., anxiety, loneliness) or socio-cultural difficulties (e.g., interpersonal conflicts, intercultural miscommunication) (Padilla, 2006). Yet, we do not know how multiculturals deal with their challenges in organizational settings. The link between individual social traits and success in culturally diverse contexts is not driven by a special ability to deal with the potential threat of cultural differences but rather by the social stimulation afforded by culturally diverse situations. In other words, an organization's social boundaries and moral order can influence group interactions, and as cultural groups and their interactions change, the nature of the macro-culture itself changes. Therefore, contextual factors may create challenges that multicultural individuals must confront. In contrast to prior work, the present study analyzes in depth the psychological challenges that multiculturals deal with in the workplace. Given the increasingly global nature of today's work force, this work also promises to be very

informative regarding how minority (i.e., multiculturals) and more important, majority members must possess certain skills to facilitate constructive intercultural interactions.

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Figure 2.1 Diverse team vs. Global team

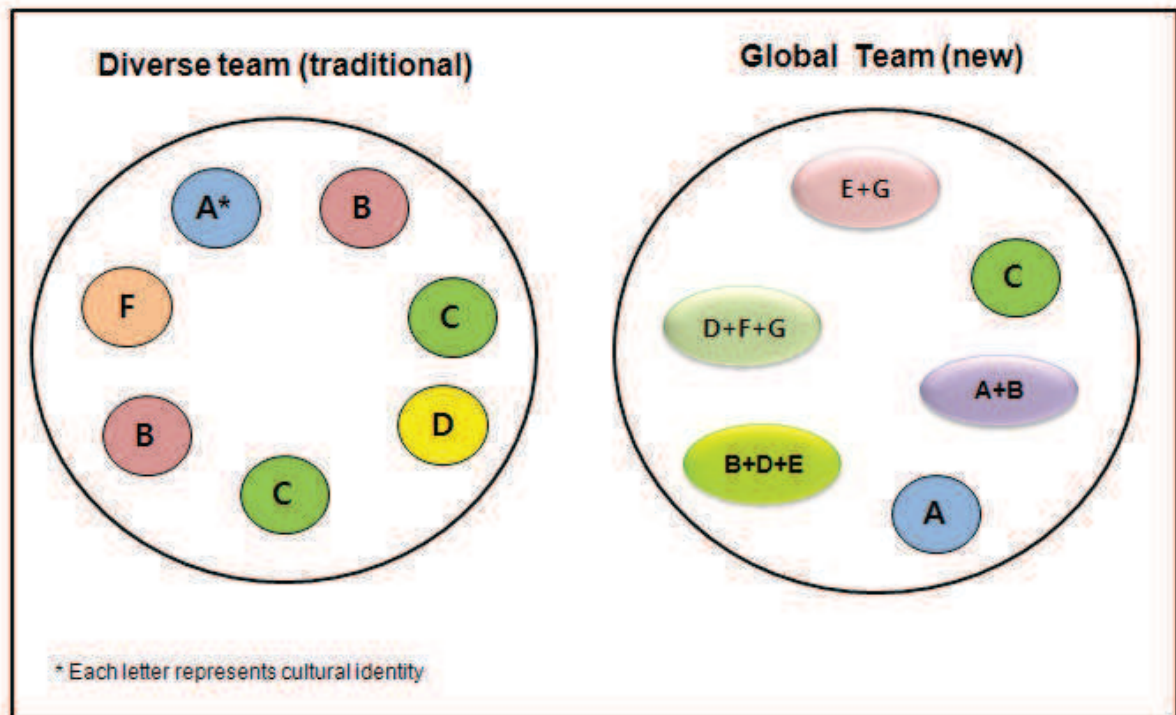


Figure 2.2 Individual and Team Cultural Heterogeneity

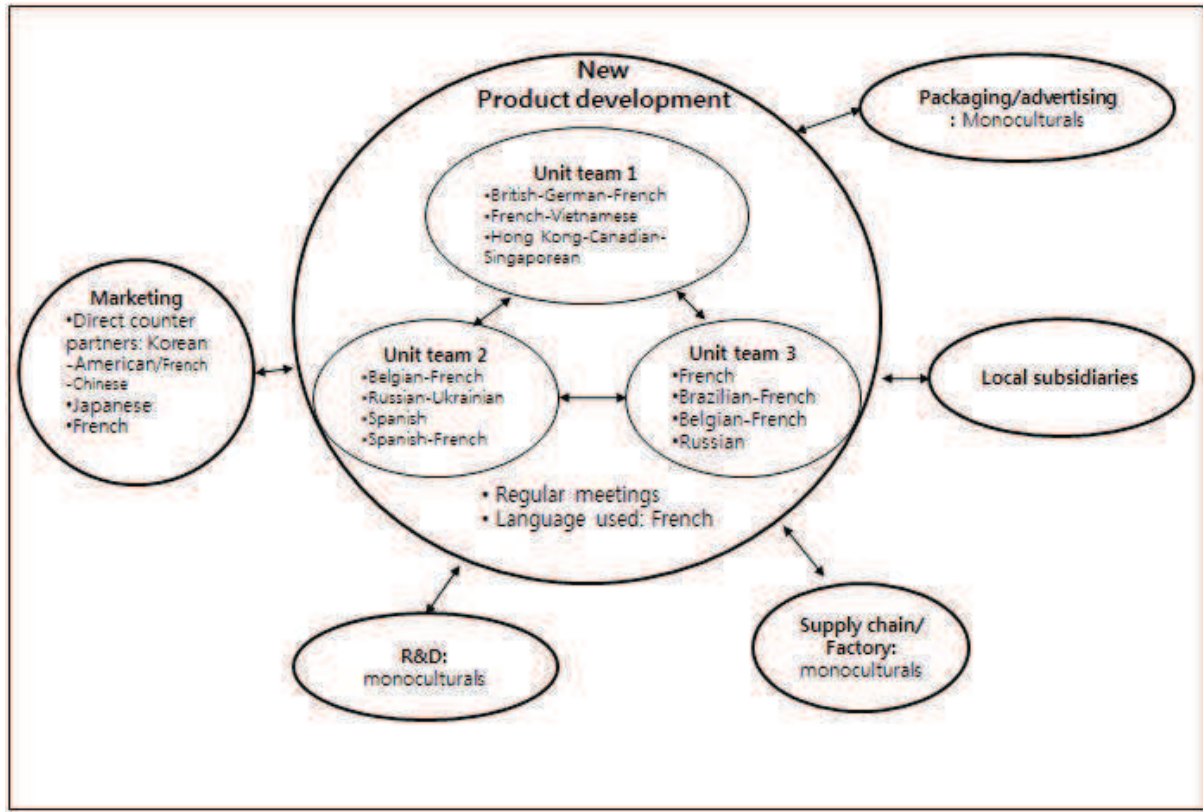


Figure 2.3 Cultural Identity(ies) Definition

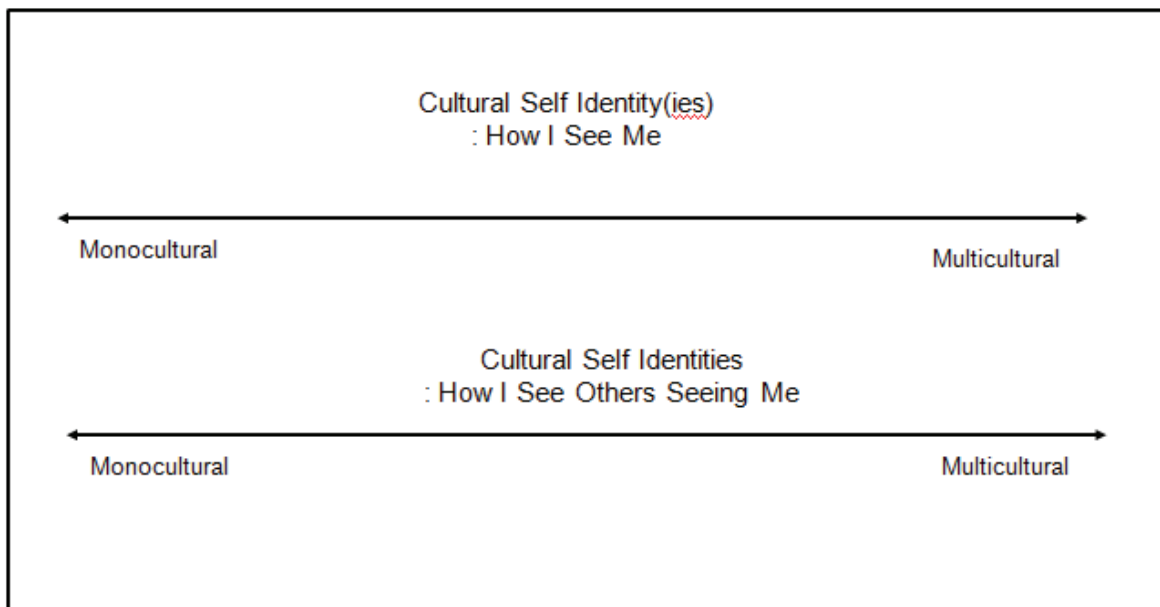


Figure 2.4 Data Structure: roles of multiculturals as a cultural broker

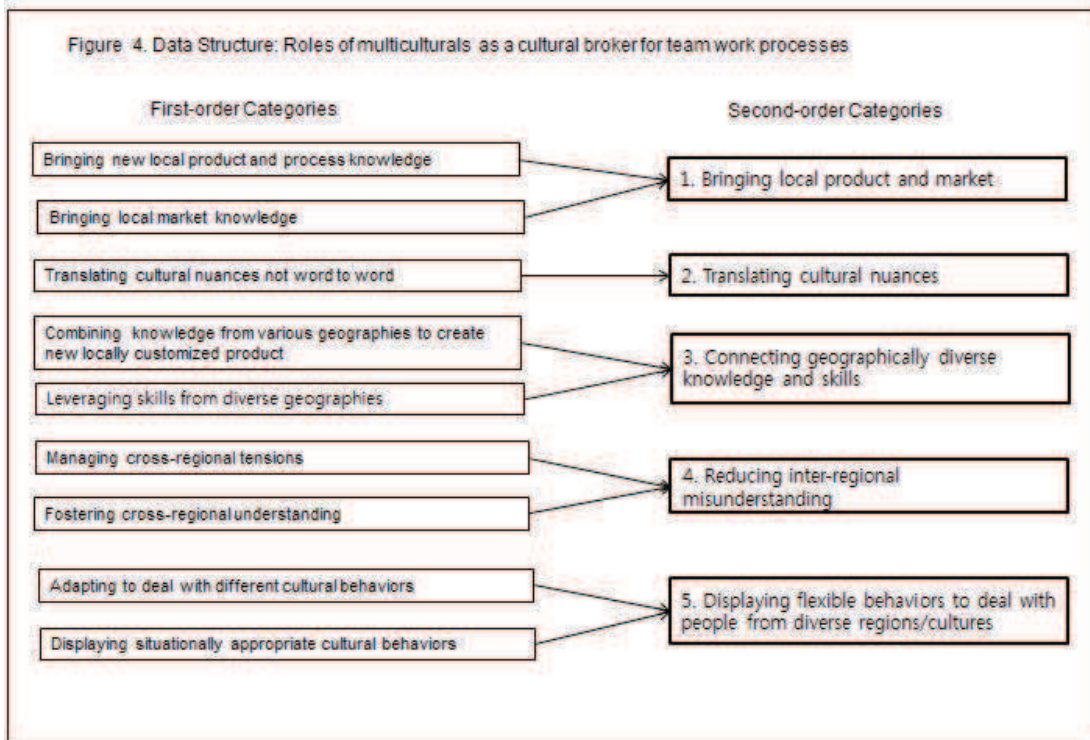


Figure 2.5 Grounded theoretical model of multiculturals as a cultural broker

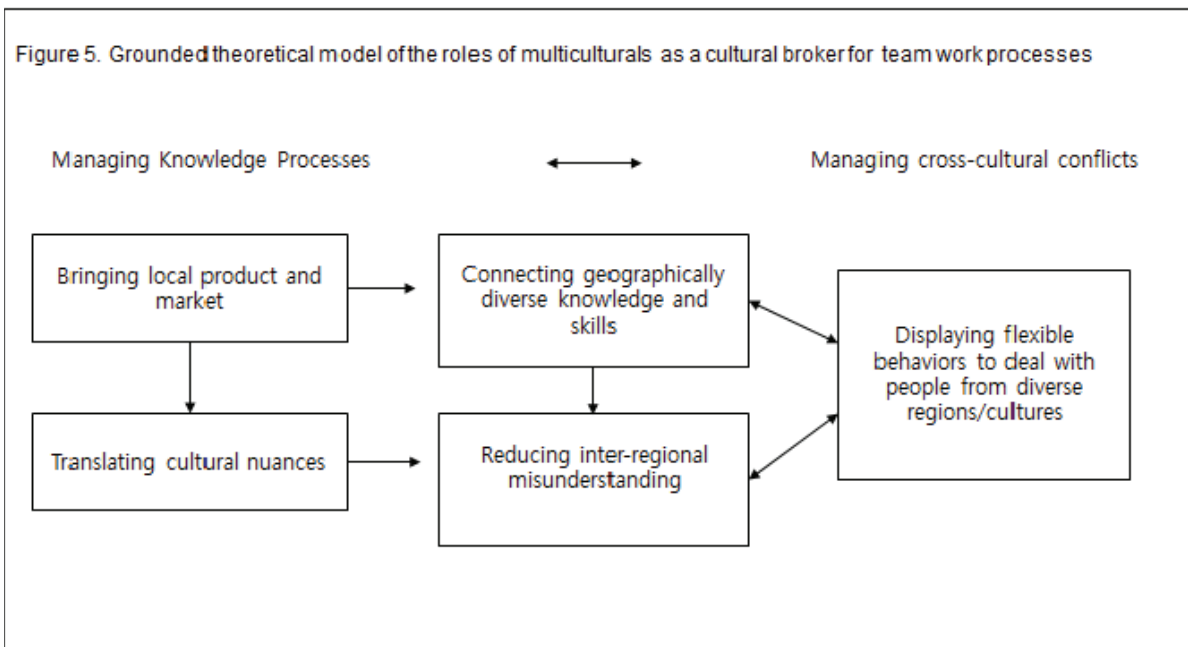


Table 2.1 Interviewees Profile and Team Composition

	Cultural profile(s)	Mono /Multi	Multilingualism	Countries have lived (>2 years)	Current position	Team**'s cultural composition (by nation)	Team's cultural composition (Mono: Multi**)
1	French-American	Multi	French/English	USA, Belgium, France	Director	Current: French Previous: British, Moroccan, Indian, French - boss	Previous 1: 4
2	French	Multi	French/English	USA, France	Director	Mexican/French	2:1
3	French	Mono	French/English	France	Director (International Recruiting)	Romanian/French /Polish	2:2
4	French	Mono	French/English	France	Director (International Recruiting)	Chinese/Brazilian /French	3:1
5	Mexican-Italian (German immigrants in Mexico)	Multi	Spanish/English/Italian/German	Mexico, Italy, France	Director (International Recruiting)	Italian/Romanian /French-Spanish	2:2
6	Indian	Multi	English/Hindi	India, Singapore, France	Manager	Italian/French /Lebanese-Spanish	2:2
7	Belgian	Multi	Flemish/English/French	Belgium	Manager	French/Russian /Brazilian	1:3
8	French-American	Multi	English/French/German/Spanish	USA, Belgium, France	Director of Latin America Zone (hair care)	French/Argentinean /Columbian/English Brazilian	2:3
9	Canadian-Hong Kong	Multi	English/Chinese	Canada, Hong Kong, Singapore, France	Manager	French/British-German /French-Vietnamese	1:3
10	Dutch-Chinese	Multi	Dutch/English /Chinese	Netherlands, France	Manager	French-Hong Kong /Taiwanese/Korean	All multitis
11	Taiwanese	Multi	Chinese/English /French	Taiwan, France	Manager	French-Hong Kong /Dutch-Chinese/Korean	All multitis
12	Russian-Ukrainian	Multi	Russian/Ukrainian /English	Ukraine, Russia, France	Manager	French/Spanish /Mexican	3:1
13	Polish-French	Multi	Polish/English /French	Poland, France	Manager	French/Dutch /American/ British-Indian	3:2
14	French-Venezuelan	Multi	French/English /Spanish	USA, Venezuela, France	Director	French(3)/Hungarian	3:2

15	French-Hong Kong-British	Multi	Mandarin/ Cantonin/ English/French	Hong Kong, England, France, China	Director	Taiwanese/Dutch-Chinese /Korean	All multitis
16	British-Spanish	Multi	English/Spanish	Spain, USA, France	Manager	French/Italian /Italian-American/Spanish /American	3:2
17	British-German	Multi	English/German /French	Germany, England, France	Director	French /Canadian-Hong Kong	1:2
18	Chinese-French	Multi	Chinese/French /English	China, France	Manager	French/ Chinese /Indian-American	2:2
19	Polish-German	Multi	German/French /Polish/English	Poland, Germany, France	Manager	French /German-Indian	1:2
20	German-Indian	Multi	German/ Indian-local/English	Germany, India, France	Manager	French /Polish-German	1:2
21	Indian-American	Multi	Indian-local/ English/French	USA, India, France	Manager	French /French-Chinese	1:2
22	Lebanese-Spanish	Multi	Lebanese /French /Spanish /English	Lebanon, USA, Spain, France	Manager	French(2)/Spanish(2)	4:1
23	Belgian-Dutch	Multi	English/Flemish /Dutch/French	USA, Netherlands, Belgium, France	Manager (International Marketing Strategy)	French(4)/Dutch/ German/Turkish/Italian	5:5
24	American-French	Multi	English	USA, France	Director (International Marketing Strategy)	Managing various teams in HQ and subsidiaries	
25	French	Mono	French/English	France	Manager(HR)	No team	
26	French	Mono	French/English	France, USA	Staff (HR)	No team	
27	American - French	Multi	English/French	USA, France	Regional Director	Manage various teams in HQ and subsidiaries	
28	French-Moroccan- German	Multi	English/Arabic /French/German	France, Germany	Regional Director	Manage various teams in HQ and subsidiaries	
29	German-French	Multi	English/German /French	Germany, France	Regional Director	Manage various teams in HQ and subsidiaries	
30	French*	Multi	French/English	France, Netherlands, Mexico, USA	Regional Director	French/ Iranian/ French-Japanese	
31	French	Multi	French/English	France, Korea, Thailand, England	Regional Director	Manage various teams in HQ and subsidiaries	
32	French	Mono	French/English	France, England	Regional Director	Manage various teams in HQ and subsidiaries	

33	French	Mono	French/English	France	Director	Russian/ Brazilian/ Belgian/ French/German	3:3
34	French	Mono	French/English	France	Director		
35	French	Mono	French/English	France	Director		
36	Indian- French	Multi	French/English/Hin di	India, France	Project manager	French	

* Team members who interact most with an interviewee, for example sharing same office.

** Multiculturals: having lived more than 2 years in foreign countries

Table 2.2 Demographic Details of Interviewees (N=36)

Positions		Departments	
Regional Director	6	International Marketing	30
Director	2	International Recruitment	3
Axe- Director	5	Human Resource	3
Project manager	22		
Staff	1		
Gender		Age	
F	23	25-35	28
M	13	35-45	8
Total : 28 multiculturals and 8 monoculturals = 36			

Table 2.3 Representative Quotes, Events, and Archival Entries underlying Second-order Themes

Representative Quotes, Events, and Archival Entries Underlying Second-order Themes	
Theme 1: Bringing local product and market Knowledge	
Bringing new local product and process knowledge	<p><i>People are more and more interested in Chinese oriental medicine. For example, the effect of ginseng is quite well known to worldwide consumers. Our team tries to find some natural ingredients for new hair care product. J (Hong Kong-Canadian-Singaporean) knows all the Chinese medicine that has no translation either in English or in French because it's so authentic. J does not only explain these ingredients but also suggest some ways we (team) can use for our new products. (French director)</i></p>
Bringing local market knowledge	<p><i>The Polish-French project manager was raised in Poland until age 20. She described her life under the communist regime and after in terms of how she evaluates and appreciates make-up products. She told us that she still loves certain products because she used to get them on black markets. As our target consumers are about her age, everything she shared with other members is valuable for developing markets and products. And for me and other members who have never lived in Poland and other countries in the region, she is actually educating us to get a better understanding of consumers in the region. (American-French regional director talking about Polish-French project manager)</i></p> <p><i>“When developing new product concept, you have to understand quickly what your target market and at the same time other markets are doing. Markets in different parts of the world are changing fast and reacting differently to even a same product. I often get inspired from, for example, market trends in Europe and use the inspiration to develop new products in Asia. (Indian-American-French project manager)</i></p> <p><i>“I think in terms of the knowledge of Chinese consumer insights of the minds, I can have a better understanding than monoculturals. For example, in terms of judging aesthetics, I can pick up which camera angle Chinese women look more beautiful on the advertising. Asian beauty is quite different</i></p>

	<p><i>from Western beauty, so those contributions I definitely do for my team. (Hong Kong-British-Canadian-French director)</i></p>
<p>Theme 2: Translating cultural nuances</p>	
<p>Translating cultural nuances not word to word</p>	<p><i>If we say ‘dry hair’, dry hair on this floor (HQ) doesn’t mean as same as German ‘dry hair’ means. So, it is much safer to check with B who knows two cultures (French and German) and translate exactly what I mean as ‘dry hair’. (B is German-British-French director)</i></p>
<p>Theme 3: Connecting geographically diverse knowledge and skills</p>	
<p>Combining knowledge from various geographies to create new locally customized product</p>	<p><i>“The most important skill I need in order to develop and launch this product line successfully is to exploit what I’ve got from one part to other parts of the world, which brings something innovative in the market. I am able to do this because I have a kind of stock of references in different languages—English, Hindi, and French. I read books in three different languages, meet people from different countries, eat food from different countries, and so on. I cannot think things in one way. That’s not my way. (Indian-American-French project manager)</i></p> <p><i>“Relating different cultural aspects on beauty helped me to create product concept that French consumers like to buy. I am able to do this because I had have to make my parents (father is a Cambodian and mother is an Irish) satisfied with me since young. For example, I found that in Asia, some tinted cream (skin colored cream for make-up face) used ‘face lifting effect’, in France and Europe, none of tinted creams used face lifting effect. I developed a new tinted cream with face lifting effect for French market. It was a big success.” (Team: French-Cambodian-Irish project manager, a Chinese-French and two French)</i></p>
<p>Leveraging skills from diverse geographies</p>	<p><i>“It is important to bridge different cultural perspectives in beauty business for worldwide consumers. What is more important is that based on knowledge integrated, you develop new products that are enough innovative to hit the market. For an example of wrinkles, for Asian women, no wrinkles are the best; for French, no wrinkles means so artificial; for Americans, some wrinkles are the most appropriate. Now, the</i></p>

challenge is how to make an innovative concept of wrinkle cream for Asian women that no competitors can beat us.” I am sure project managers like me or those with similar backgrounds handle such challenges better than monoculturals. (Venezuelan-French-American Director)

“At that time, we desperately needed help from top management right away. R just took the phone and called one of the top managers and explained the situation. We got the solution. Everyone was surprised by his behavior. It may sound easy, but if you work in a very hierarchical organization, you’d never pick up the phone to call top management for help even in such a situation. (French director about R, Dutch-Belgian-American project manager)

I systematically organize my team meetings; set the schedule, send out agenda before meeting and etc. And I am very aware of different level of English proficiency among members. So in meetings, I usually ask, ‘Andrea could tell me what Pietro has just told us?’ In this way, I minimize any miscommunication among members. I learned this when I worked for a NGO in Italy to help homeless people with whom I had difficulty to communicate either English (none spoke English except me) or Italian because of my poor Italian at the time and their grammatically wrong Italian. (Mexican-German-Italian Director, Team: Romanian, Italian, French-Spanish)

“My team is composed of a Polish, a French-Thai, a German-French, a French and me a American-French. I used to work in New York, which influenced a lot my current management style. For example, every decision is made in team meetings. Roles are clearly defined. A regular meeting schedule is set. We did team building exercise - a survival exercise. Here I added some more extra team activities. As Europeans like soccer, I suggested our team to watch world-cup together. I asked members to bring local food whenever they go home (in Europe, it is quite convenient to visit home country). It really helps constructing my team. This sounds nothing special to people in USA, but here, I am a unusual boss. But it worked well in my team”. (American-French director)

Theme 4: Reducing inter-regional misunderstanding	
Managing cross-regional tensions	<p><i>“If Indian local members said, ‘India might have an issue with this (a certain ingredients for a new product), because there’s no written piece of communication where this plant can be used to please our consumers.’ Actually, what they tried to tell me is, ‘No, I won’t do what you asked us to do and lower your expectations.’ But I didn’t make any negative comments on that. Instead I said, ‘Okay, how about I discuss with R&D at HQ and find out the way we solve this problem?’ I didn’t want to make an uncomfortable situation. Instead, I got respect from them, which as a result had a positive influence on our work progress. (Indian-American-French manager; Team members at HQ: Chinese-French, French; Local teams: India, China, & Thailand)</i></p>
Fostering cross-regional understanding	<p><i>“For the visual for a new campaign of products, our Brazilian counterpart disagreed with the HQ people. She told us, ‘Well, this visual is not going to work here because Brazilians are more built than European women.’ But no one (at the HQ) agreed with her. So, I finally said to my team, ‘Look, I totally agree with her (Brazilian). When I go to Venezuela, all my friends are more built than I and they told me, ‘You’re so skinny!’ At the same time, I know you (HQ people) think that I’m normal, not skinny at all. Remember, this commercial will be released not here but in Brazil!’ I often face this kind of problem regarding different cultural perspectives on beauty. I have to listen to both what locals say or what HQ people say, but, rather than just try to compromise for each party, I try to help them make a right decision for the best result. (Venezuelan-French-American director, current team: French (3) and Hungarian-French, previous team: French, Russian, and Serbian)”</i></p>
Theme 5: Displaying flexible behaviors to deal with people from diverse regions/cultures	
Adapting to deal with different cultural behaviors	<p><i>“Since I was young, I have educated, lived, and worked in different countries, meeting culturally different others in neighborhood, at schools, and at work places. By the conscious effort of mind I preempt the actions and their consequences when interacting with someone with a different cultural background. This helps me a lot working in this particularly, multicultural work place.” (Hong Kong-</i></p>

<p>Displaying situationally appropriate cultural behaviors</p>	<p><i>Canadian-British-French director)</i></p> <p><i>In terms of meeting time, we all seem to have different principles. For example, my French boss never starts meetings on time and quite often postponed or cancelled them. H (Dutch-Chinese) is very strict on time and deadline (meeting is time for checking-up on each other's work process). I and K (Taiwanese-French), were are a bit flexible regarding meeting time. So, whenever we have meeting with my French boss, or ourselves, we face frustrating moments. But, what is important for us is how to handle this frustrating moment. As we are conscious about each other's differences, we come to compromise when such moments occur. For example, with my French boss, I need to be really flexible with time. With my team members, if I am behind my meeting schedule with my team members, I make sure to tell them in advance why I am behind and ask them next availabilities. Conflicts may still exist in my team. But we handle them much more tolerant level. (Hong Kong-British-Canadian-French director, Team: Dutch-Chinese, Taiwanese-French, Korean-British and French boss)</i></p> <p><i>“When I led a TV commercial film with French PR team, Chinese local team, Chinese PR agency, and Korean make-up team, at the beginning, I was aware that there was no respect to me as a project leader. However I had to make them collaborate by bridging differences among them in terms of beauty, work value and attitude. Although I was considered a translator who spoke French and Chinese and English, as I knew that I could not change their mindset at once, I tried to adapt and support these teams as much as I could. It was not an easy job at all as It required constant emotional effort in order not to prejudge but to understand and respect them. Now it's been three times working with them. Their attitudes have been changed enormously. I have gained the respect from these teams. (Hong Kong-British-Canadian-French manager with teams: French, Chinese, and Korean)</i></p> <p><i>“Multiculturals have a kind of gymnastic intellectual training to think and behave as if they were French, American, or Chinese and all together inside them.” (French Director: Team: Mexican-French, British-French, French)</i></p>
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APPENDIX 2.A

The Ideal Profiles of Interviewees and Team Observation

1. Team leaders (managers) of multicultural teams that include some biculturals and some monoculturals.
2. Biculturals:
 - a. Born biculturals (e.g., parents of different nationalities, born in a country different from parental nationality).
 - b. Grown up or educated or worked in a foreign country for a period of time greater than 3 years.

Please note that one of the characteristics is needed for one to be a bicultural.

3. Monoculturals (e.g., born and having been living in the same country to now) working with biculturals in order to receive multiple impressions of biculturals' activities in a team.
4. Similar departments
5. At least 3 years of multicultural team working experience (past or current).

APPENDIX 2.B

Question Guide to Ethnographic Interviews at BEAU

Background

Age

What is your current position? How did you get it?

What is your background?

What led you to working for this company? How did you get started?

How long have you been working for this company?

What was your prior experience?

Cultural Identity(ies)

Tell me about your background; where to born, where to grow up, your parents' cultures?

How do you identify culturally? (I show interviewees Cultural Identity Definition, Interviewees posit themselves in the scale in Figure 3).

Has(ve) your cultural identity(ies) changed over time?

Have you ever had cultural identity crisis?

Cultural identity(ies) and Professional Life

How do your cultural identities influence your professional life?

Have you noticed any difference between you and your colleagues in terms of the way to perform

How do you identify culturally different others?

What is your most challenge working with people from different countries?

Team Experience

Describe your current team

Tell me one or two teams you have worked previously?

How are different between current team and previous team?

Can you think of challenges your team faces?

Do your team members behave differently when facing challenges?

- How do you find their differences?
- How do you behave differently from others in your team

Do you think that you make more effort to adapt to your team members (colleagues)?

- If so, why?
- If not, why not

The Roles

Describe a typical day/project/assignment?

What was your last project like?

How do you work with members?

Can you think of any examples you contribute to your team performance?

What resource do you use when working?

When Do Multicultural Employees Become Cultural Brokers?: A Comparative Ethnography Study of MNCs in Consumer Goods versus Auditing and Business Consulting

Multicultural employees are known for their cultural competence and skills that can contribute to organizational effectiveness, including global team effectiveness. The cultural brokerage roles of multicultural employees and contextual features affecting their roles in organizational contexts, however, have been underexplored. This study explores two main issues: 1) how multiculturals influence teamwork processes as cultural brokers, and 2) the contextual factors that exist and how these factors affect multiculturals' propensity to enact the role of cultural brokerage. To answer these questions, this study investigates boundary conditions through ethnographic fieldwork in firms in two distinct industries—fast-moving consumer goods and auditing and business consulting. By comparing and contrasting the findings of a field study in these two industries, I found multiculturals fulfill both similar and different brokerage roles in two global workplaces and six boundary conditions that either enable or constrain multiculturals from enacting the cultural brokerage role in global teams. Field data shows that these boundary conditions relate to multiculturals' identity and competence, which extends their skills in their work settings. This study first describes the cultural brokerage roles in two firms and identifies three organizational factors and three team factors that affects multiculturals to enact their cultural brokerage role. Then, the implications to understanding boundary conditions for multiculturals at multinational organizations are discussed further.

Keywords: Boundary conditions for work performing, Multicultural employees, Cultural Broker, Global team work processes, Comparative ethnography

Role theory concerns one of the most important characteristics of social behaviors—the fact that human beings behave in ways that differ and are predictable depending on their respective social identities and the situations (Biddle, 1979; Sarbin & Allen, 1968). It explains roles based on the assumption that people are members of social positions and hold for their own behaviors and those of other people (Biddle, 1986). Most role theories assume that expectations are the most critical generators of roles; that expectations are learned through experience; and that individuals are aware of the expectations they hold and that others have of them. This premise suggests that role theory assumes persons are thoughtful, socially aware social beings. Accordingly, role theorists are supposed to be sympathetic to such theories that assume human awareness as cognitive and field theories in social psychology or exchange theory and phenomenological approach in sociology. Thus, role theorists also tend

to adopt the research methods established in these theories, in particular, methods of observing roles and those that require research objectives to examine their own or others' expectations. Given this basic focus, empirical research by role theorists has generally focused on the nature of role taking and status, the dynamics of enacting a role, and the effects of roles, contextual constraints, social positions, and expectations. This, indeed, has not been the case. Much of role research had investigated practical questions and derived concepts such as role conflicts, role taking, role playing, or consensus (Biddle, 1986).

Role concepts have generated significant research in some of the central arenas of sociology and social psychology. Five such perspectives are: (1) functional role theory (Bates & Harvey, 1975; Linton, 1936; Parsons, 1951; Parsons & Shils, 1951); (2) symbolic interactionist role theory (Hiess, 1981; Mead, 1934; Ickes & Knowles, 1982; Stryker & Statham, 1985; Stryker & Serpe; Zurcher, 1983); (3) structural role theory (Burt, 1976; Mandel, 1983; Winship & Mandel, 1983); (4) cognitive role theory (Biddle, 1979; Biddle et al, 1980a, b, 1985; Greenwood, 1983; Good 1981; Janis & Mann, 1977; McNamara & Blumer, 1982; Moreno, 1934; Swartz 1977; Yardley 1982); (5) organizational role theory (Allen & van de Vilert, 1984; Gross, 1958; Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964; Fisher & Gitelson, 1983; Van Sell et al, 1981; van de Vilert, 1979, 1981). Although insightful the work of functionalists, structuralists, and symbolic interactionists, most empirical research in the role field has not come from organizational perspectives (Biddle, 1986). Researchers in this field have built a version of role theory focused on social forms that are preplanned, task-oriented, and hierarchical. Roles in such organizations are associated with identified social positions and generated by normative expectations. Yet norms vary among individuals and reflect both the formal demands of the organizations and the pressures of informal groups (Feldman, 1984). Thus individuals often face role conflicts in which they must deal with antithetical norms for their behavior. Such role conflicts cause stress and must be resolved if

the individual is to be happy and the organization is to succeed (Biddle, 1986). Such assumptions limit how roles evolve with contextual situations and are generated by nonnormative expectations. In addition, according to this perspective, organizations are rational, stable entities, and all conflicts within them are merely role conflicts. Furthermore, participants in such organizations will certainly be happy and productive once role conflict is resolved (Biddle, 1986). Although organizational role theorists have done much to call attention to role conflict in organizations, the boundaryless assumption may not be helpful in examining organizational roles played by multiculturals, a new working demographic in multinational organizations (MNCs).

In practice, people with multicultural origins—biculturals and multicultural individuals—are abundant in the MNCs, and they constitute a rich research resource to integrate culturally diverse contexts (Brannen, Thomas, & Garcia, 2009). To date, however, limited research has examined multiculturals in organizations, with even fewer studies investigating the roles multiculturals play in MNCs (for an exception, see Yagi & Kleinberg, 2011). Further, virtually no research has sought to understand the nature, dynamics and boundary conditions of the roles that multicultural individuals play to ensure that their teams function effectively.

The purpose of the present study is to build and enrich theory related to the cultural brokerage role (Geertz, 1960) that multicultural project managers play in global teams and the contextual factors that enable or constrain enacting such roles. To accomplish this aim, I conducted a 10-month ethnographic field study in a leading cosmetic and consumer goods MNC and a leading auditing and business consulting MNC. I examined cultural brokerage in the context of new product development teams and auditing and business consulting teams at each research site. Specifically, I examined how multiculturals influence networking and managing cultural heterogeneity, knowledge processes, and handling conflicts for global team

performance. I define “multicultural” as an individual with more than one cultural identity (Hong, Morris, Chiu, & Benet-Martinez, 2000), with latent skills gained through (often) life-long cultural experiences working and living with culturally different people (Benet-Martinez, Lee, & Leu, 2006; Brannen et al., 2009). I found that multiculturals play a critical role in teamwork processes within global teams in which members’ cultural/national heterogeneity seems more complicated than organizational researchers have thus far recognized (e.g., Argote & McGath, 1993; Elron, Shamir, & Ben-Ari, 1998; Jackson, May, & Whitney, 1995; Jackson, et al., 1992; Lawrence, 1997; Snow, Snell, Davison, & Hambrick, 1996). In the present study, my aim is to advance the field’s understanding of the cultural brokerage role multicultural workers play and the boundary conditions of enacting such roles.

As such, this study also asks what contextual factors exist and how do these factors affect multiculturals’ propensity to enact the role of cultural brokerage? To answer this question, this study investigates boundary conditions through ethnographic fieldwork in firms in two distinct industries—fast-moving consumer goods and auditing and business consulting. By comparing and contrasting the findings of a field study in these two industries, I identified six boundary conditions that either enable or constrain multiculturals from enacting the cultural brokerage role in global teams. My field data show that these boundary conditions relate to multiculturals’ identity and the competence that extend their skills in a work setting. First, I identify three organizational factors and three team factors that affect multiculturals to enact cultural brokerage role. Then, I discuss implications to understanding boundary conditions for multiculturals at multinational organizations better.

I begin by reviewing the research on theories of role and contextual features affecting role identity framework, person-culture fit, and international adjustment to reveal contextual factors and how they affect the way multiculturals enact the cultural brokerage role in global teams.

THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF MULTICULTURALS' CULTURAL BROKERAGE ROLE IN ORGANIZATIONS

Person-Organizational Culture Fit Theory Perspectives

Several scholars have posited that the value in organizational culture is linked to the process of an individual forming a social identity that provides meaning and a sense of connection (e.g., Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Ashforth & Humphrey, 1983; Barley, Meyer, & Gash, 1988; O'Reilly, 1989; Smircich, 1983; Nkomo & Cox, 1996) with the organization. Drawing on their underlying values, individuals may choose congruent roles, occupations, and even organizations (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Sampson 1978; Stryker & Serpe, 1982). Just as individuals with similar backgrounds, attitudes, and experiences are attracted to one another, individuals will be generally attracted to organizations with characteristics and behaviors congruent with the individual's values (Tsui & O'Reilly, 1989). With the notion of "value" acting as the starting point, the processes of selecting and socializing become complementary means to ensure person-organization fit (Chatman, 1988). Thus, congruence between an individual's values and an organization's may be central to person-culture fit (O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991:110). Although Rousseau (1990) noted "Quantitative assessment of the culture is controversial" (p. 1), many researchers attempt to measure the fit between a person and an organization. Although this trend is more prevalent in the person-organization fit (O'Reilly et al., 1991), the data reported in the present study are drawn from ethnographic fieldwork in two multinational organizations.

International Human Resource Management Perspective

In the present study, I also relate three characteristics of international HRM (IHRM) research to boundary conditions that enable or constrain multiculturals in enacting cultural brokerage roles in two MNCs. The first characteristic is the organization structure. Organization structure refers to how responsibilities are allocated among individuals and

departments. It designates the nature and means of formal reporting relationships and how individuals in the organization are grouped (Child, 1977). HRM experiences major consequences when organizations are (re)structured around teamwork (rather than individual performers). For example, organizations with team-based designs may need to use different methods to analyze jobs and recruit, socialize, and assess its employees (Klimoski & Jones, 1994). Relying on teams has been an important factor in generating concern about the HRM implications of workforce diversity (Jackson et al., 1994). Thus, the impact of structure on HRM is particularly evident in MNCs and international joint ventures (Jackson et al., 1995, p. 245). The primary challenge is how IHRM can link globally distributed teams, while also adapting to the host country's requirements and the societies within those countries (Laurent, 1986). The second and third factors related to HRM are external to the organization: industry characteristics and national culture. Industry characteristics were a particularly important factor, because I compared organizations in different industries: marketing (with a manufacturing component) and professional services. The term "industry" refers to a distinct group of productive or profit-making enterprises (Jackson & Schuler, 1992). Bowen and Schneider (1988) described three characteristics that distinguish the business activities of a services firm from a manufacturing organization: (1) a "service" is generally intangible; (2) in services the clients and employees usually cooperate in the production-and-delivery process; and (3) in service firms, production and consumption are often concurrent. Because clients play a central role in services, they can be thought of in a way as employees who are subject to HRM (Bowen, 1986; Mills & Morris, 1986). For example, service sector employers were more likely to include clients as sources of input during the appraisal process (Jackson & Schuler, 1992). Differences in the nature of manufacturing and service firms also have implications for other aspects of HRM systems, including recruiting, selection, and training employees; compensation; stress management; and developing and maintaining an

appropriate organizational culture and identity (for detail, see Davis-Blake, & Uzzi, 1993; Delany et al., 1989; Guthrie & Olian 1991a; Jackson & Schuler, 1992; Jackson, 1984; Schneider et al., 1992; Terpstra & Rozell, 1993). The third contextual factor related to HRM is national culture. Because organizational culture is embedded in host country culture, speculation is abundant about the possible HRM implications of the variations along cultural dimensions that Hofstede developed (1993). Empirical studies have focused, however, on comparing HRM practices between countries rather than directly measuring both culture and HRM (Jackson et al., 1995). Thus, it has been suggested that research may seek to examine how global companies develop IHRM systems and strategies that are consistent with distinct local cultures and remain internally dependable in the context of the organization (cf. Heenan & Perlmutter, 1979; Phatak, 1992; Schwartz, 1992; Tung 1993).

The Role and Dynamics of Enacting That Role

A process that links an individual to the level of a team is called “role-making and role-taking” (Earley & Gibson, 2002: 78). This process is a fundamental action when individuals are exposed to a social structure (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Roles that a person enacts within a team are intertwined with their self-concept (Erez & Earley, 1993; Stryker, 1980; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Social Identity Theory (SIT; Tajfel, 1982) or Self-Categorization Theory (SCT; Turner, 1987) encompass the concept that identity is individual and involves role expectations and behaviors that are both accepted and incorporated into the self (Earley & Laubach, 2000). In Stryker’s Identity Theory (1980), separate identities are ordered into a “salience hierarchy,” in which the most salient identities are more likely to emerge when an individual responds to a situation. The salience of an identity is based on the individual’s level of commitment to the social networks in which the identity plays out (Stryker, 1980). In a work team, people respond to role-expectations using the most salient identity for the given situation. Furthermore, employees negotiate among possible activities

based on the identities they generate related to role expectations according to their organizational position in the formal structure and within informal structure such as cultural or ethnic groups. When situations when conflict among multiple identities occurs, the individual responds with the identity that is more strongly committed to his or her position in the conflict (Burke & Reitzes, 1991; Stryker, 1980).

Multiculturals' Cultural Brokerage Role

For a global team to perform more effectively, it should synergistically combine individual input to influence collective actions and outcomes. For example, one member's cultural competence (e.g., multilingualism and cultural knowledge) can be used to integrate members effectively to enhance communication and resolve conflict (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000; Steiner, 1972). When a multicultural individual works within a global team, he or she faces the challenges of cross-cultural communication and conflicts caused by the members' cultural differences. Such employees have the potential to adopt the role of an intermediary between two or more culturally divergent groups. That is, possessing the quality of being multicultural can strongly indicate the roles an employee can potentially adopt in a global team. The actual roles adopted and the relative importance of each of role is influenced by situational demands to solve challenges in a global team (Stewart et al., 2005). For example, multiculturals' propensity to span boundaries promote team effectiveness (Ancona & Caldwell, 1992a, b; Yagi & Kleinberg, 2011). Thomas (1994) argued that in the process of spanning cultural boundaries both internally and externally, multiculturals acquire significant role benefits; indeed, they can obtain resources, status, and information that other team members cannot. These role benefits, in turn, increase the multiculturals' job satisfaction, encouraging them to engage further in boundary spanning activities (Au & Fukuda, 2002; Thomas, 1994; Yagi & Kleinberg, 2011). As such, Hong (2010) argued that highly biculturally competent people are more likely to play a cultural brokerage role. That is, they

become a boundary spanner and conflict mediator to meet the team's expectations, particularly when the team faces challenges caused by cultural diversity. Despite the prevalence of cultural brokerage across social and organizational contexts, theoretical conceptions have not kept pace with this phenomenon, particular in relation to multiculturals working in global teams, where managing cultural heterogeneity among members becomes a critical challenge.

Contextual Factors: Status Theory and Symbolic Interactionism Perspectives

Two concepts from the literature explicate how roles link personal and team identity in the social and organizational context. The first is the Status Characteristics Theory (Berger, Conner, & Fisek, 1974; Berger, Fiesk, Norma, & Selditch, 1977; Stryker, 1980); which discusses the nature of role-taking and status. The second is Symbolic Interactionism Theory (Mead, 1934, Stryker & Macke, 1978; Stryker & Serpe, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1985; Turner & Shosid, 1976), which helps us understand the dynamics of enacting roles.

Several significant features influence the Role Identity Framework (Earley & Gibson, 2002). First, central to this framework are the organizational control and coordination mechanisms that are salient to the individual's identity (Earley & Laubach, 2000). Normative control draws out identities whose behavioral patterns are constructed around similar interests with the organization. For example, workers operating under normative control have high levels of organizational commitment (Burke & Reitzes, 1991). Bureaucratic control evokes identities whose subordinate behavioral responses are constructed around issues of legitimation, equity, and fairness; concepts that are embedded in organizational rules (Earley & Gibson, 2002). This form of control within an individual can compete with the identities that are based within in the informal organization such as ethnic and cultural groups. When organizations strike informal deals, however, the salience of competing identities is reduced (Littler & Salaman, 1984).

Second, culture-related values through which role identities in a cultural context as expressed are also important factor (Earley & Gibson, 2002, p. 80). If the ingroup is the organization, for example, employees will respond to role expectations with the minimal effort that characterizes normative control (Earley & Gibson, 2002). A worker from a collective culture may be more likely to be more committed to an identity that reflects the interests of his or her ingroup, despite the ingroup's relationship with the organization's structure (Earley & Gibson, 2002). In contrast, if the workers' ingroup is not his or her organization, and if his or her ingroup's interests differ from those of the organization (e.g., class-based interests), then control measures must present role expectations that favor a subordinate identity over the competing ingroup identity (Earley & Gibson, 2002). In addition, a cultural value that favors high power-distance relationships can support a worker's commitment to subordinate roles, facilitating the use of simple or bureaucratic control (Earley & Gibson, 2002).

Third, status characteristics (or traits) and its hierarchies employed within various countries affect the framework an individual uses to evoke his or her role identity (Earley & Gibson, 2002). A status characteristic as an attribute on which individuals vary that is concomitant with societal beliefs of esteem and worthiness (Ridgeway & Walker, 1995). Because it is based in consensual beliefs, the status value of an attribute can change over time and vary among countries (Earley & Gibson, 2002). Status characteristics can be either diffuse or specific (Earley & Gibson, 2002). Diffuse characteristics have general performance expectations that may require more than the person's ability to perform one type of task and are not necessarily rational. Examples include gender, age, and race. Specific status markers, however, may be relevant only to one task or a category of tasks such as skills with, for example, language, cultural knowledge, and a computer. It is important to emphasize that cultural beliefs that attach status value to a characteristic also associate it with implicit role

expectations for competence (Earley, 1997; Lau & Murnighan, 1998; Ting-Toomey & Cocroft, 1994). For example, many societies including United States, men are in general believed to contribute more to, or to be more competent (Borgatta & Simoson, 1963; Ellass & Graves, 1997; Heiss, 1962; Kenkel, 1957; Shackelford, Wood, & Worchel, 1996; Stets, 1997; Walker, Ilardi, McMahon, & Fennel, 1996). In contrast, age is a significant status marker in many Asian countries (Earley, 1999; Holmes, Tantongtavy, & Tomizawa, 1995). Earley (1999) investigated the status hierarchies across various countries and suggested: (1) the effects of such a hierarchy on group decision-making as a function of cultural frame differ; (2) the content of these hierarchies differ across countries. Trait hierarchies reflect the organizational/group roles a person may take on in his or her group in the organization. For example, nationality is at the top of many people's traits (Earley & Mosakowski, 2000). Researchers have shown that when individuals come into contact with members of other national or cultural groups, they define both the other and themselves primarily in terms of national or cultural orientation (Bochner & Ohsako, 1977; Earley & Mosakowski, 2000; Melingo & Ravlin, 1998; Thomas, Ravlin, & Wallace, 1996). As a result, an individual's cultural background and his/her competence gained such background may affect his/her role identity framework.

Fourth, status theory (Berger et al., 1977) also suggests that the mixture of individual characteristics has important implications for power differences within a team. When teams are more egalitarian, the more the individual talents of each group member should be encouraged to emerge. In situations in which status characteristics create mixed expectations (e.g., a French manager with little formal education working with a team of highly educated French engineers), the team will be more egalitarian. In situations in which status characteristics are consistent, the team will be more hierarchical. This suggests that the more heterogeneous a team is, the more egalitarian it will be, and the better it will achieve goals

(Earley & Gibson, 2002; Berger & Zelditch, 1985; Webster & Foschi, 1988).

Status theory and symbolic interactionism theory have made strong contributions to our understanding of roles that (1) evolve through social interaction, and various cognitive concepts through which social actors understand and interpret their own and others' conduct; (2) a person may occupy in his or her society and their link to status characteristics including gender, race, religion, socioeconomic status, as well as achieved roles including profession, education, etc. However research on the relationship between various status characteristics across cultures has been conducted largely based on characteristics relevant to western culture. This limits to provide an ex ante framework predicting what characteristics might or might not be important in a given culture, even more importantly, in a global team with high level of cultural heterogeneity in an individual level (e.g., multiculturals). In addition, symbolic interactionists often fail to examine actors' role expectations for other persons or to contextual factors upon role expectations and role enactments.

Prior research has examined the contextual features that affect a worker's role identity framework with different levels of analysis. Because people have different status characteristics, however, contextual features that affect role-taking motivations may vary. Given increased complexity in the workplace, individual variance in status has become more pronounced. Diversity and demography researchers, however, have paid less attention to the relationship among status characteristics and the salience of role identities and the impact of roles team members might enact. For example, while exploiting their status characteristics, the kinds of roles multicultural members play and how contextual factors influence enacting such roles are largely unrecognized or unanswered.

Situated field studies of work practices are likely to produce the most insightful grounded theories regarding how a multicultural team member's cultural brokerage unfolds in two organizations (a leading cosmetic company and an auditing and business consulting

MNC). A practice-oriented approach focuses on work activity (Orr, 1996) and, more important, the repertoire of actions that reflect people's understandings of "how to play such roles" in complex and challenging work settings (Orlikowski, 2002). By examining the kinds of roles multiculturals play for teamwork processes and how contextual factors influence the way they enact such roles, I develop a process model of cultural brokerage and boundary conditions in global teams.

METHODS

Ethnography, in its most utilitarian sense, is what Spradley and McCurdy (1972) referred to as "the task of describing a particular culture" (p. 3). Denzin (2003) added that ethnography is a method to understand the politics and practices that shape human experience. Research on multiculturals in organizations is an emerging area and little theory has been developed. According to Edmondson and McManus (2007; *nascent theory*), research should collect rich, detailed, and suggestive data from ethnography in order to explain the phenomenon. Ethnographic fieldwork, therefore, particularly fits the present research objective. To initiate a grounded theoretical conception of how and what contextual factors affect enacting roles, I selected two multinational organizations that met these criteria. Both settings are listed prominently in surveys of leading firms in their respective fields, and both recruit individuals with the diverse cultural backgrounds that exemplify multiculturals.

Following a strategy of theoretical sampling (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), I compared multiculturals in global teams in the fast moving consumer goods (FMSG) industry with multiculturals in the auditing and business consulting industry. The FMSG field is characterized by quickly changing tasks that allow the organization to adapt or advance market trends, whereas auditing and consulting features stability in tasks in order to maintain standard practices and ethics to diverse clients. I sampled on this dimension to develop theory across two multinational firms that differed in the degree to which they recognize and use

multiculturals in the workforce. The FMSG firm, BEAU (a pseudonym), owes its fortunes to the new products they develop. It recruits multiculturals in order to develop new products for worldwide markets as they bring new ideas and a deep understanding of local markets, which complements monoculturals working at the headquarters. Thus, management in this firm expects multiculturals to develop products that are new and creative and better and faster than competitors. Because multiculturals in BEAU's new product development department were fully responsible for developing new products in a maximum of two years, their cultural competence seemed manifest (e.g., cultural knowledge, cross-cultural communication, and creativity).

In contrast, multiculturals in the auditing and business consulting firm, AuditCo (a pseudonym), were not always selected for specific tasks and roles. An exception is multiculturals working in International Finance Reporting Standards (IFRS), whose tasks required working cross-culturally among member countries of the IASB (International Accounting Standards Board). Although auditing practices are calculated carefully and highly rationalized, these practices are also an emotional process as various interaction rituals (conversation, task-oriented interactions, shop-talk, gossip, general discussions) automatically increase or decrease the emotional energy of both the auditors and clients (Collins, 1981, 1987). No auditor works alone; instead, they work in groups. The auditing process, therefore, revolved around strong reliance and cohesion among its members. In addition, AuditCo staff must demonstrate a high degree of loyalty in order to be seen as truly professional and worthy of promotion. This revealed itself as almost a machine-like work ethic to the ideals of commitment and professionalism, both of which were highly valued in the professional ideology. Any theory generated by studying multicultural competence was less likely to be robust than it was at BEAU.

Research Sites

My objective with the present study is to investigate what context factors are and how they affect enacting cultural brokerage role by multiculturals. As such, the present study's design is open-ended, which allows unplanned themes to emerge from the data among firms in different industries. In this way, I can cross-check internal consistency and reliability (Denzin, 1978). Each firm designated one senior professional as my main contact person who was responsible for planning meetings, interviews, and observations for my fieldwork. Before I met this individual face-to-face, I sent my contact the selection criteria for interviewees and discussed ideal interviewees and the firm's ability to fulfill my requests. In a two-page description of selection criteria (see Appendix A: "The Ideal Profiles of Interviewees and Team Observation"), I defined multiculturals, monoculturals, and multicultural teamwork experience and indicated how many interviewees I needed with multiculturals, monoculturals, and managers.

As a non-participant observer, I conducted my fieldwork from January to October 2010. My engagement at BEAU extended for 10 months (January to October, 2010), whereas my work with AuditCo lasted seven months (April to October 2010). The main purpose of conducting ethnography in two different industries was to compare and contrast two organizations in order to have more generalizability (Denzin, 1978) in my findings. I began my ethnography fieldwork at AuditCo three months later than BEAU for two reasons. First, my main contact person (a senior professional) was in an accident and hospitalized for three months. Second, when I began my fieldwork at BEAU, I realized I should concentrate on one company; indeed, it took more time and energy to familiarize myself with the field than I planned. Thus, I decided to postpone my fieldwork at AuditCo so that I could gain a sense of how multiculturals function at BEAU first.

FMCG firm: BEAU. I conducted ten months' of ethnography research at BEAU in their Paris location (January – October 2010). The study focused mainly on the company's new product development division and international recruiting division at the company's headquarters (HQ). The new product development division employed 160 project managers. Overall, 40% of the project managers are multicultural. In total, I conducted 36 *in situ* interviews: 27 with multiculturals and 9 with monoculturals. Table 1 displays information on interviewee profile and team composition, and Table 2 includes demographic details of the interviewees. Interviewees occupied a variety of hierarchical and functional positions. Interviews typically lasted 100 minutes, ranging from 60 minutes (team leaders/managers and HR manager) to more than two hours (most multiculturals). All interviews were audio-recorded and were transcribed verbatim. Although I modified interview protocols at each signal of an emerging theme (Spradley, 1979), common to each interview were a set of protocol questions. These questions addressed: (1) how cultural identity(ies) have impacted work performance and interacting with (culturally different) others in teams; (2) how the company develops new products; and (3) what challenges and support the interviewee experienced (see Appendix B for the interview protocol). Most multicultural interviewees had lived abroad for at least two years. On average, each had lived in three different countries, and all speak more than two languages. Most of the teams were composed of at least three different nationalities.

Because I knew little about multiculturals in organizations when I began this study, I started by conducting interviews with top management, six regional directors, and one HR professional. My goal was to learn whether they were aware of the firm's multicultural workforce, why they think that multiculturals are important for their business, and how they leverage the talent of multicultural workers. I elicited their views and observations regarding multiculturals and their personal experiences in working with and managing multiculturals in

teams. Through this initial set of interviews, I learned that firms fully recognize the benefits of employing a multicultural workforce and have tried to use individual unique competencies for various business purposes. For example, most agreed that it is fundamental that organizations employ a multicultural workforce in order to develop their business globally.

I also conducted a semi-structured interview with the director and manager in the Human Resource department. During the interview, I asked when BEAU started recruiting multiculturals (the HR manager called such employees '*international talent*'), why BEAU hires a multicultural workforce, and how BEAU recruits and manages these employees once they were recruited. In addition, in terms of managing a multicultural workforce, I asked about multiculturals' overall performance, the challenges of managing them, the challenges a multicultural workforce faced, and the company's future recruitment strategy. I also had several informal discussions with directors and managers in charge of diversity at BEAU. During these discussions, I asked about BEAU's current and future strategy for a diversity policy for recruitment. Finally, I interviewed nine monocultural (French) managers to understand their perspectives on multiculturals and their working experience with multiculturals.

I also observed various team meetings in the new product development department, including brainstorming sessions, bi-weekly meetings, and meetings with other functional departments. Because I wanted to observe more team meetings in other departments, I also attended team meetings in the international recruiting department. For this task, I selected a team with a multicultural project manager and members with diverse cultural backgrounds. Team observation lasted two half days. Each day, I visited their office to observe how they worked and attended a three-hour meeting. This team had a regular meeting every two weeks, and after the team meeting, I usually joined the employees for their coffee break. In addition, I visited the site at least twice per week during the 10-month data collection process. With this

approach, I observed employees in the company cafeteria and other public places (e.g., waiting areas and libraries). In addition, I observed employees' activities at company-sponsored activities, conferences, and presentations. Some of the multicultural project managers also invited me to lunch, dinner, and parties after work, which I often attended. Other important sources of data included written materials. Documents included curriculum vitae (CVs) that described the details of multiculturals' work and living experiences across countries, project pamphlets, organizational magazines, and press and media publications. The CVs of the multicultural project managers were a key element that helped me understand their multicultural experience and how they formed their cultural identities. I usually asked multicultural project managers to send me their CV before meeting with them, and I studied these documents carefully to prepare for the interview. I also took pictures of each interviewee, the products they developed, and their office decorations. Taken together, these secondary sources of data provided a richer context for understanding interviewees' responses. They also sparked new questions for interview protocols that could be addressed in subsequent interviews with other informants.

Auditing and business consulting firm: AuditCo. I conducted seven months of ethnographic fieldwork (April – October 2010) at AuditCo in their Paris location. The present study focused on multicultural employees working in the company's main functional departments such as auditing, consulting, and financial advising. I conducted 20 *in situ* interviews: 15 with multiculturals and 5 monoculturals in a variety of hierarchical and functional positions. Interview questions and interview duration were the same as described for BEAU. In terms of functional variance, interviewees worked in auditing (50%), business consulting (35%), and HR and Assistantship (15%). Hierarchical levels among interviewees were partner (1), director (1), senior manager (6), manager (9), and staff and interns (3).

Similar to my approach at BEAU, I also gathered data through observation at AuditCo. I observed employees' activities in offices (a confidential area), extra activities (e.g., English-speaking club), meeting rooms, restaurants, cafeterias, and so on. I was invited to CEO talks, top management talks, and several of the company's public activities (e.g., charity activities). On average, I went to AuditCo twice a week; for specific activities or interviews, however, I went more than twice per week.

In addition to interviews and observation, I collected written documents such as company newsletters, annual reports, IFRS-related booklets published by AuditCo, interviewees' CVs, and websites. Because I could not observe team meetings due to confidentiality issues, I read ethnography papers about auditing and business consulting firms from accounting journals. And, to improve my knowledge of auditors, I discussed my findings and questions from my fieldwork with one of my PhD colleagues who had worked in several auditing companies as a certified Professional Accountant in the US and France.

Commonalities. These two settings shared three similarities that deserve comparison, as summarized in Table 3. First, in each context, multiculturals use their multicultural competence in the workplace for better performance and networking within and across organizational and regional groups. At both sites, the level of heterogeneity was high (see Figure 1). Researchers have identified multicultural competence and its impact on organizational effectiveness as including cultural knowledge, open-mindedness, multilingualism, and creativity (Brannen et al, 2009; Cheng, Sanchez-Burks, & Lee, 2008a; Lafromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993; Cheng et al., 2006; Hong, 2010). The multiculturals from both settings were highly skilled individuals who developed new products for worldwide markets and conducted audits and consultations across regions. Most of multiculturals working at BEAU were selected from local subsidiaries with at least five years of operational marketing experience, typically with distinct performance. Partners at AuditCo selected their

team members with close attention to their work experience and specializations in the auditing and consulting fields.

Second, it was noticeable that multiculturals play roles that influence teamwork processes in both settings beyond and related to their immediate tasks. At BEAU, as a cultural broker, multiculturals' most important roles relate to team knowledge processes and cross-cultural conflict resolution within and across organizational groups between HQ and local subsidiaries. In addition to these roles, multiculturals at AuditCo act as a business broker, playing roles that develop networks and coordinate people as they work across national, societal, and organizational boundaries. Whereas the lower in hierarchy multiculturals posit, the more multiculturals played enacting such roles at BEAU, the higher in the hierarchy, the more multiculturals played such roles at AuditCo.

Finally, some multiculturals interviewed in both settings faced challenges in career development. Although they were promoted quickly, they did not have the ambition to be a 'partner' at AuditCo or 'top management' at BEAU. In both organizations, they found few role models and the most important reason they lacked the ambition was that they worked for French organizations whose top management should be French. One of director at AuditCo told me: "the director position is the highest I can achieve. AuditCo France is a French company. Therefore, French should be a partner." One of the directors at BEAU expressed the same sentiment: "Because BEAU represents France, I know my current position is the highest I can go. If I go to one of subsidiaries, I may be promoted to regional director."

Differences. Although these two sites shared enough similarities for useful comparison, they differed on three dimensions. First, teams at the two sites differed in terms of task origin (individual or collective), team organization (permanent or temporary and unit versus hierarchical), and work location (HQ offices or client sites). Although multiculturals at BEAU work in teams at headquarters, they mainly worked individually because they were fully

responsible for new product development. Their teams were permanent until they finished developing a particular new product (at least two years) and were composed of one or two other project managers who developed different product lines (e.g., the same brand such as a line and hair care and coloring products for the Latin American female market), one director (N+1 head), and one or two interns. Multiculturals worked mainly in their offices at the HQ. They worked with local subsidiaries by phone, email, or audio-visual conferences. Directors visited local office at least once a month. Project managers visited locals depending on importance of new product development process. Their offices and the corridors were decorated with images of previous products, commercial campaign posters, and examples of newly developing products. Even at the regional director level, their attire was quite casual.

In contrast, multiculturals working at AuditCo worked collectively. Auditors and consultants engaged in the “intensive performance of collective rituals” on a daily basis (Pentland, 1998:608). Teams at AuditCo were composed according to a project. Chosen members had to be available, and their skills needed to fit the project. Teams are composed of partners, seniors, consultants, and juniors. The number of each within the hierarchy varied depending on the project size and its importance. Teams also worked at clients’ sites, often requiring domestic travel. Thus, they did not have their own offices or even desks until they reached the senior director level. Their office was a large open space. Anyone could sit at any available seat to work (usually after visiting a client’s sites). Their attire was very formal. One of the female auditors told me that she wore quite expensive jewelry (e.g., a watch) if necessary to impress a client. In addition, they were trained to be professional with clients in order to gain their trust. One of managers did not take off his jacket during the interview even though I asked him to take it off because of the room temperature. Only after I took off my jacket, did he take off his own.

A second difference between two sites is the human resource management (HRM) strategy and top management recognition of the multicultural workforce. BEAU's HRM strategy on multiculturals was quite systemized because BEAU started its recruitment strategy about 10 years ago. By the time I was completing my fieldwork, the HR manager told me that they had started a new training program for newly hired multiculturals to adapt more quickly and efficiently to the work context at the HQ. And, BEAU's top management valued their multicultural workforce. In contrast, AuditCo seemed to lack a particular HRM practices to hire, train, and appraise its multicultural workforce. The HR department seemed to consider multiculturals as "expatriates" (e.g., a mentoring system for newcomers). Thus, it was not clear to me how much partners agreed on valuing multicultural workforce.

A third difference is how much the multicultural workers identified with the organizational identity and culture. Multiculturals at BEAU often used the phrase "BEAU DNA" and seemed very proud to be working at BEAU, one of leading FMCG multinationals. To develop new products for either global or specific regional markets, they must be creative by exploiting their multicultural competence. Thus, their cultural identities positively related to their performance. In contrast, at AuditCo multicultural employees did not identify with the company. Many expressed that they could work for another similar company doing the exact same tasks. Employees at AuditCo identified more with their professional identity and less with the organizational identity. Thus, their cultural identities neutrally related to their task performance.

Analytic Approach

My data analysis followed an inductive, grounded theory development process (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Eisenhardt, 1989; Sutton, 1991). I documented my reflections within a day after each interview and observation, open-coded transcribed interviews and my observation journal, and created a list of emerging themes. To visualize relationships between different

parts of the data and between the data and theoretical ideas (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 44), I not only coded notes and interviews manually, but also used Nvivo9, a qualitative data analysis program. This approach required an iterative process of theoretical sampling and comparing and contrasting examples from the data to build theoretical categories that were interrelated to form the basis for the present study. At the same time, I updated my interview protocol and research agenda for the next day of fieldwork. As noted, I started my fieldwork at BEAU three months earlier than AuditCo. With this “learning by doing” approach, I was able to conduct my fieldwork at AuditCo more efficiently.

I analyzed data and adjusted categories periodically throughout the fieldwork to confirm the test categories and further focus my study. I coded interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents using Nvivo 9, a qualitative data analysis program that allowed me to visualize relationships between different parts of the data and between the data and theoretical ideas (Miles and Huberman, 1994:44). I coded data from BEAU first and then data from AuditCo. This way helped me to compare and contrast data from two research sites. When the fieldwork concluded, I reanalyzed field notes, memos, and interview transcripts to determine how my understanding and the practices of multiculturals at the two sites differed.

Now I turn to findings that emerged from this analysis, in the finding section, first, I describe how multiculturals influence team work process by enacting cultural brokerage role. Second, I explain what organizational conditions and team work conditions are and explore how these conditions enable and constrain multiculturals to play cultural brokerage role at work place.

ROLES AND BOUNDARY CONDITIONS AFFECTING THE ENACTMENT OF CULTURAL BROKERAGE ROLE

Roles of Multiculturals in AuditCo vs. BEAU

As described, multiculturals at both sites play roles that influence team work processes (see Table 4). Multiculturals at both sites become a member of a team based on their functional role in the organization. They belong to particular projects, and have particular task skills or a particular position in the organizational hierarchy. In addition to such a functional role, membership might occur on the basis of a multicultural's capacity to generate novel ideas, coordinate contributions from others, encourage harmonious relationships, or ensure decisions are implemented. In other words, they operate based on their team or organizational role as opposed of their functional role. Multiculturals in both organizations play not only their functional role but more importantly, they play an organizational role. Multiculturals at both sites play similar roles such as connecting geographically diverse knowledge and skills and people; reducing inter-regional misunderstanding; and displaying flexible behaviors to deal with people from diverse regions and cultures.

Multiculturals at both sites, however, play different roles because their functional roles differ. Multiculturals at AuditCo play roles generated by their functional skills and knowledge such as managing teams' cultural heterogeneity and developing a network with others at similar hierarchical levels across organizational/regional boundaries (e.g., partner level). They also network with people across industrial/societal boundaries to build business relationships. In contrast, multiculturals at BEAU play roles generated by their organizational position such as helping teams' knowledge processes across cultural/regional boundaries. At BEAU, multiculturals bring new local product and market knowledge to HQ and translate cultural nuances as new products are developed.

Roles Multiculturals Play at Both Sites: AuditCo and BEAU

Connecting geographically diverse knowledge, skills, and people.

Those Eric Wolf (1956) described cultural brokers as those who stand guard over the crucial junctures of relational synapses that connect the local system to the global whole. One of the most important candidates for such a broker role in business organizations, and thus for effective team leadership, is the country desk partners in AuditCo. One of country desk partners in AuditCo described his role:

The most important and valuable function that I fulfill here in France is to coordinate all potential missions for the Spanish subsidiaries in France by connecting them to their headquarters in Spain and to French companies. The missions are not only about auditing but also about various financial services for their business development in France such as tax advice and the acquisition and the financial advisory services. We [his team] also identify the need of the local subsidiaries in France with the corporate office in Spain by showing that there are potential business opportunities in France. And finally, for the success of previous two missions, my role is also to work with French companies by incorporating management and helping them invest to Spanish companies. (French-Spanish Partner at AuditCo)

This Spanish-French partner became the main connecting link who joined the Spanish company to the global whole and their subsidiaries in France. And, it his ability to perform this broker function critically affects the business success of Spanish firms and their subsidiaries in France and France companies.

The connecting roles multiculturals play at BEAU are somewhat similar, but different in several aspects. In new product development, the challenge is how to create innovative products that no competitors can replicate. Therefore, multicultural project managers focused more on integrating knowledge from different cultural perspectives for innovative product development. BEAU's multicultural project managers have '*intellectual flexibility*' that is '*gymnastically trained;*' and as such, ideas synthesize from multiple sources—diverse cultural perspectives—for creative products. A French-Cambodian-Irish project manager described how he overcame such a challenge. He was able to operate within the community in which he

lived, as well as the cultural/national spheres of his prior residences and his parents' home, all of which influenced his multiculturalism. He understood well that women in Asia pay particular attention to reducing wrinkles on their face. He sensed the same desire in European women and created a new cream. As a cultural broker, he developed new products for European women as a focus for synthesizing local community-oriented ideas (e.g., a cream for Asian women) to a global (or other region)-oriented idea (e.g., a cream for European women).

Managing cross-cultural conflicts

Multiculturals at both sites manage cross-cultural conflicts across organizational and regional boundaries by reducing inter-regional misunderstanding. Accordingly, they display flexible behaviors to deal with people from diverse regions and cultures.

Reducing inter-regional misunderstanding. Multicultural managers working on collaborative inter-organizational projects must gain cooperation from their counterparts. AuditCo's multicultural managers mitigated any potential negative effects of group boundaries by developing cross-cultural understanding among counterparts who were involved the project. A British-French manager noted:

At the moment, I'm doing a project with a big American client, and so we have a lot of Americans coming over here to France, because the target company is French. It is quite interesting because I need to be able to talk to the French company and be able to understand the way they think and the way they act. At the same time, I need to deal with the Americans, who are incredibly planned and want lots of detail. So, I need to deal with both parties; for example, I explain to the French why things are planned and why the Americans want certain bits of information. Now things are going well. (British-French manager in AuditCo)

In addition to his main functional role for the project, this British-French manager worked as a mediator between the Americans and French. He spanned the cultural boundaries of both parties, decoded different work norms and values to each party, and helped both parties work effectively.

At BEAU, multicultural project managers also engaged actively in mediating different opinions on projects. Their mediation was not compromising per se, but was designed to make an effective decision. For example, a Venezuelan-French-American director was managing product development for the Latin America region. He was engaged to solve a task conflict in which members had different opinions about the visual for a new product campaign. The problem was a lack of understanding the local culture by those who worked at the HQ. After listening to both parties' different opinions, he said, *'Look, I totally agree with her (Brazilian). When I go to Venezuela, all my friends are more built than I am, and they told me, 'You're so skinny!' At the same time, I know you (HQ people) think that I'm normal, not skinny at all. Remember, this commercial will be released not here, but in Brazil!'* This Venezuelan-French-American multicultural manager bridged the discrepant views of both parties, wherein the team not only ended up making the right decision, but also built mutual trust. If this director had not tried to mediate conflict, more subtle forms of conflict may have occurred as the employees at HQ may have maintained their views, and the local team would be unwillingly to agree. This could position both groups to emphasize the negative characteristics of the other. If teams encounter severe conflict among members, the worst case scenario requires the team to be recomposed.

Displaying flexible behaviors to deal with people from diverse regions/cultures.

Multiculturals at AuditCo must develop business relationships with clients. One of the advantages of multiculturalism is that such individuals may have more clients with diverse cultural backgrounds than do monoculturals. This is because multiculturals use their multicultural competence to develop their business. One French-British director explained how he developed his business with clients:

Multiculturalism gives me an advantage compared to others, because it's an additional skill that you can have and with which you can bring something valuable to organizations.

For example, it's great to have multiculturals within the team, which makes a team much richer, in terms of working for clients and building relationships with them. For me, one of my clients is an British person who lives in Luxemburg, and who does M&A transactions in Europe. He always contacts me because we get on well; he's British and I use my English culture. For his business in France and Luxembourg, I use my French knowledge and speak French. It's just a big advantage to be able to have these different cultural dimensions (French-British Director).

At BEAU, people work with others on a daily basis that has different cultural backgrounds. This often causes conflicts that challenge members' ability to proceed with their work. Once conflicts occur in teams, however, multicultural project managers in BEAU handled such conflicts with tolerance. In other words, they accepted different cultural values, were less disturbed by them, and accordingly performed better at handling conflicts because they valued cultural differences among members. A Hong Kong-British-Canadian-French project manager worked with different monocultural groups—a team whose members consisted of Chinese and Korean workers and a team whose members were all French. From the beginning, she found that the team members extended no respect to her. People treated her as a translator, even though she was a project leader. She said, *'As I knew that I could not change their mindset at once, I tried to adapt and support these teams as much as I could. It was not an easy job at all, as it required constant emotional effort in order not to prejudice but to understand and respect them.'* Although multicultural project managers are known to be open to cultural differences, this project manager felt it was challenging to work in an environment in which she was stereotyped as a translator. Her perception of conflicts, however, did not evoke negative stereotyping among members, where the opportunity to develop such attitudes was quite obvious.

Roles Multiculturals Play at AuditCo

Building legitimacy for the business success within and beyond the team

Multiculturals at AuditCo build legitimacy for the business success both within and beyond the team. They reinforce relationships among members to enhance team effectiveness

and forge connections among unconnected actors to generate credibility for the business.

They accomplish this by managing team heterogeneity and fostering a generative network across cultural, regional, and social boundaries.

Managing a team's cultural heterogeneity. Team members' cultural characteristics influence how a shared culture emerges (also called hybrid culture; Earley & Mosakowski, 2000) in two ways. First, members' cultural characteristics shape their cognitive processing framework. The outcome of culturally specific cognitions creates different links among categories, and negotiated understandings about cause-and-effect relationships form the perceptions that allow individuals to act (Choi & Nisbett, 1998; Choi, Nisbett, & Norenzayan, 1999; Choi, Nisbett, & Smith, 1997; Morris, Nisbett, & Peng, 1995). Second, culture guides our choices, commitments, and standards of behavior (Erez & Earley, 1993; Schneider, 1989, 1993; Schneider & Angelmar, 1993; Schneider & DeMeyer, 1991). Thus, members' cultural background influences their self-construal as group members and view of others within the group (Lickel, Hamilton, Wieczorkowska, Lewis, Sherman, & Uhles, 1998; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Team members' individual traits, expectations, and roles are shared within a team, but vary depending on the level of heterogeneity (Earley & Mosakowski, 2000) and more important, its management. If team member heterogeneity is not managed effectively, the assets from diverse ideas, perspectives, experience, expertise, and networks do not just emerge automatically. At AuditCo, multiculturals, especially those who are higher in the organizational hierarchy, manage their teams' cultural heterogeneity for business performance. An Indian-French manager described how he came to work in his current team, while also emphasizing his team leader's management of team cultural heterogeneity:

The partner told me that when I came for the interview, he wanted open-minded people; people from different countries and also within France; from different ethnicities, cities, and social classes. He wanted diversity in his team, but at the same time wanted a balance in human interactions. We have different backgrounds, but we also share similarities such as educational and cultural backgrounds. Our team is called as 'salad bowl' at AuditCo. As a result, we have a pretty good feeling for one another. It's very interesting because

when we work, we feel like friends, and equal to equal even when we are working in a strict hierarchical workplace. We take coffee together, and after work, we go for a drink. We also play sports together from time to time, which is quite unusual in French society where private and professional lives are strictly separated (Indian-French junior consultant, working with team members: French-Korean, Tunisian-French, Cameroon-French, Algerian-French, French-Italian, French-Vietnamese, and French)

This multicultural partner knows that the effect of team heterogeneity on members' cultural backgrounds affects team-related processes and outcomes such as performance, communication, planning, team identity, and team confidence. Because he paid careful attention to selecting members based on their cultural backgrounds, his team must have enjoyed considerable opportunity and motivation to interact and become acquainted with one another. The knowledge of one's teammate's results in higher team performance.

Fostering a generative network across cultural and regional boundaries. In AuditCo, networking is crucial for business success. Multiculturals are better equipped to span organizational, regional, and even social boundaries to develop networks more effectively than monoculturals. Their multiculturalism, indeed, aids their boundary-role performance not only at the intergroup level but more importantly beyond business-related groups and people.

A Spanish-French partner highlighted his networking ability:

As a partner, the most important ability is networking, which builds your relationships. Although I am mainly working in France, I try hard not to lose my network in Spain. Here in France, I have developed networks with French partners, Spanish firms in France, the Spanish Chamber of Commerce, and even the Spanish Ambassador in France. This process is different from developing personal contact. You develop your business with them. (Spanish-French partner)

Roles Multiculturals Play at BEAU

Bringing new local product and market knowledge to HQ

Multiculturals at BEAU manage team knowledge processes by bringing new local product and market knowledge to the HQ and translating cultural nuances. To create engaging commercial success for new products, while differentiating current products in markets, multicultural project managers at BEAU must build novelty into their developing

products. This source of novelty was achieved by cultivating knowledge across national and cultural boundaries. In the product development process, however, when novelty arose (e.g., oriental medicine or opportunities in former communist countries), member collaboration was critical to share and assess such novelty. Multicultural project managers at BEAU were added to teams to compensate for shortfalls in deep local, contextual knowledge that monocultural product managers may not have had. That is, they reduced team members' misunderstandings between HQ and local subsidiary cultures by co-creating common ground, which transformed members' understanding of the local culture and market trends. It was not an easy task at BEAU to develop new products in existing markets. More difficult yet was to develop a new market and simultaneously develop new products for that market. For example, a Hong Kong-Canadian-Singaporean multicultural project manager explained the use of a specific type of Chinese oriental medicine, which had never been introduced to Western countries. A French director complimented her contribution, "*J (Hong Kong-Canadian-Singaporean) knows all the Chinese medicine that has no translation either in English or in French because it's so authentic. J not only explained these ingredients but also suggested some ways we (the team) can use our new products.*" The fact that more Western consumers appreciate products using Chinese (oriental) medicine means change, because consumer choice and behavior are major factors in market trend changes. By bringing local products and market knowledge, multicultural project managers act as culture-straddling brokers, arising to innovate in new product development at BEAU.

Translating cultural nuances

Despite a common syntax or language, interpretations are often difficult; not in processing the information, but learning about the sources that create semantic differences that occur at cultural boundaries. The problem then shifts to who is responsible for

interpreting and what he or she interprets. For example, a French manager once failed his lab testing because he asked a German staff in the same laboratory to translate a product's specificities. He later discovered a discrepancy between what he requested and what the German staff had translated. It was a very delicate, nuanced difference. He had to run the test again, which was quite expensive. Since then, he has become more careful to find the right person to translate, relying more on multicultural colleagues. In fact, his German-British-French manager became a 'specialist' who was specifically concerned with decoding semantic nuances caused by cultural differences between HQ and the local office in Germany. Beyond decoding semantic nuances, this multicultural manager previously worked in the German office and knew work practices within the German local team. What she really tried to do was to generate the same interests from both parties.

In sum, in this section, I have described three main cultural brokerage roles multiculturals play at both AuditCo and BEAU. First, the common cultural brokerage roles at both sites are connecting geographically diverse knowledge, skills, and people; managing cross-cultural conflicts by reducing inter-regional misunderstanding; and displaying flexible behavior to work with people from diverse regions and cultures. Second, multiculturals at AuditCo (compared with multiculturals at BEAU) played their cultural brokerage role distinctively to build legitimacy for business success both within and beyond the team by managing the team's cultural heterogeneity and fostering a generative network across cultural, regional, and social boundaries. Finally, multiculturals at BEAU played their cultural brokerage role in managing knowledge processes in teams by bringing new local product and market knowledge to HQ and translating cultural nuances. The next section discusses the contextual factors and how they influence multiculturals' ability to enact their cultural brokerage role.

Boundary Conditions Affecting The Enactment Of Cultural Brokerage Role

In constructing a grounded theoretical explanation of how multicultural workers function in various workplaces, I focused on employee roles related to global teamwork processes. My two samples of multicultural workers, BEAU (in the FMCG industry) and AuditCo (in the auditing and consulting industry) played these roles in distinct ways. Enacting these roles varied along three conditions: (1) organizational conditions such as (a) the interaction between professional identity and cultural identity, (b) HRM practice, and (c) language diversity management; (2) work team conditions such as (a) team heterogeneity, (b) stereotyping in global teams, and (c) value conflicting. Table 5 presents additional evidence of what and how boundary conditions affect the enactment of cultural brokerage role played by multiculturals.

Organizational conditions

Organizational culture and professional identity. Although multiculturals in both organizations identified strongly with their professions, the process by which professional identity evolves differed, and this difference affected the multicultural employees' ability to use their competence having a multicultural identity in the two organizations.

At AuditCo, auditors and consultants steer a transition from technical and managerial work to client advisory services. In their interactions with clients, they must convey a credible image long before they have internalized the underlying professional identity fully.

Professional identity refers to the relatively stable and enduring constellation of attributes, beliefs, values, motives, and experiences in terms of how people define themselves in relation to a professional task (Schein, 1978). Professional identity forms over time with varied experiences and meaningful feedback that allows people to gain insight about their central and enduring preferences, talents, and values (Schein, 1978). The higher in the hierarchy a multicultural rises, therefore, the more he or she identified with the profession and the more

he or she uses his or her skills in internalizing multicultural identities (i.e., bicultural competence, Hong, 2010).

One of most valued multicultural competences by BEAU was ‘creativity’; that is, bringing new or different ideas that challenge the way things are completed at work. By the time I started my fieldwork at AuditCo, I had been at BEAU for three months. At BEAU, I repeatedly heard that ‘creativity’ was one of most important qualifications in recruiting project managers, in particular multicultural project managers. I wondered, therefore, whether multiculturals at AuditCo shared the same view despite the different professions. I posed this question to a Tunisian-French intern who was about to be promoted to junior consultant. He said, “No, I don’t think I used any of my competence from being multicultural. My work is so structured. You just work as your senior asks.” Later, I interviewed more senior people, and one of senior auditors emphasized,

Auditing is a very dynamic activity. We, as Certified Professional Accounts (CPA), audit the numbers, but the job is based on communication. Communication skill is the number one quality. Because you’ve got your clients, you’ve got your team, you’ve got partner, and you’ve got a team that is on the site, and you represent the company. What is important to understand in this business is that because it’s very hierarchical, it means that everybody has been through the same path as a partner who’s 60. So, I am not still very comfortable using my multiculturalism, and I don’t feel good about the company using my multiculturalism in the business either. (British-French senior consultant)

This senior consultant emphasized an aspect of her profession, a CPA. Although she acknowledged her multicultural competence, she seemed uncomfortable using her skills due to the hierarchical structure of the auditing ritual. This was quite different from the director and partner levels. A British-French director made an important point about how he used his multicultural identities:

I need to be creative in order to satisfy or exceed my clients’ satisfaction. For example, writing a report to clients is a very important mission. I use my multiculturalism when writing my report. For French clients, I use some of my British attributes. To British clients, I use some of my French attributes.

The phenomenon of using their cultural identities appears even more pronounced for those at the partner level to enact their roles for team work process. A Spanish-French partner noted:

The most important and valuable function that I make here is to coordinate all potential missions, all the potential work for Spanish subsidiaries in France. In order to complete my roles, I coordinate work and communicate with various stakeholders such as Spanish corporates and their subsidiaries in France, AuditCo Spain, and partners in AuditCo France. I would consider myself not an auditor, but a cultural broker or business developer, as I connect people across cultural, functional, and regional boundaries by networking and coordinating.

The partner emphasized that what he did was beyond auditing service to his clients. Rather, he identified himself as a business and cultural broker. As his professional identity reached a partner level, he was able to use his cultural identities and competence at a maximum level. At AuditCo, multiculturals in higher positions had stronger professional identities and used more of their skills and competences internalizing multicultural identities.

Multiculturals at BEAU also strongly identified with their professions. They were called ‘stars’ or ‘*crème de la crème*’. They were proud that they had been selected to create new products. A Polish-French project manager noted:

Locals [subsidiaries management] don't promote you and send you to the HQ right away. When they believe you have the ability to prove your competence and they really want to feel that you are the person that they want to promote and to invest. Sending one of the best operational managers to the HQ is a high investment. And also for the country reputation, they want to send the best. They want to say, 'Okay, we have really the best operational manager and we are sending you the best.' This is a kind of behind-the-scenes story how I came to the HQ.

Organizational identification, however, influenced the process by which professional identity evolved. Organizational identification refers to “the process by which the goals of the organization and those of the individual become increasingly integrated and congruent” (Hall et al., 1970:176-77) or “involvement based on a desire for affiliation (Kelman et al., 1961: 493).

When multiculturals at BEAU were recruited, as new comers they were unsure of their roles and apprehensive about their status. Consequently, to understand the HQ operation (most came from local subsidiaries or competitor companies) and act within it, they had to learn its policies and logistics, general role expectations and behavioral norms, power and status structures, and so on (Ashforth, 1985). Multiculturals, however, are often concerned with building and maintaining their cultural self-definition (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Many researchers have documented that developing a sense of who one is complements a sense of where one is and what is expected (Ashforth & Mael, 1989, Fisher, 1986; Mortimer & Simmons, 1978; Van Maanen, 1976). At BEAU, multiculturals' identities are likely to represent a significant component of their organizationally situated self-definitions such as professional identity. Thus, the emergence of professional identity and cultural identities are intertwined. This emergence at BEAU differs from the experience of multiculturals at AuditCo because their professional identity was less organizationally situated and more professionally required and expected. Contrary to practices at AuditCo, therefore, the lower in the hierarchy a multicultural is (i.e., the project manager is the next level above intern), the more identified he or she is with the organization, and the more he or she uses his or her skills internalizing multicultural identities.

Multicultural project managers at BEAU gradually learned to ascribe their cultural identities to their professional identity, which was constructed organizationally. A Spanish-Lebanese-French project manager described the relationship between his job as a new product developer and his multicultural identities:

My job is development. My future product has to be new; one that no one has yet, and it has to be better than anything existing. My multiculturalism develops my creativity. I think creativity has a lot to do with the knowledge you have, just as the more books you read, the more words you know. The more banks of images and knowledge you have, the more ideas you can generate. The more things you've seen might trigger more ideas. So, I'm guessing the more you see, the more places you live, the more languages you read, then the more creative you're going to be. In addition, you could be faster processing and connecting things because you have a lot of images and knowledge.

In addition, one of directors having worked with multicultural project managers emphasized the passion he perceived among project managers in the new product department, as well as the two most important criteria they brought to his team: creativity and cultural knowledge:

On this floor, in the new project development department, every project manager works like crazy and with passion. If you don't like this job, you should not be here. I don't mean just 'hard work'. Creating new products is all about passion for the job, so-called, 'BEAU DNA'. I think multiculturals fuel creativity. They bring a different approach based on their creativity and knowledge. Last time we were in a meeting and we were doing a new shampoo for China, we were thinking about a new ingredient. We decided to use a Chinese medicine. But we faced a big problem. There was no English translation of the Chinese medicine, not even a translation in the European world. I immediately contacted A (Hong Kong-Canadian-Singaporean). Although A was working in another product development, she is always willing to help people anything related the Chinese ingredients. If you want to sell a shampoo in China, you need someone like her. Fortunately, we have A. So, it's really important for BEAU to have multiculturals. They are a great resource for the company.
(French Director)

I heard about the concept of 'BEAU DNA'—the passion—frequently when I completed my fieldwork at BEAU. The idea represents BEAU's organizational identity. Over time, multicultural project managers adopted this aspect of the organization's identity to accommodate the demands of their roles and modified role definitions to preserve and enact valued aspects of their cultural identities. At the same time, just as "A" (Hong Kong-Canadian-Singaporean) helped the project development team even not her main project concern, multiculturals improved their understanding of their new role and refined their emerging notions of who they wanted to be in their roles (Bandura, 1977; Weick, 1979). Their cultural identities and professional identity, therefore, "evolve interactively such that a new synthesis is achieved that is more than a compromise of state role demands and static self-demands" (Ashforth & Saks, 1995:173).

Multiculturals at both organizations highly identified their professionals: CPA or consultant or new product developer. Their cultural identity helped their professional identification even stronger. Given this similarity, I would expect that the more multiculturals

identify professionally, the more they use cultural competence and skills embedded in their cultural identity.

Facilitating HRM practices for multiculturals. AuditCo did not have a structured Human Resource Management (HRM) policy designated for its multicultural work force. Because AuditCo was a partnership, some partners select their team members themselves. For example, Korean-French junior consultant told me, “I was recommended by one of my seniors at school who is working here as a senior consultant. Partner interviewed me first. This is the way I was recruited” In this case, the HR department coordinated the administrative paperwork. Partners selected their members depending on the needs of the task and specialization. The selection process was quite individual and was accomplished through networking rather than an official job announcement. For example, there was one team called either the ‘salad bowl’ or the ‘melting pot’ at AuditCo. The partner created this business consulting team and selected his members whose cultural backgrounds were as diverse as possible. Members shared the common ground that they had quite similar educational backgrounds. The IFRS team may be the only team for which a partner considered the team members’ cultural backgrounds, because their tasks tended to cross national and cultural boundaries. For example, whenever an auditing issue arised, all nine of the IFRS member countries discussed options to arrive at one conclusion. Most of multiculturals on both teams, however, were selected such that they had no specific motivation to using their multicultural competence; instead, they need related working experience for IFRS tasks. Thus, I would expect that it would be better to have a specific HRM policy for multiculturals that could motivate them to use their multicultural competence to enhance not only their performance but also roles for team work processes

In contrast, BEAU started recruiting multiculturals specifically for new product development 10 years ago, after realizing the limitations within its monocultural workforce to

advance global market trends. Its HRM department for multiculturals (which the company called ‘international talent,’ with 40% working in the New Product Development (NPD) department developed to coordinate tasks such as recruitment, selection criteria, and the appraisal system.

BEAU, therefore, had a designated HR team for multiculturals. The manager of this team was quite aware of the challenges most multiculturals face. By the time I was doing my fieldwork (2010), BEAU HRM had started a new program called ‘FIT’ that helps multiculturals integrate the BEAU culture more quickly and efficiently. Multiculturals who did not benefit from this new HR program, were complimentary of the program:

In a nutshell, the FIT program makes sure that newcomer multiculturals in the new product department meet all of the different parties such as R&D people, factory people, marketing, and so on. It is very important to be familiar with them in order to do our job. For me, at the time I was hired, I was never introduced properly to these people. I just told them that I worked for my boss, whom they knew. I think this program helps multiculturals integrate better. They feel more welcome. And, each multicultural has a mentor who is outside of the department and marketing with which we work very closely. A mentor could be a HR person or an account member. So, if she doesn't feel comfortable talking to her boss directly or to any of her close colleagues, she can talk with her mentor. I think it's a quite good program. (Hong Kong-British-Canada-French director: team members: Dutch-Chinese, Taiwanese-French and Korean-British)

The real challenge in multicultural HRM practice at BEAU, however, was not only from the multiculturals' viewpoints, but more importantly from the monocultural managers who supervised the multicultural project managers. Although 40% of the project managers were multiculturals, their supervision was managed mostly by monoculturals. Thus, some multiculturals felt it was difficult to adapt to the French confrontational way of working and their monocultural supervisors' approach to feedback, which was rare, more negative than positive, and mixed with personal judgment. The HR manager noted:

If we really want our multicultural project managers to bring values to BEAU, our monocultural managers also have to change their way of thinking and managing multicultural project managers. Although we, the HR function, should train monocultural managers for better management, it is not easy to facilitate a training program for them.

Monocultural managers are aware of the value of multicultural project managers. So, their expectations are very high. But, they felt it was difficult to manage multiculturals because it took more time and energy.

Managing multicultural workforce took more time and energy because most of them were newcomers and some of them did not speak the dominant language. Many multicultural project managers felt it was unfair that they had to adapt, but their monocultural supervisors were not. An American-French regional director who used to work at BEAU-New York described how much she was in shock when she began working at BEAU-Paris: “My shock was not from France versus USA, rather BEAU-Paris versus BEAU-New York.” Because most of the multiculturals were selected from subsidiaries whose organizational cultures were quite different from HQ culture, they faced more difficulties in adjusting (Black, Mendenhall & Oddou, 1991). Multiculturals may thus need social support from coworkers and superiors. Unfortunately, however this did not happen often at BEAU.

In addition to the role HRM facilitators played to train both multicultural employees and monocultural superiors, their understanding of multiculturals should be improved. One example of their lack of understanding of multiculturals was the period of time needed to adjust. One of HRM manager said, “When they are going to produce, six months is enough, isn’t it?” This shows a lack of understanding multiculturals in work teams.. Six months may (or may not) be enough time even for multiculturals who speak the host country language fluently. According to the expatriate management literature, cultural novelty (or cultural distance or toughness, Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985) has its highest impact on expatriates during the first two years of their assignments; thereafter, the impact of cultural novelty diminishes somewhat (Torbiorn, 1982). In other words, even for multiculturals who may face less cultural novelty than monoculturals, six months is not enough for them to adjust and perform effectively as monocultural management expected.

BEAU may still benefit by developing better HRM tools and policies for multiculturals. In comparing the two companies, it seemed still better to have structured HRM policy for multiculturals than no HRM. However, when management's expectations were too high because they lack an understanding of multiculturals, it created counter effects such as high turnover. In addition, it added too much pressure to the multicultural workforce and left the impression that the organization demanded one-way adaptation (only from the multiculturals' side). I would predict that if BEAU's HRM strategy was balanced for both monoculturals and multiculturals and combined with a deep understanding of multiculturals' adjustment process, then the multicultural project managers would bring more value to new product development.

Language diversity management. Language is the first and foremost means and through which different organizational groups connect (Tietze, 2008). Language, as both an artifact of culture and the vehicle by which strategic ideas are articulated and discussed, plays an essential role in the functioning of global teams. Both organizations used French as their official language. French proficiency was therefore associated with employees' performance, motivation, and retention (e.g., high turnover rate in the NPD department). Although both organizations valued diversity and the multicultural work force, there was no management of language diversity. At BEAU, 40% of project managers were multiculturals, but most of them did not speak French fluently. Thus, host country language proficiency affected multiculturals' ability to enact cultural brokerage role within teams at the HQ than across regional boundaries.

A Hong-Kong-Canadian-British-French director at BEAU who speaks Mandarin, Cantonese, English, and French explained why language could be a barrier in developing interpersonal relationships:

I think language is definitely a barrier to most multiculturals here in the new product development area. I was lucky in that by the time I came here, I had been in France for two years, but still it was difficult. There are even times today that I don't understand

everything. Especially when they talk about some jokes, I am lost. You do feel a bit left out. You do feel foreign, and those are moments that you feel you are not integrated, you know, you're out of the circle.

A Spanish-British project manager who joined BEAU about six months prior to my interview with him confirmed the director's sentiments: "A language barrier becomes a communication barrier. This is what stresses me most." Because people spoke only French or started in English and then switched to French, those who did not speak the language suffered in regular team meetings with top management at BEAU. In addition, other departments working closely with the NPD department were mainly French. For example, 100% of the R&D employees were French monoculturals. At HQ, multiculturals who had a high level of French proficiency were more likely to enact cultural brokerage role for teamwork processes than multiculturals who had a low level of French proficiency. Most multiculturals had fewer problems working with local subsidiaries than working at the HQ. This was likely the case because most multiculturals spoke English fluently as well as local languages. Thus, multiculturals were more likely to enact the cultural brokerage role than monoculturals across regional boundaries.

In contrast, at AuditCo, most of the multiculturals spoke fluent French and English. Although the company's official language is French, all accounting programs were set in English. Thus, French monoculturals tried to improve their English proficiency. In fact, an English instructor helped monoculturals learn and improve their English (by lecturing and organizing a regular English speaking club), and a language lab with a bilingual (English-French) assistant was available. A Portuguese-French junior consultant explained the situation at work: "Seventy percent of work is done in English. Although I work with French colleagues, I don't have problem with them in communication. I speak English better than most of my colleagues."

Organization's language diversity management seemed important factor among multiculturals as they work both within teams and organizational groups across regional boundaries. Thus, I would expect that multiculturals will be less likely to face language challenges in an auditing and business consulting MNC than fast-moving consumer goods MNC. Given this contrast, I also would anticipate that multiculturals who are fluent in speaking host country language in addition to local language are more likely to play cultural brokerage role than those who are not fluent in speaking host country language even they speak local language. The three most important organizational conditions that shaped a multicultural's enactment of roles for team work processes were the interaction between professional identity and cultural identity, HRM practice, and language diversity management.

Work team conditions

Team Heterogeneity and leadership. Teams in the NPD department at BEAU were highly heterogeneous at both the team- and individual levels). Members' backgrounds were diverse in terms of culture, education, social status, and the ways they integrate into French society. Their common background was their professional work experience. Most of them had work experience at one of BEAU's subsidiaries, the HQ, or other competitor companies in different regions or in France. At BEAU, multiculturals were categorized as 'international talent' or 'internationals'. This categorization accentuates the perceived similarity among multiculturals to the relevant in-group prototype (that is, a cognitive representation of a feature that describes and prescribes an attributes of a group; Hogg & Terry, 2000: 123). Because prototypes are relatively consensual, they provide moral support and validate one's self-concept and associated cognition and behaviors (Hogg & Terry, 2000). Such prototypes will be attractive to multiculturals who are living and working in situations characterized by significant subjective uncertainty and produce a cohesive social group with which members

strongly identify. In other words, multiculturals tend to favor working with other multiculturals in teams. Among multiculturals at BEAU, there seemed to be a feeling of bonding. A Taiwanese-French project manager noted:

There is strong 'bonding' among multiculturals. We try to help each other by sharing information and exchanging feedback. Seniors also give juniors feedback and advice. We often work faster than teams where the majority is from one or two specific cultures.

Multiculturals were much more tolerant in handling cross-cultural conflicts. In other words, they are more accepting of different cultural values, less disturbed by differences, and, accordingly, handled such situations better. They rely on their multiculturalism at the individual level, and they are able to reach compromise at the group level. Thus, they concentrate more on work than peripheral issues such as conflicts that may arise due to national cultural differences.

Whereas monoculturals may see cultural difference as 'foreignness', multiculturals see it as 'familiarity'. A Belgian-French multicultural project manager, who was planning a year-long world tour after finishing his current project, described the difference between multiculturals and monoculturals using a metaphor of a good dancer and a bad dancer:

The exposure to multiple cultures gives you the ability to handle differences (cultural) and cross-cultural interaction with some flexibility; it's a bit like a supple tissue. It keeps you from becoming rigid. For example, consider a good dancer and a bad dancer. The good dancer dances smoothly because he practices a lot. If you've been exposed to different cultures a lot, it gives you this smoothness of interaction, which makes it possible to meet interesting (culturally different) people and to create a new network. Whereas, if you are not exposed, you tend to get a little bit rigid, and a little bit more into stereotypes because of the narrow view you develop from working with people with the same routine, same hobbies, and the same tennis club. They cannot even go and ask girls (i.e., culturally different others) to dance.

When multiculturals define their self-concept as multiculturals rather than mono- or bi-culturals, diverse cultural experiences come to the fore, because they emphasized their multicultural experience in their personal, educational, and professional qualities. This might

include their family cultural background such as where they were born and their parents' nationalities; their educational and professional experiences, such as how many countries in which they've lived, where they studied (different kinds of international schools); what kind of friends they've met (they point out their friends' diverse cultural backgrounds); and finally the value system by which they live. Such experience is likely to influence multiculturals to improve their openness to culturally different others and self-monitoring in cross-cultural interactions. Among multiculturals, expressions including 'openness/being open/open-minded', and 'respect others/cultural difference' are used frequently.

Teams at AuditCo were less diverse than teams at BEAU, in terms of their individual level of heterogeneity and their less complicated cultural qualities of in their multicultural identities. Still, multiculturals at AuditCo showed the same preferences and behaviors as their BEAU counterparts. A Korean-French consultant noted:

When I came for an interview, my partner told me that he wanted open-minded people. His open-minded point of view meant that people were from any kind of origin or geography, the country or a city, and had attended different universities. He wanted diversity and at the same time, a certain balance in human interactions so that you have a pretty good feeling between people. We are in a very good mood, which I like a lot about this team. It's very interesting because we feel like friends, or equal to equal, and you don't have many problems with interactions. We share coffee together, we go outside, and we take a beer together.

The partner this Korean-French consultant mentioned was a French-Moroccan multicultural who must understand French rituals. To make his team more cohesive, he may select his multicultural members. For example, I was a bit surprised to hear that this employee socialized with other team members outside work. In France, the French usually do not go out after work. They prefer to separate their private and professional lives. An Indian-French consultant in this team confirmed my doubt, saying, "Yeah, we

try to. Next Thursday we are going out together after work. I think this make us a pretty good team. We have good interactions.”

Because multiculturals in both organizations were not bothered by or concerned about working with other multiculturals, they also preferred working with leaders who were multiculturals or those who had extensive multicultural experience. This trend seemed more important at AuditCo. Because the leadership of the partner was the most important factor that influenced team work processes. A South-African-French-Argentinian senior auditor noted:

A multicultural boss is better for multiculturals. Our boss here is French but worked in the States for three years and in the U.K. for four years. For me, she keeps her French identity for example, she cuts other people off in mid-sentence, but with a very good dose – she's very open so that she can absorb the way things are done outside. Most importantly, she understands how it's done outside, and she doesn't devalue it. She doesn't think that others' ways are silly or rubbish, which is quite different from my monocultural French colleagues. Such attitudes strongly influence our team work, which mainly consists of comparing nine different auditing practices in order to device one principle that applies to all nine practices.

Lippett and White (1943) noted that it is not who you are that is important to leadership success, but it is important how you behave. Groups usually have norms in regulating behavior. Everyone is influenced by these norms—in domains most central to the group—with the leaders being more so than the followers. The partner this senior auditor described is a good example in a global team in which members' perspectives on a certain issue vary depending on their background. Such leadership may foster group cohesion, even in a team with high demographic diversity. As such, multiculturals feel more accepted in their team.

Another way for the multicultural team leader to ensure his team included more multicultural members was to promote interpersonal attraction among members with different cultural national backgrounds. A Canadian-Hong Kong-British-French director in the NPD in BEAU explained:

Because multiculturals value diversity (cultural), and they used to play cross-cultural mediating roles among different cultural groups, they try not to give negative evaluations of those who are culturally different. For example, sometime later a new member joined, one member of my team came to me a few times to discuss another member, saying, 'She is very rude.' Then, as a director I told them, 'Let's wait and see. Give her some more time to adjust. Maybe it's not her being rude; it may be from her culture, the way she expresses herself. You all know that we all have different backgrounds. Also as we are in a same boat, why don't you also try to adapt to her.' Then, they started discussing more things discovered that the new member was not being rude, but just the way she expressed herself was quite direct without bad intention, yet she was just being honest. Now things are getting much better than before within my team. (Hong-Kong-British-French director)

In a different scenario, if this director had not tried to mediate this conflict, more subtle forms of conflict might occur. For example, in-group (e.g., members with longer team tenure) affirmation and out-group (e.g., newer members) derogation might occur in the form of strategically positioning both groups to emphasize negative characteristics (Van Dijk, 1986, 1989). This could produce negative evaluations of different others that may be framed as category-free evaluations (e.g., "I don't care if she/he is from A or B country, she/he doesn't seem to get the work done properly." If the team experiences this type of conflict among its members, the team must be recomposed.

Overall, I predict that because multiculturals are more likely to work in teams with a high level of heterogeneity and under multicultural leadership, team heterogeneity positively relates to multiculturals enacting their roles for team work processes.

Stereotyping in global teams. Stereotyping is attributing common characteristics to members of an entire group. It arises directly from the categorization process, particularly assimilating within-group differences, and serves to guide and justify people's behavior in

intergroup settings (Brown, 2000). Team members' cultural differences evoke perceptions and behaviors in global teams. Multicultural and monocultural members hold strikingly divergent perceptions of others' cultural differences and in interpreting such differences. Multiculturals were less likely to use *categorization* (versus *specification*) in cognitive process than are monoculturals. According to Larkey (1991), the cognitive process of categorization operates by placing persons into broad categories such as gender or race without detecting the individuating characteristics of the perceived person. A critical feature of categorization is that it maximizes similarities within and differences between groups and thus defines groups as distinct entities (Hogg & Terry, 2000:124). In contrast, *specification* is used when a person takes in information about another person one piece at a time and composes a profile of the individual based on a unique set of observed characteristics. Through this cognitive process, individuals may have a positive effect on the impressions they form of culturally different members. Thus, consequences of specification include appreciating cultural differences and identifying individuating characteristics, which is a desirable condition for multiculturals in the workplace. What I found in both organizations, however, seemed neither desirable nor ideal for multiculturals who were minority groups.

By using the categorization process, monoculturals are more likely to place culturally different others into broad categories. My data showed two different cognitive consequences of categorization: prejudging culturally different others and ignoring individuating characteristics.

After initial categorization takes place, it serves to streamline judgments (e.g., prejudice and stereotyping or out-group perceptions). Monoculturals' prejudging may cause misunderstanding and exaggerating the reality of culturally different others. Thus, prejudging culturally different others negatively influences a team at both the individual and team levels. Once prejudice is implemented, it is difficult for monoculturals to change their perceptions,

even if they work together for a long period. A regional director at BEAU explained prejudging Thai colleagues was impossible to change even though he had worked with them for more than a year:

I thought that Thai people were very secretive and never expressed their true feelings. At the farewell party (after 1.5 years), I was surprised to see that my Thai colleagues were all amazingly emotional. At last, I realized that I developed a deep relationship with them. If I knew this before, I could have worked much better with them.

His prejudice was so strong that he could not change his attitude and behavior toward his Thai colleagues, even while working with them. This regional director's prejudging prevented him from developing interpersonal relationship, which, in turn, resulted in less contact and communication between him and his Thai colleagues.

Because monoculturals have less cross-cultural experience than multiculturals, they are less likely to identify the individuating cultural characteristics of multiculturals. Ignoring individual characteristics commonly leads to stereotype-based judgmental outcomes. For example, when a Mexican-German-Italian multicultural solved a critical problem in one of his team's global projects that involved cultural aspects from 23 countries, his monocultural colleagues called him, "Mexican Superman!"

They told me that I am a superman, but a Mexican superman! They were surprised at the fact that I, a guy from Mexico, a developing country, solved such a complicated problem, instead of how efficient I was. It seemed they did not go beyond stereotyping me instead of noticing my other capabilities.

In global teams where differences may be threatening or produce anxiety, especially, to monocultural members, such reactions may cause team members to suspend processing information about culturally different others. Thus, monocultural members are more likely to ignore individuating characteristics. As noted, management at BEAU expected a lot from its multicultural workforce. The categorization cognitive process prevalent among monocultural managers, however, may hinder using multiculturals' competence and recognizing their roles, which, in turn, demotivate multiculturals.

AuditCo had a less diverse work environment than BEAU. In addition, the nature of work was very systemized and standardized; even the multiculturals at the client sites tended to be French. The categorization cognitive process occurred, therefore, not only among monoculturals but surprisingly, even to multiculturals. Although multiculturals were less likely to use the categorization cognitive process than monoculturals, they could not escape this human cognition. A Korean-French consultant at AuditCo described a failed salary negotiation with her multicultural boss:

After the salary negotiation meeting with my boss, I was very, very disappointed. I felt that they exploited me. I deplored to myself, 'Oh my god, they think that because I'm very obedient and quiet. I'm just a little Asian girl!'

The main reason she was very disappointed was unfair treatment. One of her male colleagues who had a lower evaluation received a salary increase. It seemed not only cultural categorization had occurred, but also gender discrimination. Some of female multiculturals mentioned, “*Gender is a bigger issue than being a foreigner in AuditCo.*” For multiculturals, especially female multiculturals, working conditions were even more difficult because they were dealing with group stereotyping.

Cognitive processes in perceptions of cultural differences greatly influence cross-cultural interactions in teams. Stereotypes may cause relational conflicts among culturally different members, demotivate multiculturals, and reduce opportunities for a team to maximize the value of diversity for creative task performance. I would expect that multiculturals are more likely to face challenge to play cultural brokerage role as well as perform their task when group stereotyping serves not only ethnicity but also its related attributes such as gender. Note that stereotyping can also demotivate monoculturals as well. The stereotyping described here was particularly occurred when encountering culturally different others in global teams.

Value conflicting. Multiculturals conceive cultural meaning systems as a set of tools they can use in different situations according to dynamic of their identity and the relevance of the situation (i.e., cultural frame switching, Hong, Morris, Chiu, & Benet-Martinez, 2000). This perspective creates a more dynamic view of how one's culture and one's mind are constituted mutually across and within national cultural boundaries (Benet-Martinez & Haritos, 2005). In real life, there are moments that multiculturals feel conflicted about cultural values, face difficulties accepting them, and behave culturally appropriately. In the past, multiculturals would switch their behaviors and language in response to cultural situational cues (Fromboise et al., Hong et al., 2000, Benet-Martinez et al., 2005), when they perceived that their values conflicted. In such situations, multiculturals can become frustrated (i.e., experience cognitive dissonance, Festinger, 1957) if they do not behave as expected and as they are "supposed" to behave. Such situations cost multiculturals emotionally and demotivate them in the workplace. At both study sites, two most of the situations in which multiculturals faced deep value conflicts were the French confrontational way of debating in team meetings and supervision styles.

Both multiculturals who speak and do not speak French fluently perceived the French style of confrontation as an example of a value conflict. Team meetings occurred both regularly and irregularly, and participating in team discussions was one of most important work activities. Multiculturals often faced difficulties, however, engaging in lively team discussions. For example, a Canadian-French senior auditor who spoke French fluently described her team meeting and what she thought of it:

Discussions go everywhere and at the end of meeting, there is no concrete conclusion. In addition, it is difficult to get a chance to talk. Very few times, did I get a chance to talk? Someone would immediately cut me off in mid-sentence. Because I never (can) cut someone off, I feel very frustrated and value conflicted.

Other senior auditor experienced the same situation in her team meeting. Although she felt quite uncomfortable behaving as others did, she had to do so:

I shout! I don't get the respect of anyone if I never say anything. I don't have any option as they do, because it is not my way of doing things. They have their way, and that's how they will do it. If I want to make my voice heard, I must do as they do, but it is frustrating and tiring.

When sharing this quite discontent story, she indeed showed that she experienced the pressure of an aversive motivation state (cognitive dissonance). Although shouting to others was not obviously her value, she had to shout to show her commitment to her team discussion. At AuditCo, most of multiculturals spoke a high level of French, which was not the case at BEAU. Those who did not speak French fluently could not even shout. They perceived confrontation as harsh to others and had no desire to adapt it.

Another value conflict situation that made it difficult for multiculturals to function and enact their roles was supervision style. Because multiculturals face great uncertainty in foreign surroundings, feedback is one of most important ways to motivate them. When they received feedback, both positive and negative, they could use this information to reduce the uncertainty of what was expected of them and how they were doing. They could then correct their behavior to correspond better to expectations (Black et al., 1991). This process, in turn, would facilitate a degree of integration.

In my fieldwork, I found that what mattered to multiculturals was not the frequency of giving feedback but the way the feedback was given. One Polish-French project manager explained her situation after she asked her boss to change the way of working with her:

I felt very disrespected whenever my superior gave me feedback and ordered me to do something. After one big crisis happened, I asked her to respect me as I respect her. I was very disappointed with her reaction. She understood my frustration but reinforced that 'This is how it works here.' Although I felt really bad, I just cannot be aggressive to her. That is not my thing.

The way of giving feedback varies among countries. For example, in school situations, Americans value more positive and encouraging feedback. The French, in contrast, are accustomed to giving negative feedback, which they believe is the way to motivate students. When multiculturals worked with French monocultural superiors, they believe they received value-conflicting signals with what was expected in a new work setting: being aggressive to demand what they wanted to get or not. Thus, I might expect that multiculturals would be more able to integrate and enact their roles for team work processes with a less confrontational style of debate in team meetings and more respectful way of giving feedback. With these qualities multiculturals would, in turn, perceive less value conflicts. The three most important work team conditions that shaped a multicultural's enactment of cultural brokerage role were team heterogeneity and its management, stereotyping in global teams, and value conflicting. Figure 2 shows overall framework of boundary conditions for multiculturals' cultural brokerage role in organizations.

Boundary conditions for multiculturals to enact cultural brokerage roles in global teams. As the model in Figure 3 shows, cultural brokerage within and across global teams in the HQ and local subsidiaries was the primary way in which multiculturals transformed their multicultural competence into global team effectiveness. Because global teams have an influential structural characteristic—high heterogeneity at both the individual and team levels—multiculturals are equipped more effectively to facilitate cross-cultural interactions among members. Consequently, a multicultural's cultural brokerage role influences team work processes, which results in global team effectiveness.

Such roles facilitated these transitions such as bringing knowledge of local product and market, translating cultural nuances, connecting geographically diverse knowledge and skills, reducing inter-regional misunderstanding, and displaying flexible behaviors to deal with people from diverse regions or cultures. Although these five brokerage activities highlight

how multiculturals actively shape their roles in global teams, attributes of the organizations, the character of the teams in which they work, and individual conditions can either enable or constrain such activities. Organizational HRM strategies for employing multiculturals, stereotyping in global teams, and cultural value conflicts reduce a multicultural's willingness and ability to play the cultural brokerage role. In contrast, organizational culture impacts interaction between cultural and professional identity, team heterogeneity, and language diversity management . These qualities emboldened multiculturals to play the cultural brokerage role, particularly enabling them to play cultural brokerage role more effectively. As the model in Figure 2 shows, boundary conditions are active on three levels: within the organizational, the team, and the individual. Each condition interrelates to one another within the same level and at other levels. For example, HRM strategy is embedded in organizational culture and impacts team heterogeneity. Likewise, stereotyping in global teams may cause cultural value conflicts.

DISCUSSION

I began this research by questioning how multicultural influence team work processes and what influences multicultural employees to enact the cultural brokerage role in organizational contexts. Few theoretical attempts have been made to explain organizational guidance and support for the multicultural workforce; thus, this comparative research makes a distinct contribution in this direction by examining the contextual factors that affect multiculturals in team knowledge processes and cross-cultural conflict management in global teams. The present study thus contributes by 1) developing the framework of a multicultural's cultural brokerage role and 2) identifying contextual features affecting role identity framework and enactment in a global work place; 3) international adjustment and international human resource management strategy in MNCs.

Cultural Brokerage Role

The current comparative ethnographic study extends previous studies that comprise the literature on cultural brokerage. Important similarities emerge between this study and other treatments of cultural brokerage. For example, I see the nexus work-brokerage requiring synthesis and integration of ideas- between multiculturals and other organizational members (Long & O'Mahony, 2010) is important to identify multiculturals' cultural brokerage in the creative process of developing new products that lead local and global markets (e.g., Fleming & Waguespack, 2007; Hargadon & Sutton, 1997; Lingo & O'Mahony, 2010). Similarly, I see boundary spanning roles (Ancona, 1990) as critical to cultural brokerage among different organizational group members across cultural boundaries (Au & Fukuda, 2002; Geertz, 1960; Thomas, 2002).

More generally, I add to this work by turning scholars' attention toward multiculturals (see also Hong, 2010; Press, 1969). In doing so, I take lessons from research on "conflict mediation" related to how multiculturals handle different kinds of conflicts to the extent that it reflects the implications of multicultural competence in a global workplace (Brannen et al., 2009; Earley & Ang, 2003; Earley & Mosakowski, 2004; Hong, 2010; Jehn & Mannix, 2000; Thomas et al., 2010). And, as Geertz (1960) noted, multiculturals as a cultural broker develop the work stage where members facilitate effective communication and cultivate relationships beyond culturally and socially heterogeneous global teams. I identify the most important roles played among multiculturals in AuditingCo are to managing team cultural heterogeneity and fostering network across organizational regional and social boundaries. Building on this research, I have argued that multiculturals play a crucial role for work processes and outcomes in global teams.

Contextual Conditions Affecting the Cultural Brokerage Role Framework

The comparative ethnographic study reported in the present paper contributes to role theory. While focusing on cultural brokerage role by multiculturals in global teams, this paper explores the nature of role taking, status characteristics (e.g., cultural background) and the dynamics of enacting a role. And more importantly, it establishes the framework of boundary conditions that enable or constrain multiculturals to enact the cultural brokerage role in global teams.

Through my experiences in the field, I learned that not all multiculturals play the cultural brokerage role for teamwork processes in every potential instance. The idea that multiculturals have competence and latent skills that lead to organizational effectiveness, therefore, reflects an aspiration more than a reality. As one South Afrikaans-French senior auditor at AuditCo noted wistfully:

I can dream of an ideal world where a multicultural person brings things into organizations with which they become more competitive, visible, and acceptable in the outside world. But one thing that rarely happens is that they look at you as a multicultural person, and they find the way you do things is interesting, which makes them change their ways. So, most of the time, I have one option and that is to follow their ways.

My findings show, however, that several contextual factors support multiculturals to exploit their cultural competence and skills for teamwork processes. By focusing on how multiculturals worked to resolve human resource management ambiguities, I found that the more the work contexts required and allowed multiculturals' cultural identity and competence to emerge, the more multiculturals were motivated to enact the cultural brokerage role.

Little research has been conducted on the contextual factors that affect multiculturals and how they structure their careers in MNCs. My contribution to this emerging literature has been to specify more precisely how organizations and team conditions structures either appropriately or inappropriately construct multiculturals'

effectiveness in MNCs. The present investigation focused on organizational and team boundary conditions of multiculturals enacting the cultural brokerage role in two MNCs: a fast moving consumer goods firm and an auditing and business consulting firm. My findings may also apply to organizations in other industries in different regions other than France

Research on International Adjustment

The present paper also contributes to research on the international adjustment literature by showing that multiculturals as a working demographic should be distinguished from expatriates in general and the international adjustment of multiculturals from expatriate international adjustment in particular. Expatriate international adjustment has received increased scholarly attention and has investigated the phenomenon both empirically and theoretically (e.g., Aycan, 1997; Black, 1990; Caligiuri, 1997; Geunther & Miller, 2002). There may be less focus on individual differences among expatriate. In other words, most expatriate researchers may ignore multiculturals among the expatriate population. As the present study's findings show, there are significant differences in the contextual factors that affect expatriate international adjustment from the experience of multiculturals. Future research may compare the international adjustment processes between the two workforce demographics.

Another interesting avenue for future research is to compare the adjustment conditions between developing and developed countries. Because more expatriates and multiculturals are in top management positions in developing countries than in developed countries (e.g., top managers were monoculturals at my two fieldwork sites), the boundary conditions for successful—and unsuccessful—international adjustment may vary.

Finally, another interesting avenue is to research how non-work related factors affect multicultural international adjustment. Because most of the present study's participants were not married and were fairly young (age variation: 25-40; only two were beyond this age range), my investigation lacked important factors such as family obligations.

Research on International HRM (IHRM)

The present paper contributes to international human resource management by illuminating how firms recruit their multicultural workforce (e.g., the transition between subsidiaries and the HQ) and maintain the workforce (e.g., training programs). More importantly, the present study's findings suggest that if firms are to develop a human resource management strategy for multiculturals, the firm needs to pay attention to top management support that facilitates HRM practices and how multiculturals react to this support. As mentioned, through fieldwork, I learned that although the recruitment process was quite strategic from selection to training, most of the multiculturals confront unrealistically high expectations and receive little support from management (including HR). Future research should investigate how top management perceives the needs of the multicultural workforce and what constrains facilitating such needs within an HRM strategy.

Another future investigation might examine of how the fit and flexibility between HRM and its cross-cultural/national environment would enhance theories of IHRM. Future exploration might address questions such as how far must multinational organizations advance their IHRM strategy as it relates to the multicultural workforce? What are the similarities and differences between IHRM for the multicultural workforce among various firms and industries? How does the development stage of an organization relate to developing IHRM strategies for multiculturals?

Practical Implications

Despite an increasingly multicultural workforce in MNCs and their importance in organizations, little research has examined organizational contextual factors and how they affect multiculturals enacting the cultural brokerage role in global teams. The goal of the current research was to build and enrich theory in this area. The present study's comparative ethnographic approach offers useful new constructs and new contextual variables to scholars in international management. Perhaps the framework of boundary conditions developed here can serve as a guideline to HR managers in multinational firms.

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Figure 3.1 Team Composition and its work within and across units at BEAU

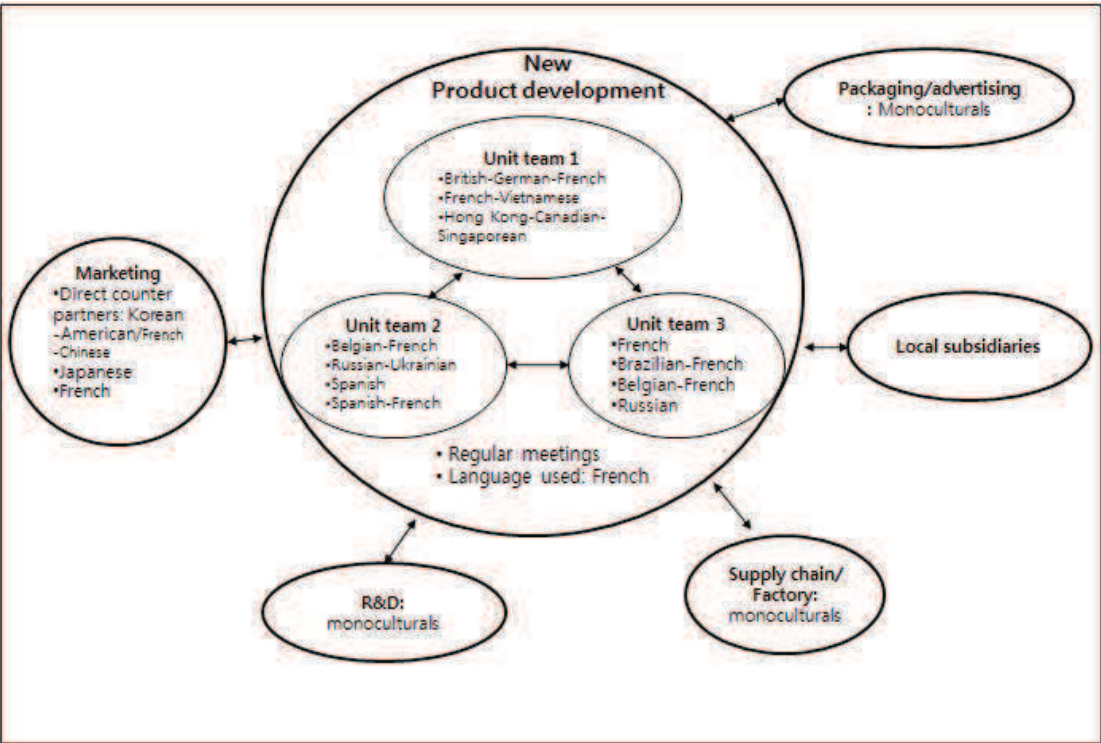


Figure 3.2 Team composition and its work within and across units at AuditCo

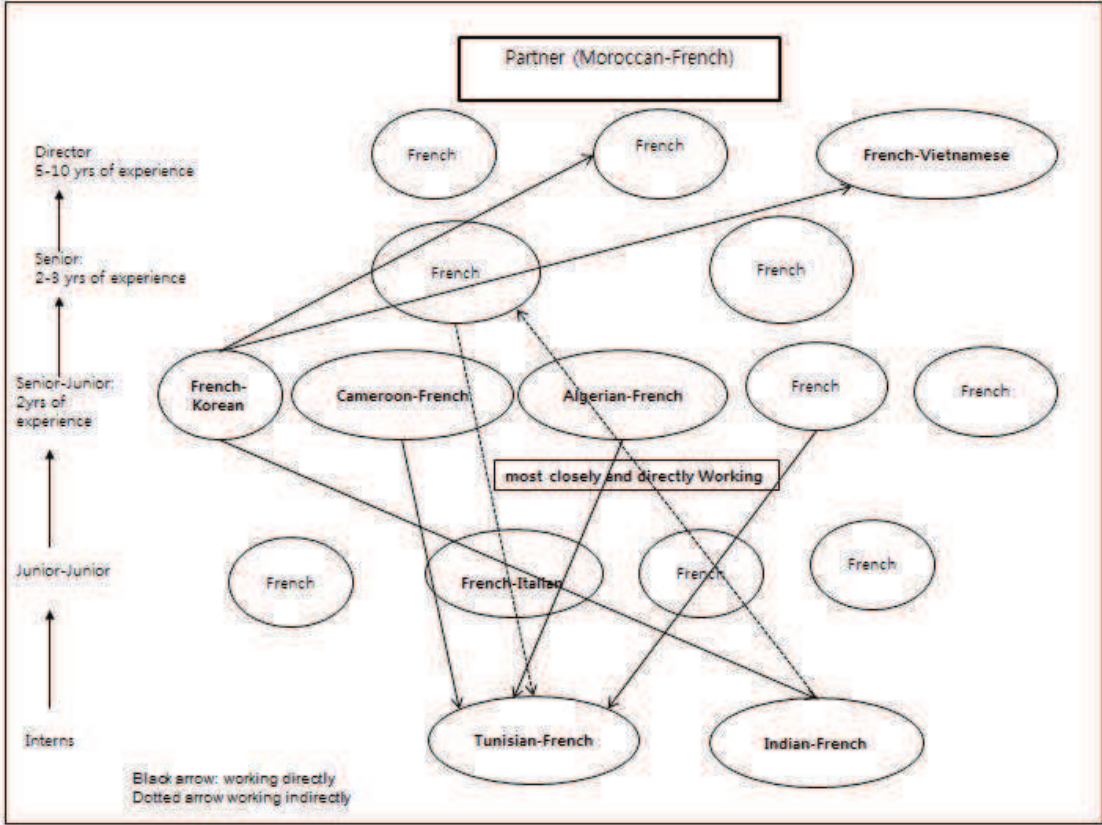


Figure 3.3 Framework of Boundary Conditions for Multiculturals' Cultural Brokerage Role

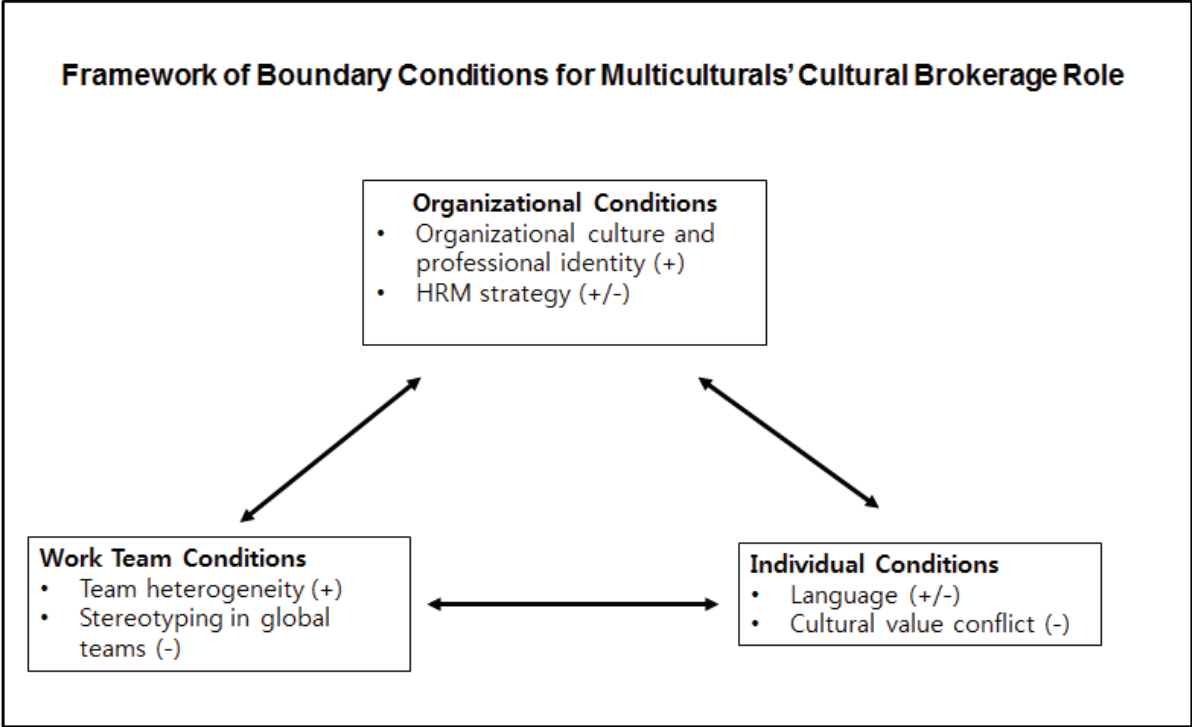


Figure 3.4 Cultural Brokerage Role and Boundary Conditions for Global Team Work Processes

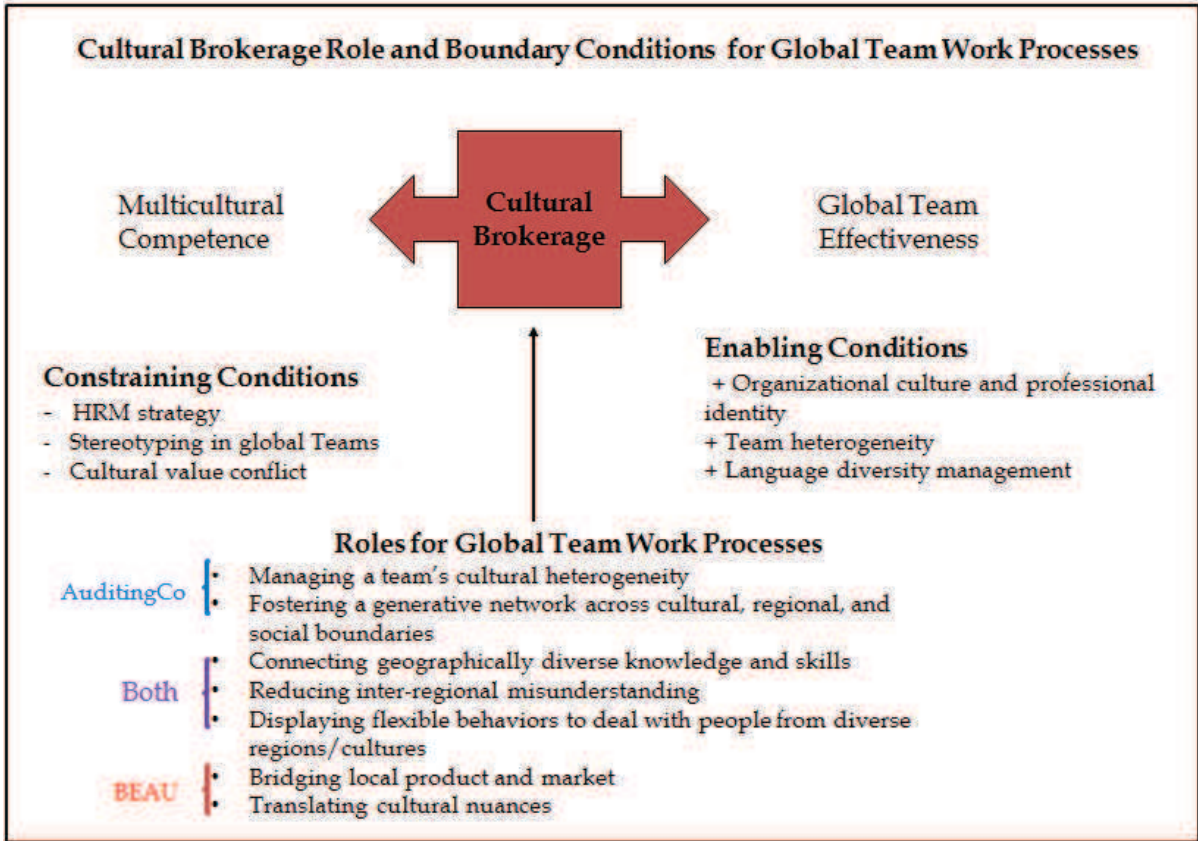


Table 3.1 Interviewee Profile and Team Composition at BEAU

	Cultural profile(s)	Mono /Multi	Multilingualism	Countries have lived (>2 years)	Current position	Team**'s cultural composition (by nation)
1	French-American	Multi	French/English	USA, Belgium, France	Director	Current: French Previous: British, Moroccan, Indian, French - boss
2	French	Multi	French/English	USA, France	Director	Mexican/French
3	French	Mono	French/English	France	Director (International Recruiting)	Romanian/French /Polish
4	French	Mono	French/English	France	Director (International Recruiting)	Chinese/Brazilian /French
5	Mexican-Italian (German immigrants in Mexico)	Multi	Spanish/English/Italian/German	Mexico, Italy, France	Director (International Recruiting)	Italian/Romanian /French-Spanish
6	Indian	Multi	English/Hindi	India, Singapore, France	Manager	Italian/French /Lebanese-Spanish
7	Belgian	Multi	Flemish/English/French	Belgium	Manager	French/Russian /Brazilian
8	French-American	Multi	English/French/German/Spanish	USA, Belgium, France	Director of Latin America Zone (hair care)	French/Argentinean /Columbian/English Brazilian
9	Canadian-Hong Kong	Multi	English/Chinese	Canada, Hong Kong, Singapore, France	Manager	French/British-German /French-Vietnamese
10	Dutch-Chinese	Multi	Dutch/English /Chinese	Netherlands, France	Manager	French-Hong Kong /Taiwanese/Korean
11	Taiwanese	Multi	Chinese/English /French	Taiwan, France	Manager	French-Hong Kong /Dutch-Chinese/Korean
12	Russian-Ukrainian	Multi	Russian/Ukrainian /English	Ukraine, Russia, France	Manager	French/Spanish /Mexican
13	Polish-French	Multi	Polish/English /French	Poland, France	Manager	French/Dutch /American/ British-Indian

14	French-Venezuelan	Multi	French/English /Spanish	USA, Venezuela, France	Director	French(3)/Hungarian
15	French-Hong Kong-British	Multi	Mandarin/ Cantonin/ English/French	Hong Kong, England, France, China	Director	Taiwanese/Dutch-Chinese /Korean
16	British-Spanish	Multi	English/Spanish	Spain, USA, France	Manager	French/Italian /Italian-American/Spanish /American
17	British-German	Multi	English/German /French	Germany, England, France	Director	French /Canadian-Hong Kong
18	Chinese-French	Multi	Chinese/French /English	China, France	Manager	French/ Chinese /Indian-American
19	Polish-German	Multi	German/French /Polish/English	Poland, Germany, France	Manager	French /German-Indian
20	German-Indian	Multi	German/ Indian-local/English	Germany, India, France	Manager	French /Polish-German
21	Indian-American	Multi	Indian-local/ English/French	USA, India, France	Manager	French /French-Chinese
22	Lebanese-Spanish	Multi	Lebanese /French /Spanish /English	Lebanon, USA, Spain, France	Manager	French(2)/Spanish(2)
23	Belgian-Dutch	Multi	English/Flemish /Dutch/French	USA, Netherlands, Belgium, France	Manager (International Marketing Strategy)	French(4)/Dutch/ German/Turkish/Italian
24	American-French	Multi	English	USA, France	Director (International Marketing Strategy)	Managing various teams in HQ and subsidiaries
25	French	Mono	French/English	France	Manager(HR)	No team
26	French	Mono	French/English	France, USA	Staff (HR)	No team
27	American - French	Multi	English/French	USA, France	Regional Director	Manage various teams in HQ and subsidiaries
28	French-Moroccan-German	Multi	English/Arabic /French/German	France, Germany	Regional Director	Manage various teams in HQ and subsidiaries
29	German-French	Multi	English/German /French	Germany, France	Regional Director	Manage various teams in HQ and subsidiaries
30	French*	Multi	French/English	France, Netherlands, Mexico, USA	Regional Director	French/ Iranian/ French-Japanese

31	French	Multi	French/English	France, Korea, Thailand, England	Regional Director	Manage various teams in HQ and subsidiaries
32	French	Mono	French/English	France, England	Regional Director	Manage various teams in HQ and subsidiaries
33	French	Mono	French/English	France	Director	Russian/ Brazilian/ Belgian/ French/German
34	French	Mono	French/English	France	Director	
35	French	Mono	French/English	France	Director	
36	Spanish-German	Multi	Spanish/English /German	Germany, Spain, France	Project manager	

Table 3.2 Interviewee Profile and Team Composition at AuditCo

	Cultural profile(s)	Mono /Multi	Multilingualism	Foreign Countries have lived (>2 years)	Current position	Team*'s cultural composition (by nation)
1	Japanese	Mono	Japanese-English	None (been in Paris for 4-month at interview)	Senior AERS Direction Qualité	French, French-Canadian, South American-French-Mexico(Latin),
2	American-	Multi –	English-French	France, Guinee-Bissau	Responsible for language	Working with French or French multiculturals who want to improve English
3	British-French -	Multi	English-French	England, France	Senior manager AERS MM 1	French
4	South African-French	Multi	English-French-Italian	France, Italy	Senior manager AERS Direction Qualité	Multicultural teams in and out-all countries using IFRS system
5	Canadian-French	Multi	English-French	France	Senior manager AERS Direction Qualité	Multicultural teams in and out-all countries using IFRS system
6	British-French	Mono	English-French	France	Manager AERS Actuariat Pensions	Multicultural team: French-British-???
7	French-Korean	Multi	French-English-Korean	Korea	Audit IT Financial Services	Multicultural team: ??
8	French – Indian	Multi	French-English-Hindi	India, Argentina	Junior Audit IT Financial Services	Multicultural team:??

9	Portuguese – French	Multi	Portuguese-English	France	Chargé d'affaires Senior FAS Valuation	Mainly French
10	Vietnamese-French	Multi	French-Vietnamese-English	France	Consultant AERS Actuarial Pensions	Multicultural team (British/French/Lebanese/Vietnam/Russian/Romanian/Lebanese/Italian/Portuguese)
11	Serbien-Dutch-French	Multi	Serbe-French-Dutch-English	Netherlands, Canada (Montreal), France	Consultant FSI IT Risk	Multicultural team?
12	Spanish – French	Multi	Spanish-French-English	France	Associate (Spanish desk)	French-Spanish
13	Tunisian-French	Multi	Arabic-French-English	France	Junior Audit IT Financial Services	Multicultural team
14	Russian-French	Multi –	Russian-French-American	France, Serbia (2yrs)	Assistant	Assisting expats for IFRS (e.g., Susumu) : working in multicultural environments
15	French – Cambodian	multi	Vietnamese-French-English	Vietnam, France	Assistant	French-British & American (virtually)
16	British-French	Multi	English-French	France	Director FAS M&A Transaction Services	French – British
17	Cameroon-French	Multi	French-English-Cameroon	France	Junior Consultant FSI IT Risk	Multicultural team
18	French	Mono	French		Consultant AERS Actuarial Pensions	Multicultural team
19	British	Mono	English		Consultant AERS Actuarial Pensions	Multicultural team
20	French	Mono	English-French	Thailand	General assistant	

Table 3.3 Demographic Details of Interviewees at BEAU

Positions		Departments	
Regional Director	6	International Marketing	30
Director	2	International Recruitment	3
Axe-Director	5	Human Resource	3
Project manager	22		
Staff	1		
Gender		Age	
F	23	25-35	28
M	13	35-45	8

Table 3.4 Demographic Details of Interviewees at AuditCo (Total: 15 multiculturals and 5 monoculturals = 20)

Position		Department	
Partner	1	Auditing	10 (50%)
Director	1	Business consulting	7
Senior manager	6	HR & Other	3
Consultant	9		
Staff & other	3		
Gender		Age	
F	10	25-35	13
M	10	>35	7

Table 3.5 Comparisons of the Two Multiculturals Work Settings

Field Setting Dimensions	AuditCo	BEAU
<i>Commonalities</i>		
Using multicultural competence to play roles in addition to performing tasks.	Highly skilled with diverse cultural experiences	Highly skilled with diverse cultural experience in living and working circumstances.
Visibility of playing roles	Business broker: Developing network and coordinating work and people across national, societal, and organizational boundaries (The higher in hierarchy)	Cultural broker: Knowledge process and managing conflict (The lower in hierarchy)
Career development challenge	No ambition to be a partner	No ambition to be a top management
<i>Differences</i>		
Task origin; team nature; work location; dress code	Collective; temporary team; working at client sites; business dress code	Individual; permanent team; working at offices; casual dress code
HRM practice strategy and recognition	No recruitment strategy	Systemized HRM practice
Identification with organization	Less identified with organization, more identified with profession	More identified with the organization, less identified with their profession.

TABLE 3.6 Multiculturals’ Cultural Brokerage Role in AuditCo. & BEAU

Representative Quotes, Events, and Archival Entries Underlying Second-order Themes			
Roles	AuditCo.	AuditCo. & BEAU	BEAU
Managing a team’s cultural heterogeneity	<p><i>“The partner told me that when I came for the interview, he wanted open-minded people; people from different countries and also within France; from different ethnicities, cities, and social classes. He wanted diversity in his team, but at the same time wanted a balance in human interactions. We have different backgrounds, but we also share similarities such as educational and cultural backgrounds. Our team is called as ‘salad bowl’ at AuditCo. As a result, we have a pretty good feeling for one another. It’s very interesting because when we work, we feel like friends, and equal to equal even when we are working in a strict hierarchical workplace. We take coffee together, and after work, we go for a drink. We also play sports together from time to time, which is quite unusual in French society where private and professional lives are strictly separated.”</i></p> <p><i>(Indian-French junior consultant, working with team members: French-Korean, Tunisian-French, Cameroon-French, Algerian-French, French-Italian, French-Vietnamese, and French)</i></p>		

<p>Fostering a generative network across cultural, regional, and social boundaries</p>	<p><i>“As a partner, the most important ability is networking, which builds your relationships. Although I am mainly working in France, I try hard not to lose my network in Spain. Here in France, I have developed networks with French partners, Spanish firms in France, the Spanish Chamber of Commerce, and even the Spanish Ambassador in France. This process is different from developing personal contact. You develop your business with them.”</i> (Spanish-French partner)</p>		
<p>Connecting geographically diverse knowledge and skills and people</p>		<p><i>“The most important and valuable function that I fulfill here in France is to coordinate all potential missions for the Spanish subsidiaries in France by connecting them to their headquarters in Spain and to French companies. The missions are not only about auditing but also about various financial services for their business development in France such as tax advice and the acquisition and the financial advisory services. We [his team] also identify the need of the local subsidiaries in France with the corporate office in Spain by showing that there are potential business opportunities in France. And finally, for the success of previous two missions, my role is also to work with French companies by incorporating management and helping them invest to Spanish companies.”</i> (French-Spanish Partner at AuditCo)</p>	

		<p><i>“While researching Asian skin-care products, I found that in Asia, some tinted cream (skin colored cream for make-up face) used ‘face lifting effect’, in France and Europe, none of tinted creams used face lifting effect. I developed a new tinted cream with face lifting effect for French market. It was a big success!” (Team: French-Cambodian-Irish project manager, a Chinese-French and two French)</i></p>	
<p>Reducing inter-regional misunderstanding</p>		<p><i>“At the moment, I’m doing a project with a big American client, and so we have a lot of Americans coming over here to France, because the target company is French. It is quite interesting because I need to be able to talk to the French company and be able to understand the way they think and the way they act. At the same time, I need to deal with the Americans, who are incredibly planned and want lots of detail. So, I need to deal with both parties; for example, I explain to the French why things are planned and why the Americans want certain bits of information. Now things are going well.” (British-French manager in AuditCo)</i></p> <p><i>“For the visual for a new campaign of products, our Brazilian counterpart disagreed with the HQ people. She told us, ‘Well, this visual is not going to work here because Brazilians are more built than European women.’ But no one</i></p>	

		<p><i>(at the HQ) agreed with her. So, I finally said to my team, 'Look, I totally agree with her (Brazilian). When I go to Venezuela, all my friends are more built than I and they told me, 'You're so skinny!' At the same time, I know you (HQ people) think that I'm normal, not skinny at all. Remember, this commercial will be released not here but in Brazil!' I often face this kind of problem regarding different cultural perspectives on beauty. I have to listen to both what locals say or what HQ people say, but, rather than just try to compromise for each party, I try to help them make a right decision for the best result." (Venezuelan-French-American director in BEAU. current team: French (3) and Hungarian-French, previous team: French, Russian, and Serbian)"</i></p>	
<p>Displaying flexible behaviors to deal with people from diverse regions/ cultures</p>		<p><i>"Multiculturalism gives me an advantage compared to others, because it's an additional skill that you can have and with which you can bring something valuable to organizations. For example, it's great to have multiculturals within the team, which makes a team much richer, in terms of working for clients and building relationships with them. For me, one of my clients is an British person who lives in Luxemburg, and who does M&A transactions in Europe. He always contacts me because we get on well; he's British and I use my English culture. For his business in France and Luxembourg, I use my French knowledge and speak French.</i></p>	

		<p><i>It's just a big advantage to be able to have these different cultural dimensions." (French-British Director).</i></p> <p><i>"When I led a TV commercial film with French PR team, Chinese local team, Chinese PR agency, and Korean make-up team, at the beginning, I was aware that there was no respect to me as a project leader. However I had to make them collaborate by bridging differences among them in terms of beauty, work value and attitude. Although I was considered a translator who spoke French and Chinese and English, as I knew that I could not change their mindset at once, I tried to adapt and support these teams as much as I could. It was not an easy job at all as It required constant emotional effort in order not to prejudge but to understand and respect them. Now it's been three times working with them. Their attitudes have been changed enormously. I have gained the respect from these teams." (Hong Kong-British-Canadian-French manager with teams: French, Chinese, and Korean)</i></p>	
<p>Bringing new local product and market knowledge to HQ</p>			<p><i>"People are more and more interested in Chinese oriental medicine. For example, the effect of ginseng is quite well known to worldwide consumers. Our team tries to find some natural ingredients for new hair care product. J (Hong Kong-Canadian-Singaporean) knows all the Chinese medicine that has no translation either in English or in French because it's so authentic. J does not only explain these ingredients but also suggest some ways we (team) can use for our new products." (French director)</i></p>

<p>Translating cultural nuances</p>			<p><i>“If we say ‘dry hair’, dry hair on this floor (HQ) doesn’t mean as same as German ‘dry hair’ means. So, it is much safer to check with B who knows two cultures (French and German) and translate exactly what I mean as ‘dry hair’.” (B is German-British-French director)</i></p>

Table 3-7 Boundary Conditions for Cultural Brokerage Role

Representative Quotes, Events, and Archival Entries Underlying Second-order Themes		
	AuditCo	BEAU
Organizational conditions		
(1) Organizational culture and professional identity	<p><i>“Auditing is a very dynamic activity. We, as Certified Professional Accounts (CPA), audit the numbers, but the job is based on communication. Communication skill is the number one quality. Because you've got your clients, you've got your team, you've got partner, and you've got a team that is on the site, and you represent the company. What is important to understand in this business is that because it's very hierarchical, it means that everybody has been through the same path as a partner who's 60. So, I am not still very comfortable using my multiculturalism, and I don't feel good about the company using my multiculturalism in the business either.”</i> (British-French senior consultant)</p> <p><i>“I need to be creative in order to satisfy or exceed my clients' satisfaction. For example, writing a report to clients is a very important mission. I use my multiculturalism when writing my report. For French clients, I use some of my British attributes. To British clients, I use some of my French attributes.”</i> (British-French director)</p> <p><i>“The most important and valuable function that I make here is to coordinate all potential missions, all the potential work for Spanish subsidiaries in France. In order to complete my roles, I coordinate work and communicate with various stakeholders such as Spanish corporates and their subsidiaries in France, AuditCo Spain, and partners in AuditCo France. I would consider myself not an auditor, but a cultural broker or business developer, as I connect people across cultural, functional, and regional boundaries by</i></p>	<p><i>“Locals [subsidiaries management] don't promote you and send you to the HQ right away. When they believe you have the ability to prove your competence and they really want to feel that you are the person that they want to promote and to invest. Sending one of the best operational managers to the HQ is a high investment. And also for the country reputation, they want to send the best. They want to say, 'Okay, we have really the best operational manager and we are sending you the best.' This is a kind of behind-the-scenes story how I came to the HQ.”</i> (Polish-French project manager)</p> <p><i>“My job is development. My future product has to be new; one that no one has yet, and it has to be better than anything existing. My multiculturalism develops my creativity. I think creativity has a lot to do with the knowledge you have, just as the more books you read, the more words you know. The more banks of images and knowledge you have, the more ideas you can generate. The more things you've seen might trigger more ideas. So, I'm guessing the more you see, the more places you live, the more languages you read, then the more creative you're going to be. In addition, you could be faster processing and connecting things because you have a lot of images and knowledge.”</i> (Lebanese-Spanish-French project manager)</p> <p><i>“In this floor, in the new project development department, every project manager works like crazy and with passion. If you don't like this job, you should not be here. I don't mean just 'hard work'. Creating new products is all about passion for the job, so-called, 'BEAU DNA'²¹⁹. I think multiculturals fuel creativity. They bring a</i></p>

	<p><i>networking and coordinating.” (Spanish-French Partner)</i></p>	<p><i>different approach based on their creativity and knowledge. Last time we were in a meeting and we were doing a new shampoo for China, we were thinking about a new ingredient. We decided to use a Chinese medicine. But we faced a big problem. There was no English translation of the Chinese medicine, not even a translation in the European world. I immediately contacted A (Hong Kong-Canadian-Singaporean). Although A was working in another product development, she is always willing to help people anything related the Chinese ingredients. If you want to sell a shampoo in China, you need someone like her. Fortunately, we have A. So, it’s really important for BEAU to have multiculturals. They are a great resource for the company.” (French Director)</i></p>
<p>(2) HRM practices</p>	<p><i>“I was recommended by one of my seniors at school who is working here as a senior consultant. Partner interviewed me first. This is the way I was recruited.” (Korean-French junior consultant)</i></p>	<p><i>“In a nutshell, the FIT program makes sure that newcomer multiculturals in the new product department meet all of the different parties such as R&D people, factory people, marketing, and so on. It is very important to be familiar with them in order to do our job. For me, at the time I was hired, I was never introduced properly to these people. I just told them that I worked for my boss, whom they knew. I think this program helps multiculturals integrate better. They feel more welcome. And, each multicultural has a mentor who is outside of the department and marketing with which we work very closely. A mentor could be a HR person or an account member. So, if she doesn’t feel comfortable talking to her boss directly or to any of her close colleagues, she can talk with her mentor. I think it’s a quite good program.” (Hong Kong-British-Canada-French director: team members: Dutch-Chinese, Taiwanese-French and Korean-British)</i></p> <p><i>“If we really want our multicultural project managers to bring values to BEAU, our monocultural managers also have to change their way of thinking and managing multicultural project managers. Although we, the HR function, should train monocultural managers for better management, it is not</i></p>

		<i>easy to facilitate a training program for them. Monocultural managers are aware of the value of multicultural project managers. So, their expectations are very high. But, they felt it was difficult to manage multiculturals because it took more time and energy.” (HR Manager)</i>
(3) Language diversity management	<p><i>“Most multiculturals here speak French and English fluently. Otherwise you probably were not recruited.” (Indian-French junior consultant)</i></p> <p><i>“Seventy percent of work is done in English. Although I work with French colleagues, I don’t have problem with them in communication. I speak English better than most of my colleagues.” (Portuguese-French consultant)</i></p>	<i>“I think language is definitely a barrier to most multiculturals here in the new product development area. I was lucky in that by the time I came here, I had been in France for two years, but still it was difficult. There are even times today that I don’t understand everything. Especially when they talk about some jokes, I am lost. You do feel a bit left out. You do feel foreign, and those are moments that you feel you are not integrated, you know, you’re out of the circle.” (Hong-Kong-British-French director)</i>

Work Team Conditions

(1) Team Heterogeneity and its management	<p><i>“When I came for an interview, my partner told me that he wanted open-minded people. His open-minded point of view meant that people were from any kind of origin or geography, the country or a city, and had attended different universities. He wanted diversity and at the same time, a certain balance in human interactions so that you have a pretty good feeling between people. We are in a very good mood, which I like a lot about this team. It’s very interesting because we feel like friends, or equal to equal, and you don’t have many problems with interactions. We share coffee together, we go outside, and we take a beer together.” (Korean-French junior consultant)</i></p> <p><i>“A multicultural boss is better for multiculturals. Our boss here is French but worked in the States for three years and in the</i></p>	<p><i>“There is strong ‘bonding’ among multiculturals. We try to help each other by sharing information and exchanging feedback. Seniors also give juniors feedback and advice. We often work faster than teams where the majority is from one or two specific cultures.” (Taiwanese-French project manager)</i></p> <p><i>“The exposure to multiple cultures gives you the ability to handle differences (cultural) and cross-cultural interaction with some flexibility; it’s a bit like a supple tissue. It keeps you from becoming rigid. For example, consider a good dancer and a bad dancer. The good dancer dances smoothly because he practices a lot. If you’ve been exposed to different cultures a lot, it gives you this smoothness of interaction, which makes it possible to meet interesting (culturally</i></p>
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U.K. for four years. For me, she keeps her French identity for example, she cuts other people off in mid-sentence, but with a very good dose – she's very open so that she can absorb the way things are done outside. Most importantly, she understands how it's done outside, and she doesn't devalue it. She doesn't think that others' ways are silly or rubbish, which is quite different from my monocultural French colleagues. Such attitudes strongly influence our team work, which mainly consists of comparing nine different auditing practices in order to device one principle that applies to all nine practices.” (South-African-French-Argentinian senior consultant)

different) people and to create a new network. Whereas, if you are not exposed, you tend to get a little bit rigid, and a little bit more into stereotypes because of the narrow view you develop from working with people with the same routine, same hobbies, and the same tennis club. They cannot even go and ask girls (i.e., culturally different others) to dance. “(Belgium-French project manager)

“Because multiculturals value diversity (cultural), and they used to play cross-cultural mediating roles among different cultural groups, they try not to give negative evaluations of those who are culturally different. For example, sometime later a new member joined, one member of my team came to me a few times to discuss another member, saying, ‘She is very rude.’ Then, as a director I told them, ‘Let’s wait and see. Give her some more time to adjust. Maybe it's not her being rude; it may be from her culture, the way she expresses herself. You all know that we all have different backgrounds. Also as we are in a same boat, why don’t you also try to adapt to her.’ Then, they started discussing more things discovered that the new member was not being rude, but just the way she expressed herself was quite direct without bad intention, yet she was just being honest. Now things are getting much better than before within my team. (Hong-Kong-British-French director)

(2) Stereotyping in Global Teams

“After the salary negotiation meeting with my boss, I was very, very disappointed. I felt that they exploited me. I deplored to myself, ‘Oh my god, they think that because I’m very obedient and quiet. I’m just a little Asian girl!’ (Korean-French junior consultant)

“I thought that Thai people were very secretive and never expressed their true feelings. At the farewell party (after 1.5 years), I was surprised to see that my Thai colleagues were all amazingly emotional. At last, I realized that I developed a deep relationship with them. If I knew this before, I could have worked much better with them.” (French regional director)

“They told me that I am a superman, but a Mexican superman! They were surprised at

		<p><i>the fact that I, a guy from Mexico, a developing country, solved such a complicated problem, instead of how efficient I was. It seemed they did not go beyond stereotyping me instead of noticing my other capabilities.” (Mexican-German-Italian director)</i></p>
<p>(3) Value Conflicting</p>	<p><i>“Discussions go everywhere and at the end of meeting, there is no concrete conclusion. In addition, it is difficult to get a chance to talk. Very few times, did I get a chance to talk? Someone would immediately cut me off in mid-sentence. Because I never (can) cut someone off, I feel very frustrated and value conflicted.” (Canadian-French senior auditor)</i></p> <p><i>“I shout! I don't get the respect of anyone if I never say anything. I don't have any option as they do, because it is not my way of doing things. They have their way, and that's how they will do it. If I want to make my voice heard, I must do as they do, but it is frustrating and tiring.” (South-African-French senior consultant)</i></p>	<p><i>“I felt very disrespected whenever my superior gave me feedback and ordered me to do something. After one big crisis happened, I asked her to respect me as I respect her. I was very disappointed with her reaction. She understood my frustration but reinforced that ‘This is how it works here.’ Although I felt really bad, I just cannot be aggressive to her. That is not my thing.” (Polish-French project manager)</i></p>

APPENDIX A

The Ideal Profiles of Interviewees and Team Observation

6. Team leaders (managers) of multicultural teams that include some biculturals and some monoculturals.
 7. Biculturals:
 - a. Born biculturals (e.g., parents of different nationalities, born in a country different from parental nationality).
 - b. Grown up or educated or worked in a foreign country for a period of time greater than 3 years.
- Please note that one of the characteristics is needed for one to be a bicultural.
8. Monoculturals (e.g., born and having been living in the same country to now) working with biculturals in order to receive multiple impressions of biculturals' activities in a team.
 9. Similar departments
 10. At least 3 years of multicultural team working experience (past or current).

APPENDIX B

Question Guide to Ethnographic Interviews at BEAU

Background

Age

What is your current position? How did you get it?

What is your background?

What led you to working for this company? How did you get started?

How long have you been working for this company?

What was your prior experience?

Cultural Identity(ies)

Tell me about your background; where to born, where to grow up, your parents' cultures?

How do you identify culturally? (I show interviewees Cultural Identity Definition, Interviewees posit themselves in the scale in Figure 3).

Has(ve) your cultural identity(ies) changed over time?

Have you ever had cultural identity crisis?

Cultural identity(ies) and Professional Life

How do your cultural identities influence your professional life?

Have you noticed any difference between you and your colleagues in terms of the way to perform

How do you identify culturally different others?

What is your most challenge working with people from different countries?

Team Experience

Describe your current team

Tell me one or two teams you have worked previously?

How are different between current team and previous team?

Can you think of challenges your team faces?

Do your team members behave differently when facing challenges?

- How do you find their differences?
- How do you behave differently from others in your team

Do you think that you make more effort to adapt to your team members (colleagues)?

- If so, why?
- If not, why not

Work Experience

Describe a typical day/project/assignment?

What was your last project like?

How do you work with members?

Can you think of any examples you contribute to your team performance?

What resource do you use when working?

Can you tell me what your challenges and how you handle them?

Concluding thought

Contributions to the Field of International Business

This thesis is a first step toward a better understanding of multiculturals in organizations. Beyond current conceptualizations of multiculturalism and demographic diversity, it aimed to identify the roles multiculturals play for global team work processes, as well as contextual factors that influence multiculturals in their work places. More specifically, this thesis identifies that multiculturals' rich abilities may constitute a specific type of cultural competence that could make them key members of global teams. The construct of bicultural competence does not apply existing competence constructs to a new domain. Rather, it proposes that the competence is a unique construction of multiculturals' cultural intelligence to benefit from effective cross-cultural interactions that result in global team effectiveness. Systematically analyzing the performance of biculturals' competence in cross-cultural interactions in organizations (such as multicultural teams) has received less attention. This thesis contributes to this research stream by introducing the concept of bicultural competence; providing a conceptual model of the construct; and describing its impact on multicultural team effectiveness.

Second, this thesis contributes to research on cultural brokerage in global team work processes. To my knowledge, my study is the first to detail through the use of ethnography how multiculturals influence this process occurred in new product development in a global context. That is, the present study is the first to discuss specific roles played by multiculturals in managing knowledge processes and handling cross-cultural conflicts in global teams. As Geertz (1960) noted, multiculturals as a cultural broker develop the work stage where members facilitate effective communication and cultivate relationships beyond culturally and socially heterogeneous global teams. Building on this research, I have argued that

multiculturals play a crucial role for work processes and outcomes in global teams. In addition, little research has been conducted on the contextual factors that affect multiculturals and how they structure their careers in MNCs. My contribution to this emerging literature has been to specify more precisely how organizations and team conditions structures either appropriately or inappropriately construct multiculturals' effectiveness in MNCs.

Third, subsequent research on team diversity needs to focus on a wider set of factors than simply individual nationality. This dissertation suggests that measuring team heterogeneity by nationality seems no longer valid because many multicultural members have difficulty identifying themselves with a single nationality. These individuals self-identified as multiculturals based on their multicultural experience such as parents' different nationalities and working/living/education abroad, for example, Venezuelan-French-American or French-Cambodian-Irish.

The present research sheds new light on the contribution of multiculturals by going beyond bi/multiculturalism developed through lab experiments by cross-cultural psychologists to examining what multiculturals bring to global team effectiveness. Collectively, these contributions offer a deeper understanding of the specific "multiculturals' tactics as real socially and *culturally* skilled actors used to induce cooperation" (Fligstein, 2001, p. 113, italics added) on projects that unite contributors from various groups across organizational, cultural, and regional boundaries in the field of international business.

Practical implications

Finally, my research also informs better management and utilization of multicultural workforce for practitioners in three ways. First, it has practical implications for composing global teams in MNCs. Second, my thesis also highlights training multiculturals and monoculturals. Last, despite an increasingly multicultural workforce in MNCs and their importance in organizations, little research has examined organizational contextual factors

and how they affect multiculturals' ability to enact the cultural brokerage role in global teams.

The goal of the dissertation was to build and enrich theory in this area. The framework of contextual variables developed in this thesis can serve as a guideline to Human Resource managers in MNCs.

Avenues for Further Research

To a greater or lesser extent, most global companies face four challenges (or dualities): global integration versus local adaptation; dispersed complex knowledge that must be integrated; the national image of the home base versus global reach and global learning; and rapid innovation in products versus continuity in brands and channels worldwide. The dissertation shows that multiculturals allow global firms to transcend these challenges in how it effectively integrates their business success.

The dissertation has been a first step toward understanding multiculturals in organizations better. It aimed to advance beyond current conceptualizations of multiculturalism and demographic diversity and identify the roles multiculturals play in global teams, as well as contextual factors that influence multiculturals in their work places. Throughout, the dissertation reinforces the importance of multiculturalism in international management. In demonstrating so, the dissertation also points to further research, namely: multiculturals as a new knowledge transfer approach at a distance (virtual contexts); typology of multiculturalism, that is, different multiculturals may bring different skills; cultural identity negotiation and its impact on work performance: darkside of multiculturalism as minority group in organizations.

Les rôles d'individus multiculturels dans les organisations

Hae-Jung Hong

Résumé

Cette thèse explore le rôle de multiculturels dans les multinationales. Les multiculturels sont connus pour leur compétence et leur potentiel culturels susceptibles de contribuer à l'efficacité d'une organisation. Peu d'études à ce jour ont examiné les multiculturels dans les multinationales et pratiquement aucune recherche n'a essayé de comprendre le rôle des multiculturels dans la facilitation d'un processus de travail d'équipe efficace. En vue d'étudier un phénomène qui n'a pas été suffisamment scruté, cette dissertation a mobilisé un travail de terrain ethnographique dans deux multinationales importantes sur une période de 10 mois. Elle étudie les rôles de multiculturels dans des équipes mondiales en se référant à trois contextes : (1) la compétence multiculturelle et son impact sur l'efficacité de l'équipe ; (2) comment les multiculturels influencent les processus de travail d'équipe ; (3) en quoi et comment des facteurs liés au contexte affectent l'aptitude des multiculturels à jouer des rôles.

La globalisation économique a eu pour résultat le besoin d'intégration culturelle et sociale face aux déséquilibres démographiques. Alors qu'auparavant l'essentiel de l'immigration se déroulait sur un axe est-ouest, elle s'est déplacée du sud au nord, avec une croissance démographique élevée dans le sud et des populations vieillissantes et allant en diminuant dans le nord. Ce changement dans les données démographiques et les défis concomitants liés à l'immigration créent un risque social significatif d'instabilité, accompagné d'explosions d'hostilité et de menaces croissantes de terrorisme. Les conséquences les plus bénignes d'un tel changement pourraient être le risque d'un communautarisme fragmenté et l'échec d'une intégration sociale et culturelle. Dans les cas les plus extrêmes, les démocraties peuvent échouer et d'autres issues tragiques sont à redouter dans le nord-ouest de l'Europe comme des émeutes, des insurrections et la violence interethnique.

Dans quels contextes pouvons-nous procéder à l'examen de ce problème? Les multinationales (EMN) sont devenues le lieu de rencontre global où des personnes aux

cultures dès différentes doivent travailler ensemble efficacement. Ceci se vérifie en particulier dans les industries mondiales, où sont particulièrement marquées les forces d'adaptation et de compréhension locales d'une part et les forces d'intégration mondiale de l'autre. La diversité dans l'encadrement et les postes d'influence est un défi significatif auquel les multinationales ont à faire face, du fait que les sources d'apprentissage se sont dispersées davantage d'un point de vue géographique et organisationnel et que les données démographiques concernant la population active font écho à la complexité multiculturelle croissante de la société dans son ensemble. Les multinationales luttent donc pour maîtriser les complexités qu'entraîne la gestion d'activités multiples sur des sites multiples avec des partenaires multiples, dans le monde entier. Dans les industries mondiales d'aujourd'hui à forte intensité de connaissances, les dirigeants doivent exceller dans l'utilisation des talents de leurs collaborateurs pour faciliter le 'co-learning' et le partage du savoir à travers des contextes différenciés. Cruciale pour la mise en œuvre opérationnelle de ces nouveaux mandats est la capacité à négocier des relations de travail fortes, efficaces et synergiques, à l'intérieur de contextes organisationnels et culturels divers et entre eux. Comme telle, à la suite de la globalisation, l'entreprise multinationale en tant que lieu de rencontre mondial est un laboratoire naturel – un microcosme délimité – à partir duquel une théorie est à construire sur les meilleures pratiques pour la résolution de conflits transculturels et l'intégration multiculturelle. Les entreprises multinationales sont devenues un contexte idéal pour étudier l'intégration transculturelle en vue d'informer les responsables politiques sur la façon de réaliser efficacement l'intégration entre communautés.

En pratique, la panoplie de compétences transculturelles que requièrent l'intégration et la collaboration multiculturelles se donne à observer de la façon la plus vivante dans les équipes mondiales à l'intérieur des multinationales. D'éminents spécialistes ont suggéré que le défi le plus critique et le plus pratique auquel sont confrontés les équipes multiculturelles

est la gestion de conflits de part et d'autre des délimitations culturelles nationales (Joshi et autres, 2002 ; Mateev & Nelson, 2004). Pour que les équipes mondiales soient efficaces, leurs membres doivent apprendre à relever les défis découlant de leur nationalité et de leurs racines culturelles. Les multiculturels sont définis comme des individus ayant plus d'une identité culturelle (Hong et autres, 2000), dotés de ressources latentes acquises grâce à des expériences culturelles (souvent) de toute une vie passée à travailler et à vivre avec des personnes culturellement différentes. Il existe, toutefois, à ce jour une recherche limitée concernant de telles équipes, avec encore moins d'études sur des individus multiculturels dans des environnements d'entreprise multinationale. En outre, pratiquement aucune recherche ne nous aide à comprendre le rôle d'individus multiculturels dans la facilitation du fonctionnement efficace de ces équipes. Comme les personnes ayant des origines multiculturelles –individus bi/multiculturels– augmentent en nombre dans les multinationales, ils constituent une ressource de grande valeur pour la recherche, en vue de comprendre le processus permettant de surmonter les disparités et d'intégrer des communautés culturellement différentes (Brannen et autres, 2009).

En recherchant l'ampleur et la nature du mode de contribution que les multiculturels apportent au fonctionnement d'équipes mondiales, cette thèse éclaire les conditions qui permettent une collaboration transculturelle efficace et favorisent l'intégration sociale. Comme telle, la thèse recherche un système représentatif de problèmes en jeu dans le contexte plus large de la société et peut donc influencer des décisions et des pratiques au niveau politique.

L'exposé que voici présente un aperçu d'un travail de thèse plus ample. La section 1 introduit le phénomène des multiculturels comme nouvelle donnée démographique concernant le travail dans les multinationales. La section 2 élabore le cadre de référence théorique. La section 3 détaille les méthodes de recherche utilisées. La section 4 décrit les

conclusions principales et, finalement, les sections 5 et 6 attirent l'attention sur des implications pratiques et une recherche ultérieure.

1. Les multiculturels, Courtiers Culturels dans des Equipes mondiales

1.1 La compétence des multiculturels et son impact sur l'efficacité d'équipe

Dans le cadre de l'entreprise contemporaine, les équipes à composante mondiale effectuent une part significative du travail d'organisation. Ces équipes sont constituées parce qu'une recherche antérieure a montré qu'elles améliorent l'efficacité organisationnelle dans un environnement commercial mondial (Cox, 1993 ; Galbraith, 2000 ; Kirkman & Shapiro, 2001 ; Tung, 1993). Comme telles, les équipes de type mondiales offrent un énorme potentiel aux organisations. Cependant, ironiquement, la diversité culturelle empêche souvent un tel potentiel de s'actualiser. Comme on l'a décrit plus haut, la gestion des conflits suscités par le découpage national et culturel des membres constitue le défi majeur auquel les équipes mondiales ont à faire face.

Les chercheurs n'ont pas reconnu encore que des salariés multiculturels sont une main-d'œuvre croissante mais inexploitée, dotée de capacités latentes qui pourraient jouer un rôle en relevant des défis à l'intérieur des équipes mondiales. Les individus multiculturels sont-ils un atout souvent ignoré qui permettrait de dépasser le paradoxe décrit ci-dessus ? Se peut-il qu'ils soient des membres importants capables de promouvoir l'efficacité d'une équipe mondiale ? La recherche récente a mis en évidence que certains individus multiculturels ont des réponses souples aux signaux culturels et situationnels (que l'on appelle commutation de cadre culturel ; Hong et autres, 2000). On a trouvé aussi que les multiculturels disposent de représentations culturelles plus complexes d'un point de vue cognitif (Benet-Martinez & Haritatos, 2005) et sont plus capables d'adapter leur comportement dans un cadre transculturel que ne le sont les personnes mono-culturelles (Padilla, 2006). LaFromboise, Coleman et Gerton (1993) ont suggéré que les multiculturels possèdent des aptitudes

spécifiques telles que la dextérité dans la communication croisée, la connaissance de croyances et de valeurs culturelles et les répertoires de double rôle culturel. En outre, Brannen et ses collègues (2009) ont trouvé que beaucoup de multiculturels ont des niveaux plus élevés de métacognition culturelle que les mono-culturels. La métacognition culturelle est définie comme l'aptitude à surveiller et à réguler ses processus de connaissance et de ses états cognitifs et affectifs en relation avec un objectif. Elle englobe aussi la capacité d'abstraire d'une expérience spécifique des principes plus larges en vue d'interactions transculturelles futures (Thomas et autres, 2008).

La richesse de leurs aptitudes peut constituer pour les multiculturels un type spécifique de compétence qui en ferait des membres essentiels d'équipes mondiales. De plus, la construction d'une compétence multiculturelle ne consiste pas seulement à appliquer des éléments de compétence existants à un nouveau domaine. C'est plutôt la proposition que la compétence est une construction unique de l'intelligence culturelle de multiculturels au bénéfice d'interactions transculturelles efficaces qui aboutissent à l'efficacité d'une équipe mondiale.

Pour qu'une équipe mondiale fonctionne plus efficacement, il faudrait qu'elle combine sur un mode synergétique les apports individuels pour influencer les actions et les résultats collectifs. Par exemple, la propension des multiculturels à franchir des frontières culturelles devrait promouvoir une communication transculturelle parmi les membres et arbitrer les conflits transculturels (Ancona & Caldwell, 1992). Ceci aboutit à un transfert de savoir efficace entre des membres culturellement différents. Comme telle, une compétence multiculturelle peut fournir une indication forte pour les rôles qu'un membre multiculturel peut choisir de remplir dans une équipe mondiale. Les rôles choisis et l'importance relative de chaque rôle sont influencés par les demandes situationnelles de solution des défis auxquels les équipes mondiales sont confrontées (Stewart et autres, 2005).

1.2. Dirigeants multiculturels comme courtiers culturels au sein d'équipes mondiales

Les multiculturels jouent un rôle crucial dans le déroulement du travail d'équipe au sein d'équipes mondiales là où l'hétérogénéité nationale semble plus compliquée que les chercheurs organisationnels ne l'ont reconnu jusqu'à présent (voir figure 1 Équipe diverse vs équipe mondiale, par ex. Elron et autres, 1998 ; Lawrence, 1997 ; Snow et autres, 1996). Les directeurs d'un projet multiculturel dans les multinationales, par exemple, jouent souvent le rôle de courtiers culturels (Geertz, 1960). Dans le texte intégral de ma thèse, j'ai examiné le courtage culturel dans le contexte des équipes du développement d'un nouveau produit : la façon dont les multiculturels influencent les processus de connaissance et gèrent les conflits dans des équipes mondiales. Mon but est de faire progresser notre compréhension des personnels multiculturels en explorant comment ils interagissent et ce qui leur permet de réussir plus ou moins dans l'intégration de membres qui peuvent ne pas partager des traits, des normes, des valeurs culturelles ou des façons similaires d'appréhender les tâches.

En pratique, les personnes d'origine multiculturelle – individus bi/multiculturels – augmentent dans les multinationales et elles constituent une abondante ressource de recherche pour intégrer culturellement des contextes divers (Brannen et autres, 2009). À ce jour, toutefois, une recherche limitée a examiné les multiculturels dans les organisations ; des études encore moins nombreuses ont scruté les rôles que les multiculturels jouent dans les multinationales (pour une exception, voir Yagi et Kleinberg, 2011). En outre, pratiquement aucune étude n'a cherché à comprendre la nature, la dynamique et les conditions de délimitation des rôles que des individus multiculturels assument pour garantir que leurs équipes fonctionnent efficacement.

À la lumière de la complexité des organisations d'aujourd'hui, ce travail aspire à comprendre les rôles des multiculturels dans des équipes mondiales. J'étudie les multiculturels dans les organisations dans trois contextes en particulier:

- 1) Comment les multiculturels accèdent à une compétence culturelle ;
- 2) Comment ils influencent les processus mondiaux de main-d'œuvre ;
- 3) Quels facteurs contextuels influent sur leur aptitude à remplir des rôles et

comment.

2. Cadre de Référence Théorique

La thèse vise à faire progresser la compréhension actuelle des conséquences de la présence d'employés multiculturels dans des équipes mondiales. On a fait le choix de ne pas fournir un cadre de référence théorique holistique, il se concentre plutôt sur les questions théoriques suivantes:

- Comment des membres multiculturels influencent les processus de travail d'équipe dans les équipes mondiales
- Qu'est-ce qui construit la compétence et les savoir-faire de multiculturels
- Comment les multiculturels influencent les processus de travail d'équipe
- Quels facteurs contextuels affectent les multiculturels

À cette fin, la thèse puise largement dans la littérature sur le bi/multiculturalisme. À certains égards, la question si les multiculturels contribuent aux processus cruciaux de la mise en application et de l'acquisition de savoirs apparaît dans la littérature sur les cosmopolites et les expatriés (Au & Fukuda, 2002; Haas, 2006). La présente recherche, toutefois, jette une lumière nouvelle sur ce problème, en allant au-delà d'un bi/multiculturalisme élaboré grâce à des expériences de laboratoire par des psychologues transculturels pour examiner ce que les multiculturels apportent à l'efficacité d'une équipe mondiale. Collectivement, ces contributions offrent une compréhension plus profonde des "tactiques spécifiques de multiculturels comme d'authentiques acteurs dotés d'un savoir-faire social et *culturel* ayant l'habitude d'inciter à la coopération" (Fligstein, 2001, p. 113, *italiques ajoutés*) pour des projets qui réunissent des collaborateurs provenant de différents groupes recouvrant un

découpage organisationnel, culturel et régional. La thèse contribue en outre à des domaines d'enquête majeurs :

- La recherche sur la diversité
- Les processus de travail d'équipe mondial
 - Gestion des connaissances
 - Gestion des conflits

Recherche sur la diversité

La thèse élabore et étend la recherche liée à la diversité et à l'hétérogénéité d'une équipe, de deux manières. D'abord, en discutant les corrélations de l'hétérogénéité de l'équipe du point de vue de la nationalité et la performance effective, je complète le travail d'Earley et de Mosakowski (2000) en révélant les détails de la dynamique d'équipe portant sur la manière dont les rôles joués par les multiculturels ont un impact sur les processus de travail d'équipe. Peut-être, ceci n'est-il pas surprenant, étant donné qu'Earley et Mosakowski se sont concentrés sur la culture d'équipe hybride à l'intérieur d'équipes transnationales en tant qu'elle facilite l'interaction de groupe sans faire attention aux racines culturelles des membres de l'équipe. Cette interaction peut expliquer le niveau différent de l'analyse du fait que les populations actives multiculturelles ne font pas encore l'objet d'une vraie reconnaissance de la part des praticiens et que la recherche qui se concentre sur leur rôle dans les organisations est un domaine naissant (Brannen et autres, 2009). Toutefois, en traitant les multiculturels comme des agents de facilitation de l'interaction de l'équipe mondiale, je vois que leurs rôles sont liés à la performance de l'équipe.

D'autre part, je m'appuie sur la recherche d'Earley et Mosakowski en décrivant la diversité culturelle qui pourrait influencer la façon dont les multiculturels s'adaptent au lieu de travail. La nationalité est suggérée comme un déterminant de l'identité propre d'une personne ; pour cette raison, le terme "équipe multiculturelle" se réfère à une équipe dans

laquelle deux ou plus de nationalités sont représentées parmi les membres (Adler, 1997). Les équipes qui ont émergé de mon travail de terrain ethnographique semblent, pourtant, bien plus compliquées en termes de racines culturelles individuelles (Voir Fig. 1 Équipe diverse vs équipe mondiale).

C'est-à-dire, mesurer l'hétérogénéité d'une équipe par la nationalité ne semble plus valable parce que beaucoup de membres multiculturels ont de la peine à s'identifier avec une seule nationalité. Ces individus se sont identifiés eux-mêmes comme multiculturels en se basant sur leur expérience multiculturelle telle que les nationalités différentes des parents et le fait de travailler/vivre/se former à l'étranger, par exemple, un Vénézuélien-Français-Américain ou un Français-Cambodgien-Irlandais. Dans les constitutions d'équipes mondiales figurant dans mon travail de terrain, certaines équipes étaient même composées uniquement de multiculturels (par ex. le chef d'équipe identifié comme habitant de Hong Kong-Britannique-Canadien-Français et des membres de l'équipe identifiés comme Taiwanais-Français, Hollandais-Chinois et Coréen-Britannique). Leur dynamique d'interaction à travers des frontières organisationnelles et régionales semblait beaucoup plus compliquée culturellement du fait qu'ils travaillaient avec d'autres équipes fonctionnelles au siège de Paris (y compris des équipes mono-culturelles) et dans différents bureaux régionaux. En résumé, je crois que la recherche subséquente sur la diversité d'équipe doit se concentrer sur un ensemble de facteurs ne se limitant pas à la simple nationalité individuelle.

Processus de travail de l'équipe mondiale: Courtage dans le transfert de connaissances et la gestion de conflit

La recherche sur l'hétérogénéité d'une équipe suggère qu'un niveau modéré d'hétérogénéité peut équilibrer le rendement d'une équipe homogène (Amabile, 1988). À la différence des recherches antérieures, alors que la thèse intègre de la littérature sur le multiculturalisme et sur le courtage culturel, elle accorde aussi une attention particulière aux

racines culturelles individuelles (c.-à-d., le multiculturalisme) en analysant des processus de travail d'équipe transculturels. La thèse identifie les rôles de courtage culturel de multiculturels dans les processus de travail de l'équipe mondiale. À ma connaissance, bien que d'autres aient commencé à exposer dans leurs grandes lignes les facteurs importants pour le courtage culturel, mon approche ethnographique est la première à détailler comment ce processus se présente dans le développement d'un nouveau produit dans un contexte mondial. C'est-à-dire, la présente étude est la première à discuter les rôles spécifiques de la gestion des processus de connaissance et de la gestion de conflits transculturels. D'importantes similitudes apparaissent néanmoins entre cette étude et d'autres traitements du courtage culturel. Par exemple, je vois que le lien travail-courtage requérant la synthèse et l'intégration d'idées entre multiculturels et autres membres organisationnels (Lingo & O'Mahony, 2010) est important pour identifier le courtage culturel de multiculturels dans le processus créatif de développement de nouveaux produits qui sont leaders sur les marchés locaux et mondiaux (par ex., Fleming & Waguespack, 2007 ; Hargadon & Sutton, 1997). De façon similaire, à mes yeux, les rôles de transfrontaliers (Ancona et Caldwell, 1992) ont une importance cruciale pour le courtage culturel entre les différents membres du groupe organisationnel de part et d'autre des frontières culturelles (Au & Fukuda, 2002).

De façon plus générale, j'ajoute à ce travail en attirant l'attention des spécialistes sur les multiculturels (voir aussi Hong, 2010; Press, 1969). En agissant de la sorte, je tire des leçons de la recherche sur "la médiation de conflits" en rapport avec la façon dont les multiculturels traitent différents genres de conflits, dans la mesure où elle reflète les implications de la compétence multiculturelle dans le lieu de travail d'une équipe mondiale (Earley & Ang, 2003 ; Jehn & Mannix, 2000 ; Thomas et autres, 2008). Et, comme Geertz (1960) le notait, les multiculturels en guise de courtiers culturels développent la phase de travail là où les membres, en facilitant la communication et en cultivant les relations, dépassent les équipes

mondiales culturellement et socialement hétérogènes. En m'appuyant sur cette recherche, j'ai fait valoir que les multiculturels ont un rôle crucial pour les processus de travail et les résultats dans les équipes mondiales.

Conformément au but de cette thèse d'explorer le multiculturalisme et le courtage culturel dans la pratique, un effort constant a été fait pour se concentrer sur les pratiques de travail de multiculturels dans les équipes mondiales, une fois qu'on en vient à l'élaboration de théories. En vue de mettre en place une conception théorique fondée, la thèse utilise le 'travail de terrain ethnographique' en guise de méthodologie de recherche. Ceci permet à l'approche épistémologique du travail d'être cohérente avec ses objectifs et contenus théoriques. De plus amples détails sur les méthodes de recherche sont donnés dans la section suivante.

3. Méthodes de Recherche

La thèse cherche à comprendre comment les multiculturels influencent les processus du travail d'équipe mondial et quels facteurs contextuels affectent la tenue de pareils rôles. Comme on l'a décrit, la recherche sur les multiculturels dans les organisations est un domaine naissant et l'élaboration théorique est encore mince. Selon Edmondson et McManus (2007; *nascent theory* : théorie naissante), une telle recherche devrait recueillir à partir de l'ethnographie des données riches, détaillées et suggestives pour expliquer le phénomène. L'ethnographie, dans son sens le plus utilitaire, est ce à quoi Spradley et McCurdy (1972) faisaient référence comme "la tâche de décrire une culture particulière d'activités humaines" (p.3). Denzin (2003) ajouta que l'ethnographie est une méthode pour comprendre la politique et les pratiques qui façonnent l'expérience humaine. Le travail de terrain ethnographique est par conséquent particulièrement approprié pour l'objectif de la thèse. En vue d'ouvrir des perspectives originales, fondées théoriquement (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), j'ai mené un travail de terrain ethnographique dans deux multinationales pendant une période de 10 mois. Les industries des firmes couvraient les cosmétiques et les activités d'audit et les services de

conseil aux entreprises. Les deux établissements figurent à une place honorable dans les relevés de firmes leader dans leurs domaines respectifs et tous les deux recrutent des individus dotés des diverses références culturelles qui exemplifient les multiculturels.

En suivant une stratégie d'échantillonnage théorique (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), j'ai comparé les multiculturels dans des équipes mondiales dans l'industrie de biens de consommation en mouvement constant (FMSG) avec des multiculturels dans l'industrie d'audit et de services de conseil aux entreprises. Le domaine des FMSG est caractérisé par des tâches changeant rapidement qui permettent à l'organisation de s'adapter ou de devancer les tendances du marché. En revanche, l'audit et le conseil mettent en évidence la stabilité de la tâche afin de maintenir des pratiques normées et une éthique en se mettant au service de clients divers. J'ai choisi cette dimension pour effectuer le sondage en vue de développer la théorie à travers deux multinationales qui différaient dans le degré auquel elles admettent et utilisent des multiculturels dans le personnel. La firme FMSG, BEAU (un pseudonyme), doit ses bonnes fortunes aux nouveaux produits qu'elle développe. Elle recrute des multiculturels pour développer de nouveaux produits destinés à des marchés mondiaux parce qu'ils apportent de nouvelles idées et une compréhension des marchés locaux, ce qui complète les mono-culturels qui travaillent au siège. Ainsi, la direction dans cette firme attend des multiculturels qu'ils développent des produits nouveaux et créatifs et meilleurs et présents plus rapidement sur le marché que ceux des concurrents. Parce que les multiculturels dans le service de développement d'un nouveau produit de BEAU étaient pleinement responsables du développement de nouveaux produits dans un maximum de deux ans, leur compétence culturelle semblait manifeste (par ex., savoir culturel, communication transculturelle et créativité).

En revanche, les multiculturels dans la firme d'audit et de conseil de gestion, AuditCo (un pseudonyme), ne furent pas toujours sélectionnés pour des tâches et des rôles

spécifiques. Les multiculturels qui travaillent pour International Finance Reporting Standards (IFRS) (= Normes internationales d'information financière) constituent une exception : leurs tâches requéraient de travailler de manière transculturelle parmi des pays membres de l'IASB (International Accounting Standards Board : le Bureau international de normes comptables). Bien que les pratiques d'audit fassent l'objet de calculs rigoureux et d'une rationalisation élevée, ces pratiques sont aussi un processus émotionnel du fait que des rituels d'interaction divers (par ex., les conversations, les interactions orientés à la tâche, le 'parler-boutique', les commérages, les discussions générales) augmentent ou diminuent automatiquement l'énergie émotionnelle à la fois des auditeurs et des clients (Collins, 1981, 1987). Aucun auditeur ne travaille seul ; au contraire, ils travaillent en groupes. Le processus d'audit tournait pour cette raison autour d'une confiance forte et d'une cohésion entre ses membres. En outre, le personnel d'AuditCo doit faire preuve d'un degré élevé de loyauté afin d'être perçu comme vraiment professionnel et digne de promotion. Ceci s'est révélé comme une éthique de travail obéissant quasi à l'instar d'une machine aux idéaux d'engagement et de professionnalisme, qui tous deux étaient tenus en haute estime dans l'idéologie professionnelle. Toute théorie créée en étudiant la compétence multiculturelle à AuditCo avait moins de chances d'être solide qu'elle n'en avait dans le cas de BEAU.

J'ai analysé les données et ajusté périodiquement les catégories tout au long du travail de terrain aux fins de confirmer les catégories de test et de mettre au point davantage mon étude. J'ai codé les transcriptions d'interviews, les notes d'observation et les documents en utilisant Nvivo9, un programme d'analyse qualitative de données, qui m'a permis de visualiser les relations entre les différentes parties des données et entre les données et les idées théoriques (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 44). J'ai codé d'abord les données de BEAU, suivies par les données d'AuditCo. Cette façon de faire m'a aidé à comparer et à contraster les données provenant des deux sites de recherche. Quand le travail de terrain fut achevé, j'ai

analysé une nouvelle fois les notes de terrain, les mémos et les transcriptions d'interviews pour déterminer en quoi ma compréhension et les pratiques des multiculturels sur ces deux sites ne s'accordaient pas.

Dans la section suivante, je me tourne vers les conclusions qui se sont dégagées de cette analyse. Je décris d'abord comment les multiculturels influencent le processus de travail d'équipe en assumant le rôle du courtage culturel. J'explique ensuite les conditions de l'organisation et les conditions du travail d'équipe et explore comment des situations différentes permettent aux multiculturels et les empêchent de jouer un rôle de courtage culturel sur le lieu de travail.

4. Les Conclusions de La Recherche

La thèse fournit des réponses différentes aux trois questions ci-dessus qui ont orienté la recherche. D'abord, elle définit la construction d'une compétence multiculturelle, développe un modèle conceptuel de la construction et décrit son impact sur l'efficacité d'une équipe multiculturelle. En se basant sur la littérature antérieure et compte tenu de l'environnement transculturel du commerce international, voici la définition de la compétence multiculturelle qui est proposée pour le domaine du management international:

La compétence multiculturelle est l'aptitude d'un multiculturel à s'appuyer sur un savoir culturel et des aptitudes transculturelles (telles que l'adaptation du comportement et de la communication à travers les cultures) pour intervertir efficacement des cadres culturels et appliquer la métacognition culturelle à des contextes culturels disparates dans le but de travailler avec des personnes d'horizons culturels différents pour un résultat organisationnel désiré.

Cette définition est large, mais simple. La compétence multiculturelle résulte d'une

flexibilité comportementale acquise à partir d'expériences culturelles multiples que ces individus utilisent ensuite pour interagir efficacement avec des personnes de différentes cultures dans des contextes transculturels.

Deuxièmement, la thèse examine en profondeur les rôles que les multiculturels jouent dans une multinationale qui produit des cosmétiques. Elle se concentre sur la façon dont les multiculturels, tels des courtiers culturels, influencent les processus de travail d'équipe dans le développement d'un nouveau produit. Je m'appuie sur un ensemble unique de données que j'ai développées à partir d'un travail de terrain comme je l'ai décrit ci-dessus. Ma recherche ethnographique a montré comment des chefs de projet multiculturels comblaient efficacement les vides organisationnels, culturels et régionaux pour intégrer des savoirs disparates et atténuer des conflits en vue d'un ensemble innovant, cohérent. Le courtage culturel de multiculturels dans des équipes mondiales fut identifié du fait qu'ils remplissent un rôle unique en (1) gérant la connaissance par : (a) l'apport d'une connaissance nouvelle du produit et du marché locaux, (b) la traduction de nuances culturelles, et (c) en mettant en relation géographiquement des connaissances et capacités diverses ; et 2) en gérant les conflits par : (a) la réduction des malentendus interculturels et (b) la manifestation d'un comportement flexible avec des personnes de cultures diverses. Cette recherche construit non seulement une nouvelle théorie mais encore elle met en communication une recherche disparate sur le multiculturalisme et son impact sur la gestion de la diversité et les processus de travail d'une équipe mondiale que d'autres théories ont offerts.

Troisièmement, la thèse explore les facteurs contextuels qui ont un impact sur les rôles multiculturels que remplissent des équipes de travail mondiales, en comparant des individus multiculturels dans deux types d'organisations très différentes. Cette comparaison complète les conclusions des rôles de courtage culturel joués par les multiculturels. Bien que les cinq activités de courtage notées ci-dessus soulignent comment des multiculturels

façonnent activement leurs rôles dans des équipes mondiales, les attributs de leur organisation, le caractère des équipes dans lesquelles ils travaillent et comment des conditions individuelles peuvent soit promouvoir soit empêcher de telles activités. Les stratégies organisationnelles de GRH, un stéréotype dans les équipes mondiales, et les conflits de valeur culturelle réduisent la bonne volonté d'un multiculturel et son aptitude à jouer un rôle de courtage culturel. En revanche, la culture organisationnelle, l'hétérogénéité de l'équipe et la gestion de la différence de langue ont enhardi les multiculturels à jouer le rôle de courtiers culturels, particulièrement en leur permettant de remplir ce rôle plus efficacement. De telles conditions de découpage sont actives à trois niveaux : à l'intérieur de l'organisation, de l'équipe et de l'individu. Chaque condition est en corrélation au même niveau et à d'autres niveaux. Par exemple, la stratégie GRM est ancrée dans la culture organisationnelle et influe sur l'hétérogénéité de l'équipe. De même, les stéréotypes dans les équipes mondiales peuvent être à l'origine de conflits de valeurs culturels. Cette étude comparative identifie par conséquent un ensemble de facteurs affectant les rôles que remplissent les membres d'une équipe multiculturelle. L'étude montre aussi comment ces facteurs constituent à la fois des défis et des opportunités pour les salariés multiculturels dans ces deux organisations. La figure 2 expose le modèle conceptuel des conclusions d'ensemble. Elle décrit le courtage culturel à l'intérieur et à travers des équipes mondiales au siège et dans les filiales locales comme le premier mode de transformation par les multiculturels de leur compétence multiculturelle en processus de travail d'équipe mondiale, elle montre en quoi et comment les facteurs contextuels permettent aux multiculturels ou les empêchent de pareils rôles.

5. Implications Pratiques

La thèse suscite un vif intérêt de la part des praticiens confrontés à la tâche de gérer des salariés aux identités culturelles d'une complexité croissante. D'abord, elle a des implications pratiques pour la composition d'équipes mondiales dans les multinationales. Pour être

performantes et rivaliser avec succès, les organisations multinationales doivent innover à un niveau mondial, effectuer simultanément une intégration planétaire et une différenciation locale (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1989 ; Nohria & Ghoshal, 1997). Par exemple, bien que certains contextes de travail représentent un challenge plus ou moins grand pour les multiculturels selon leurs attributs personnels tels que la personnalité, les talents, les expériences culturelles et la nature de la tâche, la direction devrait tenir compte des multiculturels en composant les équipes mondiales. Je suggère que les organisations multinationales préoccupées par les résultats potentiels de multiculturels devraient se pencher sur des manières alternatives d'encapsuler leurs membres, au sens où il s'agit de faire correspondre la convenance et les demandes d'une équipe avec les caractéristiques diverses de ses salariés multiculturels.

Deuxièmement, ma recherche éclaire la formation de multiculturels et de mono-culturels. Les chercheurs ont souligné l'importance de la spécificité dans la formation (Mendenhall & Stahl, 2000). La recherche de la dissertation peut aider les multinationales à 'customiser' une formation selon les besoins spécifiques des salariés. En effet, les leçons que les multinationales retirent du fait d'employer des multiculturels pour des projets particuliers devraient être mises à profit pour former d'autres salariés multiculturels et mono-culturels pour des tâches similaires. La première étape pour une formation réussie est, bien sûr, d'évaluer le niveau de compétence et les caractéristiques d'un employé à l'égard des deux rôles dont la thèse suggérait qu'ils contribuent à l'efficacité de l'équipe. En utilisant la présente recherche comme un 'blueprint' pour l'intervention et la formation du personnel, les multinationales n'aideront pas seulement les multiculturels, mais plus important, elles aideront les mono-culturels à améliorer leur compétence à travers une formation sur mesure. En fin de compte, cet investissement améliorera la performance commerciale (Mendenhall & Stahl, 2000).

Finalement, en dépit d'un personnel de plus en plus multiculturel dans les

multinationales, une recherche peu abondante a examiné les facteurs contextuels liés à l'organisation et la manière dont ils affectent les aptitudes des multiculturels à remplir leur rôle de courtage dans les équipes mondiales. Peut-être le cadre de variables contextuelles qui a été élaboré peut-il servir d'indication pour les directeurs de ressources humaines dans les multinationales.

6. Perspectives Pour Une Recherche Ulérieure

Dans une mesure plus ou moins grande, la plupart des sociétés mondiales doivent faire face à quatre défis (ou dualités) : mondial vs local ; connaissances complexes dispersées qui doivent être intégrées ; l'image nationale de l'entreprise basée dans le pays vs portée mondiale et apprentissage mondial ; et innovation rapide dans les produits vs continuité dans les marques et canaux partout dans le monde. La thèse montre que les multiculturels permettent aux firmes mondiales de dépasser ces défis dans la mesure où elles intègrent efficacement leur succès commercial.

La thèse a été une première étape vers une meilleure compréhension des multiculturels dans les organisations. Elle visait à progresser au-delà des conceptualisations actuelles de multiculturalisme et de diversité démographique et d'identifier les rôles que les multiculturels jouent dans des équipes mondiales, ainsi que les facteurs contextuels qui influencent les multiculturels sur leurs lieux de travail. Partout, la thèse renforce l'importance du multiculturalisme dans le management international. En procédant à cette démonstration, la thèse pointe aussi vers une recherche ultérieure, à savoir : les multiculturels comme nouvelle approche du transfert de connaissance à distance (contextes virtuels) ; typologie du multiculturalisme, c'est-à-dire des multiculturels différents peuvent apporter des compétences différentes ; négociation de l'identité culturelle et son impact sur la performance de travail : le côté sombre du multiculturalisme comme groupe minoritaire dans les organisations.

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Abstract

This dissertation explores multiculturals in global corporations. To date, limited research helps us understand the role of multicultural individuals in facilitating the effective functioning of global teams. To investigate this under-examined phenomenon, this dissertation presents the first empirical study of the roles of multiculturals in organizations by facilitating 10-month ethnographic field work in two MNCs: a leading cosmetic MNC and an auditing and consulting MNC. This dissertation comprises three papers. The first paper develops the theoretical model of *bicultural competence and its impact on multicultural team effectiveness*. I define bicultural competence, determine its antecedents, and identify two roles that bi/multiculturals might play in promoting multicultural team effectiveness: boundary spanner and conflict mediator. The second paper examines *multiculturals' cultural brokerage role* for team work processes in global new product development teams: *how* multiculturals influence teams' knowledge processes and handle cross-cultural conflicts (not only collocated but also virtual between corporate headquarters and local subsidiaries). Multiculturals play a critical role that influence knowledge processes and cross-cultural conflict management within global teams where cultural and national heterogeneity seems more complicated than organizational researchers have recognized to date. The third paper investigates *boundary conditions* and *how* they impact multiculturals to enact their roles. I compare and contrast multiculturals in two MNCs in different industries. In particular, I identify boundary conditions that have impact on multiculturals in three levels of analysis: organizational; team; individual. Furthermore, I propose what factors challenge or enable multiculturals and accordingly, how multiculturals overcome challenges and use given opportunities in order to perform effectively or yield such challenges in organizations.

Key words:

Multiculturalism ; Cultural Brokerage; Bicultural competence ; Boundary spanner ; Conflict mediation ; Global Team Effectiveness ; Boundary conditions for work performing ; Comparative ethnography

Résumé

Cette thèse explore le rôle de multiculturels dans les multinationales. Les multiculturels sont connus pour leur compétence et leur potentiel culturels susceptibles de contribuer à l'efficacité d'une organisation. Peu d'études à ce jour ont examiné les multiculturels dans les multinationales et pratiquement aucune recherche n'a essayé de comprendre le rôle des multiculturels dans la facilitation d'un processus de travail d'équipe efficace. En vue d'étudier un phénomène qui n'a pas été suffisamment scruté, cette dissertation a mobilisé un travail de terrain ethnographique dans deux multinationales importantes sur une période de 10 mois. Elle étudie les rôles de multiculturels dans des équipes mondiales en se référant à trois contextes : (1) la compétence multiculturelle et son impact sur l'efficacité de l'équipe ; (2) comment les multiculturels influencent les processus de travail d'équipe ; (3) en quoi et comment des facteurs liés au contexte affectent l'aptitude des multiculturels à jouer des rôles.

Mot-clefs:

Multiculturalism ; Cultural Brokerage; Bicultural competence ; Boundary spanner ; Conflict mediation ; Global Team Effectiveness ; Boundary conditions ; Comparative ethnography