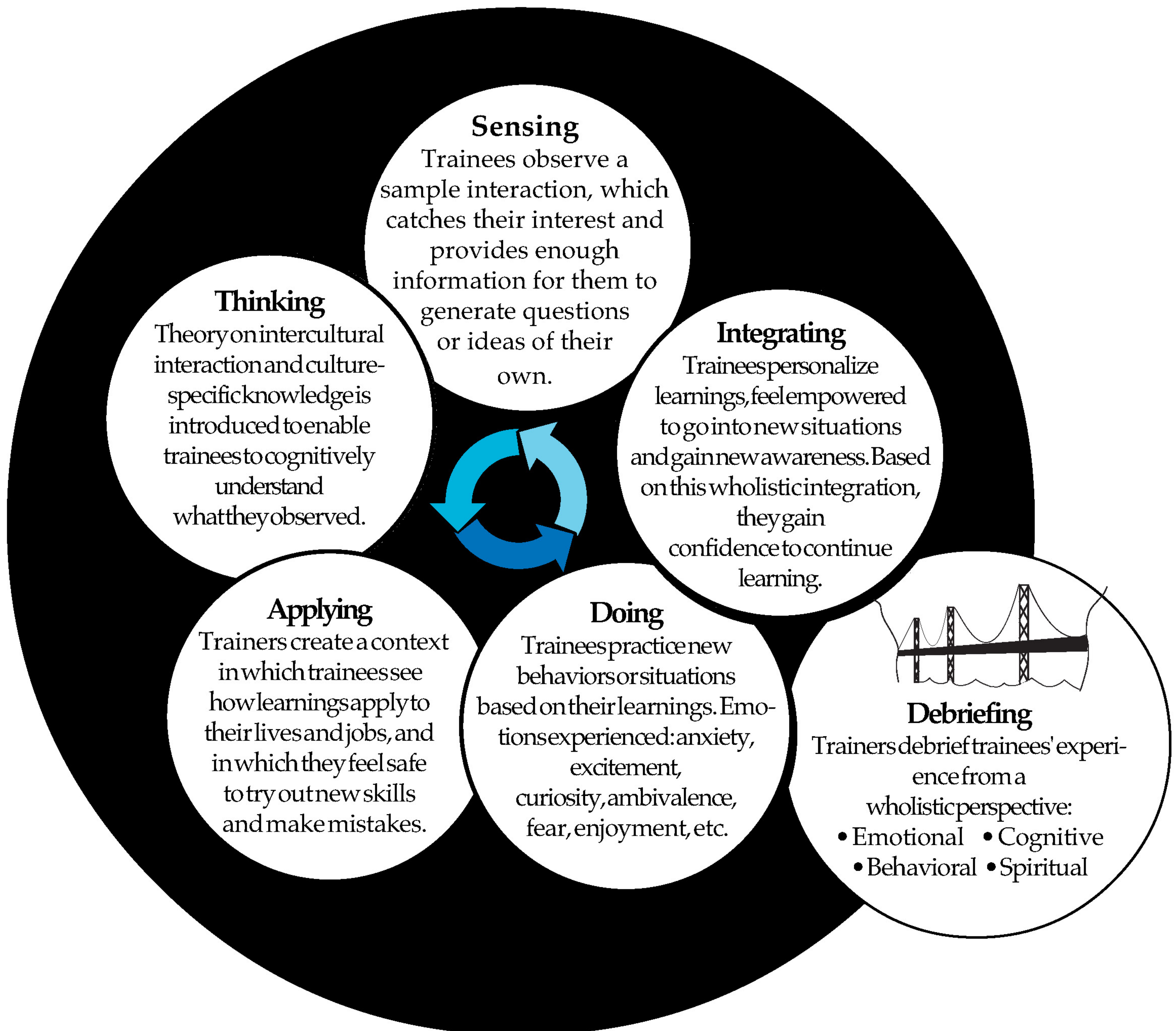


The *STADI* Approach To Intercultural Learning



Definitions for Stages of STADI Approach

STADI Approach is a method for learning to be effective in a new culture, or for teaching effectiveness in a new culture. The emphasis is on personal cross-cultural effectiveness: finding ways to be effective which are personally challenging yet comfortable, which maintain and do not compromise personal strengths and identity, but which stretch people to develop new skills and even expand their values.

The process for the STADI Approach is to give participants the experience of entering a new culture, including that of the “multicultural”: as organic and natural a process as is possible. For example, participants are not “given” a list of values up-front (i.e. traditional classroom learning), but are given the opportunity to observe interactions in the target culture and “discover” the values on their own, with the advantage of “experts” or “resources” to assist them with making sense of their experience. Guidelines of what “clues” to look for, then guided debriefing of experience, teach participants both about the target culture and about how to learn to be effective in any new culture. The assumptions are that there are culture-general methods for entering, learning, finding one’s own place in any culture, and that culture-specific knowledge and skills are also crucial. A combination is needed, and there is significant overlap.

There are five stages to the STADI Approach: **Sensing**, Thinking, Applying, Doing and Integrating. The idea is that any adult learner will need to experience all five of these stages in order to thoroughly incorporate learning into behavior and emotions. The stages are intended as a guide or checklist for designing cultural learning activities and programs. These stages are fairly sequential, and a training design usually starts with the “sensing” stage. However, the process can begin at any stage, and often the stages overlap with one another. They can also occur out of sequence. Nipporica hopes that people will not become overly dogmatic about the sequencing of and separate existence of each of the stages. The key idea is that the purpose of each of the stages should be accomplished in the training program or activity.

The word “stadi” is a Latin term, from which the term “stadium” is derived in English. It means “to observe from a distance” or “to measure distance”, an idea which we feel applies very much to the process we go through when entering a culture for the first time.

A description of each of the stages follows, along with a list of sample techniques which can be used in each of the stages. Many of the techniques can be used to accomplish the objectives of many of the stages; it is how the techniques are used and debriefed that makes the technique appropriate for one stage of learning or another.

Sensing: To observe monocultural or cross-cultural interaction; to create an attraction and initial/superficial interest; preliminary jumping off point for questions, giving people enough information so they have some questions to ask; create a receptivity to or desire for learning; to lay the groundwork/till the soil for helping people to learn what they don’t know; to create a chance to react; to focus attention; an initial, preliminary experience.

Techniques: Demonstration by the trainers, resource people or participants themselves;

spatial exercises: give participants the experience of being in a train or an office; show pictures; play music; peruse question lists (the questions people don't know to ask); use instruments for helping people to feel the emotion; create a comfort level and then a loss of comfortable space, so people can feel the difference; back-to-back exercises – drawing – so people can see and feel the importance of accurate communication, of being on the same wavelength, operating from similar assumptions; building with blocks; co-trainer debriefs self & shares experiences; culture comparative; mapping; watching a video.

Thinking: To explain what people have seen; to assist participants with organizing their thoughts into a framework; to provide information, data, facts, as in an area briefing; to map out the “cultural clues” to look for; to have participants draw or define what they do in their own cultures, and the trainers present the contrast, the theory / process in the target culture; draw analogies; illustrations, patterns, relationships, groups; we help participants to make the connections appropriately, to make some sense of the initial experience; to prevent incorrect evaluations and judgments and guide interculturally sensitive thinking on the part of the participants; to present a logical order; reading and discussing; analyzing what we have seen.

Techniques: Present theory interactively, through dialogue or a quiz; to introduce a model, verbally or a 3-dimensional model/machine that participants can work with and manipulate; the idea of the various “eyes” through which you can look at an interaction: organizational eye, cultural eye, interpersonal eye, etc.; to introduce and analyze other intercultural successes and failures; to present skill lists; to help participants to discover paradigms to organize their experiences; to use questions, blocks and labels as methods to assist with the organizing; to take people outdoors, to get out of the traditional “classroom” mode, as this stage is closest to “lecture mode”; *Gumby* in his various *ba*; pin-wheels.

Applying: To analyze; to relate the sensing and the theory to on-the-job reality; to create empathy — help participants to feel how it feels; heavily cognitive & intuitive (not yet implemented); partialistic; manipulating people and things; participants make the connection to their lives and jobs, realize how this new reality / place will affect them personally {AHA!}; participants are outside looking in.

Techniques: Strategize / plan; set up a room, a train or a car and move through *kamiza*; put labels on *PlaySkool* people and move them around, discussing what each of them are doing and saying at different junctures; different *ba* (i.e., in evening) impacts what the people say; *Chutes & Ladders*: helping participants to distinguish what would be a ladder / skill and what would be a chute / step backwards at different times and in different situations / places, how you can get ahead by waiting; a *ma* / physical exercise; watch for the seat on the merry-go-round, wait for the right timing, then jump on quickly; *Gumby* / *Legos* / *Playskool* / blocks with labels; analyzing a case study, particularly using the *Cultural Detective*.

Doing: To attempt; to practice the skill; to move; to speak; to attempt new behaviors; to try on new clothes; to “be in” the situation; inside looking on and out; participant/observer; to do something on the job or in real life and later discuss it/reflect on it.

Techniques: Role play, with trainers, with other participants, with real life people who come into training; speaking a language; living a real life/performing a real job; empathetic movement — *aikido*, *aizuchi*, drumming; painting, gardening, folding; participating in simulations — *Redundancia* / *Ecotonos*; exercises and speeches; OJT practice; homework — do your life more Japanese; dinner.

Integrating: To personalize learnings and experience; self reflection on strengths, tendencies, improvement areas; an on-going process — experimenting to find the correct fit as we grow and the situation changes (skills required when we’re a “new” immigrant are different than expectations of us at the three-year mark of our assignment); creating a sense of progress, a marker for ourselves and a pat on the back; mapping the future and maybe the past and present; beginning/ending ceremonies and commemoration; absorbing; building muscles; refining technique.

Techniques: Personal/individual time for reflection on past/future; dialogue with a partner on past/future; *tansu* drawers: packing what we’ll take with us and what we’ll leave behind; visualizing the ideal – folding, drawing; ceremony/ritual; burning old (*oni wa soto*); visualize/draw your power position/when you feel centered; follow-up/benchmarking; mapping; self-revelation; use props of their industry (making cardboard computers which are outwardly/inwardly “Japanized” or “interculturalized”; music; go outdoors to move/feel/reflect.