Balancing Emic and Etic: Situated Learning and Ethnography of Communication in Cross-Cultural Management Education

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We interrogate current approaches to cross-cultural management teaching and learning, which have been criticized for delivering a curriculum modeled on "cultural patterns." Such approaches could be described as etic or culture-general. We argue for re-centering cross-cultural management teaching and learning around a stronger emic or culture-specific component, balancing the current etic emphasis. This we call the "situated cultural learning approach" (SiCuLA), which focuses on the active role that the learner plays in the specific cultural contexts of learning. First, we propose to look at emic–etic as a continuum, as others have argued, rather than an opposition. Second, we reconceptualize cross-cultural management learning as situated learning and, third, we put forward ethnography of communication (EoC) as a learning epistemology that bridges the gap between situated learning and the classroom and workplace as learning contexts. More important, we propose a novel "situated curriculum" based on practical ideas to train students as culture learners. Last, we discuss some implications for developing an ethnography of communication-based curriculum for future cross-cultural management education.

Culture, often defined as shared beliefs, values, and norms (Lustig & Koester, 2003), is seen as an essential component of cross-cultural management (CCM) learning and education. Culture learning is becoming increasingly important as expanding world trade and globalization of industry, finance, and many professions are creating a

world in which cross-cultural interactions occur more frequently than at any time in the past (Bhawuk, 2009; Blasco, 2009). Yet, culture learning can be very challenging. A survey of the relevant literature argues that more than a quarter-century of research on CCM learning and training for business leaders has generated findings of limited practical use (e.g., Festing & Maletzky, 2011). Empirical studies (e.g., Blasco, 2009) also seem to indicate that certain approaches to culture teaching and learning may fail to develop students' understanding of the importance of cultural sensitivity in increasingly multicultural workplaces.

One of the reasons for this situation is that there

has been much reliance on "universal" cultural dimensions (cf. Hofstede, 2001; Trompennars & Turner, 1993) as an important tool for cultural analysis in CCM research (Jackson & Niblo, 2003). Although there are studies incorporating discussions on universal and culture-specific dimensions (Schwartz, 1994), a more influential trend in the CCM literature privileges the etic approach, based on outsiders' account of cultures (Pike, 1967), for example, viewing them as collectivistic or individualistic (Hofstede, 2001). This etic trend has been criticized for relying on polarized views (e.g., individualism vs. collectivism) and sophisticated stereotypes, and "[w]hile this sophisticated stereotyping is helpful to a certain degree, it does not convey the complexity found within cultures" (Osland, Bird, Delano, & Matthew, 2000: 65). Further, the etic perspective is also pervasive in CCM textbooks (Mead, 2005, among others), and the etic approach to teaching culture is prevalent in both undergraduate and postgraduate programs. This overemphasis on the etic approach is problematic as it has tended to overshadow the importance of emic knowledge. The *emic approach* is defined as the insiders' perspective on culture (from within a specific culture), which provides insight into cultural nuances and complexities (Pike, 1967, 1990) such as Fei's (1986) ethnographic study of *guanxi* (connections) in a small village in Southern China.

Some CCM researchers have, accordingly, called for incorporating more emic sources (Holden, 2004; Jack et al., 2013; Sinkovics, Penz, & Ghauri, 2008; Zhu, 2009a; Zhu & Hildebrandt, 2012) and using "native categories" (Buckley & Chapman, 1997; Harris, 2000) to study international and CCM programs. Likewise, in recent developments in communication studies, including intercultural communication, the emic perspective has animated the work of scholars such as Asante (2008); Baraldi (2006); Miike (2008); Gunaratne (2010); Kim (2010); Zhu, Nel, and Bhat (2006) and others, all of whom advocate the recovery of the emic perspective in social scientific research. Credit must also be given to those educators (e.g., Bird & Osland, 2004; Gannon & Pillai, 2009; Kleinberg, 2004) who have demonstrated through their work the value of the emic analytic approach. For example, Kleinberg (2004) taught the rich meanings of culture through incorporating ethnographic observation and reflexivity into student assignments. In a similar vein, Bird and Osland (2004) used videos and cases to teach cultural sense-making in order to

move students beyond sophisticated stereotypes of cultures.

Such scholars point to a somewhat underexplored research approach that uses emic resources to deepen the understanding of cultures in terms of awareness and sensitivity, with the goal of preparing students to interact more effectively in the multicultural workplace. Yet the emic approach still remains peripheral to CCM learning and education. Here, we make a case for the need to incorporate emics into the existing etic frameworks for a fuller understanding of culture(s). Specifically, we suggest viewing emics and etics as a continuum (Morris, Leung, Ames, & Lickel, 1999; Sackmann, 1991) rather than a dichotomy, and cultural teaching and learning as emerging from the creative and dynamic encounter of the emic and etic. To that effect, we propose combining situated learning (SL) and ethnography of communication (EoC) as novel approaches to promoting the emic as complementary to the etic.

Situated learning is defined as learning that takes place in the same context in which it is applied, thus learning and doing are inseparable (Lave & Wenger, 1991). *Ethnography of communication* is a specific ethnographic approach to the analysis of situated communicative practices (Hymes, 1974). Situated learning and ethnography of communication are especially useful for recovering the emic knowledge still underexploited in CCM learning. We are aware that literature in cross-cultural competence (e.g., Deardorff, 2009) has looked at skills required to operate effectively in multicultural environments. Here, we take a step back and look at what resources students can draw upon in the process of SL and what tools EoC offers for a reflexive understanding of "what is going on" within a cultural setting. Both incremental cultural knowledge and tools could be seen as underlying the process of competence development; however, for reasons of space, our work here will be limited to discussing the combined SL–EoC approach and selective benefits of its application to CCM teaching and learning.

The rest of the article is organized as follows: First, we argue the need for an emic–etic continuum for CCM learning and education. Second, we introduce SL and EoC as both epistemology and methodology for enabling a deeper appreciation of the emic dimension of culture. Third, we discuss how findings from the EoC tradition can be used as valuable emic resources complementary to the etic approach. We illustrate this point with practical

examples and the introduction of a novel situated cross-cultural curriculum. Finally, we draw conclusions about ways in which SL based on EoC can help improve learning and education in the CCM in class and beyond.

CONCEPTUAL UNDERPINNINGS

Integrating the Emic and the Etic

As early as 1967, the linguist Kenneth Lee Pike pointed to the need for incorporating emics in cross-cultural research as they reflect local theories and nuanced practices of cultures. According to Pike (1967), the etic approach only provides a starting point for analysis, which needs complementing by an in-depth emic perspective, with its detailed accounts of how insiders' understand their own practices, how they perceive and categorize the world, what has meaning for them, and how they explain things.

Although agreeing on the importance of emic insight, the cross-cultural psychologist Berry (1989) applied the emic approach slightly differently from Pike. Berry (1989) proposed the concepts of "imposed etic" and "derived etic." The *imposed etic* approach refers to the constructs or concepts that are derived from the researcher's home culture and are deployed in the study of other cultures. Jackson and Niblo (2003), for example, note that the majority of cross-cultural comparative research uses "imposed etic" designs. Although Berry views emic insight as an important initial step in comparative analysis, his "derived etic" approach sidelines the emic in the end. The debate around emic–etic approaches in general represents a clear divide, with preference for either the emic or the etic as the ultimate explanation (Harris, 2000), and with etics more prevalently practiced (Osland et al., 2000). We discuss both issues below.

The major cause for the emic–etic divide can be found in the different logics underpinning them (Morris et al., 1999). The emic approach mainly relies on findings from ethnographic immersion and observation and focuses on the richness of detailed descriptions. In contrast, the etic approach follows a functionalist logic and tends to employ surveys to compare cultures (Morris et al., 1999). Morris and colleagues (1999) challenge the dichotomic understanding of emic–etic and instead suggest that we should look at the emic and etic as points on a continuum. Further, they argue that integration of the two approaches overcomes their inherent weaknesses: the emic approach can be biased as it relies exclusively on researchers' interpretations, while the etic may miss out on the nuances and richness of culture(s). The emic–etic continuum conceptualization affords rich accounts of culture and organizational behavior (emic), which prepare the ground for the formulation of possible transcultural dimensions (etic). Specifically, the historicist logic underpinning the emic provides detailed interpretation by insiders, while the functionalist logic characterizing the etic seeks transhistorical generalizations useful for comparing cultures (Morris et al., 1999; see also Sackmann, 1991 for a detailed discussion of the strengths and limitations of a combined emic–etic approach).

In light of the above discussion, we propose that the emic can complement the etic in two distinct ways. First, the emic can provide in-depth understanding of cultural preferences. For example, Zhu and Hildebrandt (2012) have suggested introducing emic resources as components of linguistic repertoires (following Hymes, 1974) to complement the etic approach to cultural learning. They note that Hall's (1976) high- and low-context cultural framework is useful in characterizing the Chinese business writing style as "indirect." Yet, a complementary emic analysis of texts can provide nuanced and rich explanations. Zhu and Hildebrandt found that the "indirect" Chinese style actually indicates a *qing* (positive affect) persuasive orientation. Specifically, Chinese managers interviewed by the authors identified two types of *qing*, that is, respect and warmth. The expression of *qing* requires the use of specific forms of linguistic politeness (e.g., certain expressions for greetings). These emic findings offer a more sophisticated explanation as to "why" certain linguistic choices, and hence rhetorical styles, are preferred by Chinese managers.

The second insight is that emic knowledge can provide the basis for new discoveries about cultures. As Li (2012) notes, all etic theories and concepts (i.e., both Western and non-Western) have derived from emic sources or were originally emic. For example, certain cultural dimensions have emerged from studies in Western contexts (e.g., Hofstede's individualism vs. collectivism), while other dimensions were originally non-Western emics (e.g., Hofstede's long-term vs. short-term dimension based on Confucian work dynamism[1]).

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[1] Hofstede's long-term orientation is based on the research findings from a project conducted by a group of Hong Kong re-

This phenomenon suggests that emic insights could eventually generate etic dimensions. For example, following the Chinese Taoist philosophical principles of *Yin* (femininity) and *Yang* (masculinity), Fang (2012) conceptualizes (every) culture as possessing inherently paradoxical value orientations. However, we also need to be aware that as soon as emic insights turn into etic, as in the case of the above examples, they tend to exhibit the limitations typically associated with etic dimensions. As Hymes (1967) notes, etic concepts are usually abstract and may pose problems for application if contextual factors (emics) are not taken into consideration. The emic and etic are thus intertwined, representing a continuum in which emics serve as a source for (potentially) etic developments.

The exploitation of emic insights and findings as sources of knowledge and in-depth cultural learning requires further conceptual scaffolding, which is provided by situated learning (SL) and ethnography of communication (EoC), as discussed in the following sections.

Situated Learning

We find that the construct of "situated learning" (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989; Lave & Wenger, 1991) is especially sympathetic to the call for a rebalancing of emic–etic, since SL honors situated knowledge (Brown et al., 1989: 32) and real-life practices (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Situated learning is a type of learning embedded in activity, context, and culture (Lave & Wenger, 1991). It is pertinent to note that SL originated from the epistemological legacy of learning through social interaction and development (e.g., works by Vygotsky, 1978, 1987; Leontiev, 1981), hence representing a major shift in learning theory from traditional views of learning as knowledge accumulation, toward a perspective of learning as emergent, social, and cultural (Brown et al., 1989; Greeno, 1998; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Salomon, 1996).

The literature on SL discusses three interrelated aspects of the application of the theory in practice that are highly relevant to our discussion: (a) the concept of authentic activities; (b) learning as an enculturation process; (c) and the situated curriculum. We briefly define each in turn and explain

their relevance to our discussion on CCM learning and education.

First Brown et al. (1989: 34) view "authentic activity" as important for situated knowledge and learning. Authentic *activities* are defined from the practitioner's or insiders' perspective as "the ordinary practices of the culture" (Brown et al., 1989) or the "daily routines" carried out by practitioners such as tailors sewing clothes (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Note that SL scholars focus on the local culture where examples of practice take place, such as what senior managers or engineers do in a certain organization (Brown & Duguid, 2001). "Practice" refers to specific activities and "the way in which work gets done. . ." (Brown & Duguid, 2001: 200). For example, how managers run and participate in business meetings and negotiations are types of "authentic activities." Such "authentic activities" are seen as important tools of learning, for example, in terms of language use and nonverbal communication mobilized by practitioners to perform effectively. Tools such as these are known as the symbolic artifacts of cultures (Vygotsky, 1978). These culture-embedded tools are also components of the *emic dimension*, which is underemphasized in the CCM literature (Weisinger & Salipante, 2000). Learners equipped with these tools are considered to have achieved deep learning, which is acquired progressively through engagement in daily routines (Lave & Wenger, 1991), and through real-life problem-solving (Hung, 2002).[2] Second, SL (Brown et al., 1989) views learning as enculturation in a particular social group or community through authentic activities and daily routines (e.g., becoming school children or office workers). In this process, "people are given the chance to observe and practice in situ the behavior of members of a culture," and subsequently "consciously or unconsciously adopt [their] behavior and belief systems" (Brown et al., 1989: 34). They also learn what a "legitimate" or "illegitimate" behavior is like in a particular activity. This emphasis on practice is also encouraged by Lave and Wenger (1991), who developed the concept of legitimate peripheral participation (LPP), defined as a process through which newcomers become mem-

searchers. See details in: Chinese Culture Connection. 1987. Chinese values and the search for culture-free dimensions of culture. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 18: 143–164.

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[2] We are aware that "authentic activities" are similar to real-world learning, which has already been applied to postgraduate and executive programs by some CCM educators (e.g., Kessler & Wong, 2009; Pless & Schneider, 2006). Situated learning, however, will help to further extend real-world learning by viewing learning as an enculturation process.

bers of a community initially by participating in simple, low-risk tasks that are nonetheless productive and necessary to further the goals of the community (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Through peripheral activities, novices become acquainted with the tasks, vocabulary, and organizing principles of the community (e.g., Markham, Larmer, & Ravitz, 2003; Utley, 2006).[3]

Enculturation via LPP is often applied as an effective principle for on-site learning in organizational contexts (e.g., Argote, 1999; Raelin, 1997; Raz & Fadlon, 2006; Saka-Kelmhout, 2010; Zhu, 2009b) to describe how novices learn to become full members of the community. However, "enculturation" does not imply that CCM students should become business practitioners while still in higher education. Brown et al. understood "enculturation" as the process of exposing students to the ways in which tools (e.g., language and other artifacts) are used in classroom-based authentic activities. From the analysis of such activities one can tease out ways in which practitioners look at the world and solve emergent problems. In addition, Brown and Duguid (1996) stress participation and view the classroom as a site of community (of learning) in which individual students participate, thus contributing to the development of their learning practice. For example, Brown and colleagues (1989) describe how real-world problem solving (e.g., in mathematics) can be transferred to classroom situations where students through active participation learn to adopt a practitioner's perspective. In particular, learners can alternate between novice and expert strategies in a problem-solving context, thus developing an awareness of the specifics of an expert's performance, and the need to make adjustments so as to see the world through the practitioners' perspective (Brown et al., 1989; Collins & Brown, 1988). Utley (2006), in her study of a postgraduate class in special education, showed that it is possible and fruitful to incorporate into the learning and teaching process students' input based on their real-world experience. This finding is especially relevant to the multicultural CCM classroom in the United States, Hong Kong, and

Australia, where students have access to emic, or expert knowledge about their own culture(s) and, at the same time, have the opportunity to learn from students from other cultures.

Third, SL relies on the application of a "situated or learning curriculum" (Lave & Wenger, 1991), which differs from a "teaching curriculum." The latter focuses on "learning mediated through an instructor's participation and relying on an external view of what 'knowing' is about" (Gherardi, Nicolini, & Odella, 1998: 280), while the former stresses learning through engagement and coparticipation in situated activities with other members of the community (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Gherardi and colleagues (1998) further explicate the concept of "situated curriculum" as "a specific form of social order that instructs the socialization of novices within the context of ongoing work activities" (Gherardi et al., 1998: 273). According to this perspective, the situated curriculum is embedded in the authentic activities and traditions of the practitioners' community as well as in the community of the CCM classroom, as noted earlier. A situated curriculum is the key to accessing and interpreting emic knowledge from the insider's perspective and is the model for new curriculum development for CCM programs.

As mentioned above, SL has not been systematically applied in CCM classroom contexts, where the majority of undergraduate and postgraduate programs are taught. To what extent can SL be applied to cultural learning in CCM education? To answer this question, we introduce EoC in the following section as a necessary methodological bridge between the reclaimed emphasis on emics discussed above and the development of a situated curriculum, the focus of the second part of this article.

RECOVERING THE EMIC THROUGH EoC

In this section we extend the purchase of the emic approach and SL in CCM education by introducing EoC, which is especially suited to learning culture as constructed in social interactions (Brislin & Cushner, 1995; Hymes, 1967). In the words of the British anthropologist Brian Street, culture is a verb: "a signifying process—the active construction of meaning—rather than the somewhat static, reifying or nominalising senses in which culture used to be employed in the discipline of anthropology, [and] is sometimes still used in some linguistics circles" (Street, 1993: 23). Cultural learning,

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[3] It must be noted that learning to become a full member through LPP and immersion in authentic activities is one of the key aspects that distinguishes SL from experiential learning (i.e., learning from experience, as in Kolb, 1984), or action research (as a natural way of acting and researching at the same time, especially in a flexible spiral process as in Argyris, 1994, and Lewin, 1946).

then, is about the activities in which social actors are involved, their everyday as well as their unique practices, the analysis of which reveals underlying values, beliefs, preferences and norms. After a brief introduction to ethnography, we concentrate on the features of EoC. In the discussion that follows, we also dwell on the synergetic link between EoC and SL.

EoC: An Ethnographic Approach to CCM Learning

As Fetterman (2010) points out, it is the focus on *emic description* and *interpretation* that makes ethnography suited to the appreciation of the richness of situated cultural practices. Among the various types of ethnography, there is one that has been devised specifically to study culture—embedded communicative practices both in class and on site (Barro, Joordan, & Roberts, 1998) and to which CCM students could be introduced relatively easily. Ethnography of communication is both an approach to the study of communication and a qualitative research methodology aimed at interpreting communicative phenomena by reflecting on the knowledge and system of meanings within a cultural group (Geertz, 1973; Hymes, 1964, 1974). Originating with Hymes (1962, 1974), EoC "brings together language and cultural practice by looking at *speaking* as a cultural system [. . .]; studies conducted in this tradition either start from a particular aspect of speaking and consider its ramifications for social life or they start with a theme such as marriage or role conflict and examine how these themes are illuminated through communication" (Barro et al., 1998: 80).

Here, we emphasize EoC's original analytic focus on *situated communication* as unfolding through local practices redolent of cultural meanings. Contrary to Schatzki (2001), who expounded a sophisticated social ontology of practice that takes precedence over language and discourse, through our emic–etic rebalancing act, we hope to reaffirm *the ontological priority of language and discourse*. We understand "knowing" as ensuing from theoretical input, reflective insight, and cultural constructions, and "human agents as the subjects and objects of knowledge [who] can establish a relative secure epistemological space to reflexively define stance towards knowledge or their actions" (Caldwell, 2012: 17). This is the epistemological rationale for our focus on the communicative nature of workplace practices and on the need for an approach to cultural learning and teaching that privileges (the analysis of) situated, embodied discourse, that is, language as action (Bargiela-Chiappini, Nickerson, & Planken, 2013: 7). It seems to us that an effective way of raising awareness of the complexity and, often, "messiness" of business practices, is to foster actual involvement in "learning-by-doing," which EoC enables through observation and analysis of (workplace) communicative activities.

Situated Cultural Learning: Students As Ethnographers

In a book-length study entitled *Language Learners as Ethnographers*, Roberts, Byram, Barro, and Street (2001) describe how undergraduate students are trained in EoC in order to equip them with the observation, analytic, and writing skills necessary to go out in the field and understand how individuals and groups conduct their daily activities, as well as what meanings they attach to them. Although the study targets language learners, much of the discussion around methodology and materials design could easily apply to CCM students as "culture learners." Roberts et al (2001: 11) treat language learning as a social practice; arguably, cultural learning is also a social practice, which involves developing "an analytic understanding of another group's system of meanings." This is essential knowledge for CCM students to be able to act and communicate as expert members in a (business) community. The planned learning envisaged in an ethnographic approach designed specifically for students with no background in anthropology or ethnography is personal and reflexive, based on the observation of everyday practices, and is structured in four categories (adapted from Roberts and colleagues, 2001: 42–43):

1. *Local social and cultural knowledge*: The students will develop an understanding of how situated cultural practices are organized around communication and social relations, as well as how local meanings are related to larger systems of meaning;
2. *Processes of interrogation and relativization*: A constant self-questioning attitude is developed in the students, who learn to interrogate their own assumptions, values, and beliefs and to critique systems of meaning often presented as normative, universal, or natural;
3. *Observation, social interaction, and analytic skills*: Students are helped to develop ethnographic skills, which they will apply to learning in and from the field;

4. *Personal development*: Mentioned by many students as one of the most important aspects of ethnographic training (Roberts et al., 2001: 43), the development of qualities of "initiative, autonomy self-confidence and flexibility" are not only necessary for learners as ethnographers but represent valuable additions to the professional profile of students both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

The above four general principles underpin the rationale behind the integration of EoC into a CCM curriculum founded on the learning philosophy of SL. For example, Principle 1 focuses on "authentic activities" in a specific cultural context, which for Roberts and colleagues (2001) means understanding the layered meanings of culture through observation. For example, gift giving in local German politics has political (hierarchy and power) and emotional (interpersonal or intercultural ties) implications within the local community. These levels of cultural meanings can be appreciated or decoded inductively through EoC. Principles 2–3 illustrate specific skills necessary to achieve deep SL, for example, reflexivity and critique. In particular, these skills will help students to understand culture in terms of "thick description" (Geertz, 1973), that combines detailed observation with interpretation (Barro et al., 1998). Students are thus encouraged to search for the meanings of culture and identify patterns of culture (e.g., beliefs and values). Principle 4 sums up the personal development of the trainee as an ethnographer. As a result of EoC training, contact with various authentic activities will lead to familiarization with "ways of doing" in specific contexts, thus progressively building cultural learning.

In line with Hymes (1974) and Roberts et al. (2001), we propose that CCM students as ethnographers could begin by observing, describing, and interpreting everyday situations as realized through discourse practices (or "authentic activities," in SL vocabulary) in settings familiar to the students. Observing discourse practices also includes analyzing written artifacts produced in the course of a certain activity. This aspect of EoC is particularly important for business students who are required to familiarize themselves with the compilation and interpretation of corporate documents, which fall under the category of unmediated discourse practices.

Barro et al. (1998: 80) applied EoC in their teaching and proposed a very useful list of conceptual and method units for their "Introduction to Ethnography" module, upon which we draw to design the ethnographic component of a CCM curriculum. In the following section, we single out individual items for discussion, such as "preparation for fieldwork," "participant observation," "ethnographic interviewing," and "recording and analyzing naturally occurring events," among others, as particularly relevant to the CCM classroom and to the preparation of students toward conducting ethnographic projects.

In addition, in order to ease students into SL and EoC, tutors can employ existing cultural toolkits that look at culture as constructed practices (see Hong, Morris, Chiu, & Benet-Martínez, 2000; Swidler, 1986). Real-life cases that can help sensitize students to cross-cultural issues can be found in some CCM textbooks. Other existing resources such as scenarios and simulations are also relevant and efficient transitional materials to prepare the ground for SL and EoC.

Situated Curriculum for CCM Learning

In light of SL principles (Brown et al., 1989; Lave & Wenger, 1991), we envisage a situated curriculum composed of two stages during which students progressively acquire and apply ethnographic skills. During Stage 1, students will conduct small ethnographic projects involving self-reflexive appreciation of aspects of enculturation in their own cultures in a range of familiar settings, for example, in a local community or social group, and will write short reports on what they have observed (e.g., cultural patterns and nuances), which they will present to the class. This stage also coincides with creating a classroom community (Brown et al., 1989). Students learn from each other and actively contribute to learning about their own culture as "experts," and are exposed to other students' cultures as "novices" (cf. discussion on LLP above). Classroom forums will be planned at regular intervals to nurture appreciation and critique of the specific knowledge that students demonstrate in their projects; suggestions by the teacher and peers will be offered on what to improve and how. In addition, a CCM classroom will also incorporate analysis and discussion of workplace data, such as meetings, presentations, negotiations, and interviews available from the literature on business discourse (see examples below).

To date, intra- and intercultural qualitative research on workplace interactions inspired by ethnography and discourse analysis have shown the value of emic knowledge as gained from the anal-

ysis of real-life work practices. Such insights could be usefully fed into the CCM curriculum alongside students' preparation for and execution of ethnographic projects (e.g., Salvi & Tanaka, 2011; Koester, 2004; Drew & Heritage, 1992; Yamada, 1992; Dhanania & Gopakumaran, 2005; Hong, Easterby-Smith, & Snell, 2006; Boden, 1994; Bargiela-Chiappini & Harris, 1997; Tanaka & Bargiela-Chiappini, 2011; Hanford, 2010; Nair-Venugopal, 2006; Paramasivam, 2007; Fujo, 2004; Tanaka, 2011; Chakorn, 2006; Kaul, 2012; Yotsukura, 2003; Zhu, 2005).

For example, one of the most sobering findings in ethnography-inspired research of business meetings, especially multicultural meetings, is that decision-making processes are almost inevitably messy and complex, and they may not lead to tangible outcomes within the context of a single meeting (Poncini, 2007; Samra-Fredericks, 2003, 2004). Observation and analysis of international management meetings have revealed the negotiated nature of real-life problem solving, where agreeing on "what the problem is" and "who owns it" exposes the limitations of simplistic problem-solving models found in the management literature (Angouri & Bargiela-Chiappini, 2011). Similarly, disagreement in business is relatively frequent and potentially damaging in organizational contexts: An emic approach allows researchers to capture the subtle, strategic discursive work of disagreeing parties in multiparty interaction (e.g., Angouri, 2012). An incorporation of some of the data (e.g., in tutorial activities) from these published works may offer students preliminary exposure to the real world of business practice while preparing them for Stage 2.

Stage 2 of the ethnographic component will see students equipped with basic ethnographic skills and ready to access workplace situations with a view to compiling emic accounts of one or more communicative practices therein. This stage concerns observing organizational routines and learning about the practitioners' perspective, which is part of the enculturation process envisaged by SL (Brown et al., 1998; Lave & Wenger, 1991). Observation of work practices will give students some idea of what practitioners do and how, and will prepare them to interpret and understand layered cultural meanings as an interactional accomplishment (Brislin & Cushner, 1995). In particular, students will be encouraged to observe, describe, and interpret unmediated communicative practices, such as meetings, negotiations, and presentations, as well as mediated communicative practices, such as bulletins, reports, circular letters, e-mails, advertisements, websites, and Facebook.

Cross-cultural management students introduced to EoC will also learn to gain exposure to multiple perspectives for a more sophisticated understanding of interactional dynamics. Interviews are probably the most widely used ethnographic method for gathering participants and nonparticipants' reflections in management and organization studies (Saka-Kelmhout, 2010). Both ethnographic accounts and interviews afford access to emic practitioners' perspectives, which are essential to an approach to CCM education based on SL (Brown et al., 1989; Lave & Wenger, 1991). Following Raz and Fadlon (2006), business practitioners can also be involved in the ethnographic component as experts, and therefore, "teachers." In the new organizational contexts, students learn as ethnographers by immersing themselves in the practitioners' settings and watching them work, which paves the way for future situated and life-long learning after graduation.

HOW CAN EMIC KNOWLEDGE IMPROVE LEARNING IN THE CCM CLASSROOM?

Training students in EoC as part of a new situated CCM curriculum is seen as the first practical step toward bolstering the emic dimension in CCM. In this section, we suggest that the synergetic potential of SL and EoC can be best realized through students' engagement in practices that develop the interactional skills necessary to work in a multicultural workplace. As empirical research in cross-cultural management shows (Hong & Snell, 2006; Todeschini, 2011), understanding "from within" the values that sustain workplace practices is an essential aspect of CCM. How to collaborate in everyday activities with fellow managers whose understanding of work and corporate life is different from one's own raises the question of how CCM education can begin to equip students preparing for the workplace with transferable interpersonal skills that will ease their access into challenging multicultural contexts.

On his personal webpage, Schank (2012), one of the founders of cognitive science, writes: "There are only two things wrong with education: 1. What we teach; 2. How we teach it." Schank and pedagogues who share his pragmatics of learning perspective insist on the need to re-introduce learning-by-doing, whereby teachers facilitate stu-

dents in "knowing how," rather than imparting theoretical and factual knowledge, or "knowing that" (Schank, 2010: 170). This understanding of learning and teaching, sits well with an SL epistemology, which informs the "situated curriculum" for the CCM classroom that we introduce below. Schank's provocative stand on education is a good starting point for our discussion on "situated learning" because it takes us straight to the heart of the question: How and what should we teach in the cross-cultural management classroom? This in turn demands that we reflect on the nature of the learning process and the role of the teacher. Given the constraints of a short article, we cannot reproduce here the history and the debates around theories of learning and their applications. We are aware that the roots of cognitive science are much deeper and varied than our discussion is able to reflect, but for the purpose of our argument we find Schank's (2010) "pragmatics of learning" a useful blueprint for a reflexive appraisal of current cross-cultural management pedagogy.

Specifically, Schank raises questions that are highly pertinent to how we frame a case for SL in CCM learning and education. Regarding Schank's first question: "What kinds of learning situations occur naturally?" the EoC approach promotes the use of authentic resources from the workplace or from the relevant literature cited above (e.g., recordings of communicative events and copies of corporate documents), illustrating, for example, how business people strike up a conversation at a trade exhibition in China (Yang, 2012). Exposure to these materials is essential for practicing cultural sense-making through reflection (Bird & Osland, 2004). In addition, students in multicultural CCM classes would provide a rich source for peer learning, as noted earlier. A lesser "authentic" but also relevant source of emic insight, readily available for classroom use, are films and other visual materials (Mallinger & Rossy, 2003). All these types of data form a solid empirical domain through the analysis of which students can begin to interrogate current etic approaches to cultural learning with a view to developing a reflexive, critical attitude toward extant cross-cultural knowledge and an appreciation of the contribution of the emic–etic continuum perspective.

With regard to Schank's second question: "How can we focus education [and training and e-learning] on those types of situations?", we argue that students will benefit from viewing practitioners as "teachers" and learning from them as they go about their daily work activities. This realizes the principle of learning about culture as "doing" (Street, 1993). Students are also encouraged to develop a critical attitude toward themselves as observers (e.g., their own presuppositions, norms, and values) and "observed" (specific vs. universal meanings). Students who have been encouraged and helped to adopt a self-reflexive attitude toward the subject they observe, as well as toward their own learning process, are also given the means to engage critically with the CCM literature. This is an important objective for any new CCM curriculum at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels (see further details in the following section).

Turning now to Schank's third question: "What would teaching look like if we did this?", we propose that CCM teaching is no longer a purely instructional process. Instead, we view teaching as an interactive and situated-learning process in a (multi)cultural context, with both learners and teachers deeply involved in and inspired by EoC. Specifically, in Table 1, we propose tentative guidelines to illustrate this process, in which the emic complements the etic, in light of the theoretical underpinnings of SL and EoC.

As shown in Table 1, in a situated cultural context, the repositioning of the student-as-ethnographer and the teacher-as-mentor or mediator, both embedded in contexts of practice, becomes a possibility. Teachers play the role of mentor, incorporating in their approach both emic and etic perspectives for a comprehensive view of cultural knowledge. However, the learning target and content differ: Etic learning can draw from, for example, the derived etic approach described earlier (Berry, 1989) as a starting point for discussion and debate, with the purpose of stimulating the need for in-depth emic understanding (Morris et al., 1999). In turn, an emic approach can be used to follow up specific issues or problems identified in the earlier discussion and concerning the nuances of culture(s), for example, how a networking pattern occurs in a certain high- (e.g., New Zealand) or low-context cultures (e.g., Indian; Zhu et al., 2006). Subsequently, a balanced comparison of both etic and emic findings across a number of cultures can take place (see also Zhu et al., 2006).

To help students understand the emic approach, the teacher acts as an EoC facilitator and mentor by not only introducing basic skills for classroom ethnography (e.g., observation and interviewing skills) but also, and more important, by encourag-

TABLE 1
Proposed Outline for Situated CCM Learning and Education: Incorporating the Emic–Etic Continuum

Learning processes	Learning objectives
Teachers' roles	
Teacher as facilitator and mentor: immersing students in realistic cultural contexts or cases, facilitating multiple perspectives incorporating both the emic and etic approaches.	• Understanding real-life cultural issues via self-awareness of own and other's cultures as ethnographers do (emic); • Accepting multiple perspectives (etic & emic).
Teacher as mediator: interacting with students and trying to examine with students ill-defined and ambiguous problems (Brown et al., 1989); classroom as site of debates; understanding the pros and cons of emic and etic approaches.	• Understanding the nature of the problem as open-ended and "messy" as in real-life situations (emic); • Encouraging student participation and contribution; • Applying culture (etic) theory as a point of reference.
Teacher introduces tools including authentic discourse data, such as meetings and practitioners' views obtained from interviews, dealing with the data as an ethnographer of communication would (Roberts et al., 2001); facilitating the acquisition of EoC techniques, as well as tools for cultural comparison.	• Developing learning tools in emic contexts; • Developing etic tools for cultural comparison; • Achieving in-depth understanding by incorporating real-life views and practices; • Encouraging learning from experts.
Students' roles	
As mentees: preparing cognitively for a process of cumulative learning via active engagement and participation (Roberts et al., 2001).	• "Unlearning" one's culture and turning familiar "anecdote" into "illuminating" insight (Roberts et al., 2001); • Discovering and developing new perspectives of culture as ethnographers by applying inductive skills to the interpretation of authentic data and experts' views.
As ethnographers: achieving cultural knowledge incrementally (about own and other cultures) through a sequence of situated-learning experiences.	
Collaborating with peers, giving and receiving feedback from peers; regarding peer feedback as sources of mediation (Vygotsky, 1978) and resources for cultural learning (Holden, 2004).	
Course/Learning plans	
Course plans should be seen as part of the physical resources and artifacts (Vygotsky, 1978), focusing on learning actions.	• Understanding how to make use of multiple tools, including course plans and emerging "real-world" discourses and interactions.
Learning strategy should focus on broadening and appropriating "real-world" situated contexts (Brown et al., 1989).	
Learning sites	
In class (Stage 1): preparation toward a cumulative learning process attempting to understand the emic practice of cultures as ethnographers do.	• Understanding learning as an ongoing situated process and emic perspectives in relation to specific contexts; • Understanding classroom learning as a step-up process in preparing students toward real-life learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991).
In the field (Stage 2): Conducting small group projects in the field (e.g., observing and interviewing experts) during the semester, practicing and even challenging what was learned in class as part of a cumulative learning process.	
Assessment incorporating SiCuLa	
• Cumulative assessment in class: via a series of assessed tutorials, peer evaluation, feedback, reflections, and oral presentations.	• Assessing cumulative and continued learning (e.g., via SiCuLa), which will carry on toward real-world experience in the CCM program and beyond even after graduation; • Encouraging students to participate in the assessment process.
• Cumulative assessment in the field: compilation of a portfolio composed of a field journal that includes reflections on field notes, interview, and interactional excerpts.	

Note. SiCuLa = situated cultural learning approach.

ing students to practice ethnography in the classroom, making good use of the students' lived experiences as sources of learning (Roberts et al., 2001), especially in the culturally diverse classroom. For example, students could be encouraged to describe, analyze, and reflect on educational activities in which they participate, such as seminars, or project work, as well as social activities they might engage in while on campus. Through coaching in reflexive participation and sharing, students gradually "acquire the tools to transform the 'anecdote' about personal experience into an illuminating example of cultural practice" (Roberts et al., 2001: 155). In addition, the teacher can also encourage students to discover new emic cultural phenomena, which may have etic or universal implications (as in Fang, 2012). In this learning process, teachers are also ethnographers working together with students in self-reflexive meaning-making and critique of their own cultural assumptions.

The student takes the role as a mentee and ethnographer, for example, by observing cultural patterns and noticing beliefs and values emerging in practice through small EoC projects. Thus students begin to acquire cultural knowledge about their own contexts of practice (e.g., the CCM classroom, the family, a social group they belong to such as a sports club), leading to the development of a deeper insider's understanding, which they share in the CCM classroom. In other words, students share in the teaching role, alternating between the expert's perspective (when reflecting on their own cultures), and the novice's perspective (when learning about other students' cultures).

Within the new relationships between teacher and students, and teaching and learning, attentiveness to learning by doing is sustained by reflection and dialogue, first practiced within the classroom (Stage 1, e.g., doing ethnography in class as in Roberts et al., 2001), and then taken outside through the workplace-based project (Stage 2 observation in an organization as in Barro and colleagues, 1998, and Kleinberg, 2004).

In light of the cultural learning curriculum sketched out thus far, CCM course assessment should aim to test both etic and emic knowledge acquisition. In addition to conventional types of assessment such as essay and multiple-choice questions to test etic cultural theory, we also need to incorporate tools that assess emic knowledge and transferrable skills of reflexivity, criticism, and analysis. For example, we propose to assess (the process of) learning at both Stages 1 and 2 of

postgraduate programs through peer feedback on classroom participation and presentation of project plans and project findings.[4] In this way, students take an active part in evaluation as a component of their learning process. Especially in Stage 2, students can be asked to develop a portfolio composed of ethnographic notes detailing learning activities (observation, participation, interviewing, etc.), and a reflective journal on a topic of their choice. We are aware that some of these forms of assessments have already been applied in CCM programs; however, we place an emphasis on a combined assessment that is cumulative, continued, and peer-based in order to stimulate student involvement and capture the development of multiple aspects of (cultural) learning. To this end, we also suggest assessing students' ability as cultural learners and testing their ethnographic skills of appreciating culture and inferring cultural meanings as discussed in Kleinberg (2004). Feedback can also be solicited from practitioners when student on-site projects are completed and findings are presented to practitioners involved in the ethnographic setting. During this learning process, a twofold objective can be achieved: (1) the short-term goal of learning and effective intercultural adjustments in specific cultural contexts; and (2) the long-term goal (e.g., through the reflective ethnographic diary and so on) of increasing bias awareness and cultural sensitivity by exposing (cultural) assumptions and prejudices.

Last, in terms of Schank's final question, "If what we know about how learning works is antithetical to how school works, then what can we do?" (Schank, 2010: 160), we believe a possible tension may surface involving emic–etic perspectives in CCM learning and education. Here, we briefly address this tension in relation to SL and EoC. We maintain that the etic cultural perspective can be incorporated into the learning process as one of the voices instead of the dominant voice, as it is often the case at present. As shown in Table 1, one of the teacher's roles is to encourage classroom discussion and debate, during which etic views can be appraised and discussions of textbook-based cultural dimensions can be turned into an opportunity for eliciting alternative views. In addition, in light of SL and EoC, we suggest that the emic–etic tension can be resolved following the

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[4] As one of our reviewers noted, to be effective at the undergraduate level, peer assessment requires dedicated training.

sequence of cultural learning: from intracultural (learning about one's own culture), through cross-cultural (learning about other cultures), to intercultural learning (interacting with cultural others).

The emic (intracultural) perspective can subsequently be applied to learning about a different culture (e.g., a Chinese student learning in the role of ethnographer-analyst about French management practices, such as leadership style, in a French organization). This process is likely to generate conflict in the students' understanding of etic and emic, since they are likely to hold etic or sophisticated stereotypical views about other cultures. However, since students will have had the experience of learning about their own culture beforehand, they may find it easier to learn about other cultures "from within," hence alternating between etic and emic perspectives (Brown et al., 1989). According to Zhu (2000), based on her study of Chinese students learning English business communication genres, this process is not only possible, but also, more important, it can help students identify the gap between their cultural knowledge and that of the practitioners operating in a different culture. With a developed learning attitude such as described above for understanding culture(s), one can progressively learn to interact with a range of cultures, negotiating the meanings of intercultural interactions (Nardon & Steers, 2008). We are not suggesting here that this process of learning is the only appropriate one (see Sackmann, 1991, for the etic-to-emic learning order); rather, we see the emic-to-etic cultural learning sequence as a possible way of addressing the emic–etic tension through EoC, including appreciation of the "thick description" of cultural practices (Geertz, 1973) and of "the workings of culture" (Sackmann, 1991).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

We have proposed a new theoretical perspective on cross-cultural management (CCM) learning and teaching based on situated learning (SL) and ethnography of communication (EoC), which we have called a "situated cultural learning approach" (SiCuLA). Specifically, as a major contribution to CCM learning, we have challenged the existing dyadic opposition of emic–etic as unhelpful and misleading. We have argued that CCM learning needs conceptualizing and redefining as a situated learning process in which students play the

role of ethnographers and learn by doing and by interacting with the target culture(s) as a point of departure toward achieving cross-cultural competence. As an additional contribution, we have enriched the understanding of SL with EoC in order to develop a practical framework for conceptualizing CCM learning and education both in- and outside the classroom. To this end, we have proposed a situated cultural learning curriculum, reflecting the emic–etic continuum and incorporating EoC.

In particular, we maintain that the application of the emic perspective based on SL and EoC elucidates four key strengths for in-depth learning in CCM. First, by viewing students as ethnographers and equipping them with basic ethnographic skills, we established a close link between real-world practice and CCM learning (e.g., students learn to apply the ethnographers' interpretative methods in class as well as in the field), thus providing rich tools (e.g., real-world discourse data, peer feedback) for students to learn about communicative (management) practices in situated (cross)-cultural contexts.

Second, we have suggested EoC as a methodological bridge between the theoretical construct of SL and CCM practices, thus also filling a gap in organizational learning in general. As discussed earlier, extant research thus far has focused on only the on-site learning of novices from experts by way of legitimate peripheral participation (LPP). We have argued that this type of situated learning could happen much earlier, in the CCM classroom community. Specifically, we view the classroom as a site of learning that reflects "real-world" practices and also forms an integral part of real-world learning. In our situated curriculum, we suggested ways of furthering classroom learning with individual, on-site projects, in which students learn from each other as well as from practitioners about culture-specific (organizational) practices in relation to larger systems of meaning (Roberts et al., 2001).

Third, in light of a situated cultural learning process, we have suggested student evaluation through cumulative assessment. Just as students are encouraged to contribute to mutual learning, they are also encouraged to participate in peer assessment and feedback. In addition, their onsite learning in the real world will also be assessed with a cumulative portfolio focusing on acquisition of ethnographic skills, critique, and reflection relating to deep cultural learning (Brown et al., 1989).

Last but not least, we are very much aware of the

emic–etic tension that may arise from implementing a curriculum that gives ample space to the emic. This tension is likely to surface, for example, when students are exposed to CCM textbooks that rely heavily on the etic perspective. Accordingly, we suggest incorporating into the resources for classroom discussion and debate the etic perspective as an outsider's voice. In addition, fostering a learning process from intracultural through cross-cultural to intercultural based on increasingly deeper observation, self-awareness, and reflection will encourage students' development along the etic-to-emic sequence.

In order to extend cross-cultural learning, we call upon further theoretical development and empirical research. Theoretical aspects such as the role of mediation and cultural tools in a situated curriculum could be explored further. This study also has theoretical implications for investigating the tension between the etic and emic, which is likely to emerge during the cultural learning process. We support the conceptualization of emic–etic as a continuum, and in light of this notion, we have explored how in CCM learning the emic perspective can complement the emic as in the 2-stage CCM learning in Table 1. We hope that the continuing emic–etic dialogue will lead to developing new approaches for textbook design and new forms of assessment that reflect student learning as a cumulative process.

In the long term, our position here on SL for CCM, if heeded, could change the nature of research and learning in this area and, with it, the contents of CCM textbooks and curricula, both of which are long overdue.

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