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FACTORS AFFECTING EXPATRIATES' PERFORMANCE WHEN THEY WORK WITH THAI GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS: AN INITIAL EXPLORATION

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Commerce and Management at Lincoln University

By Sirinart Theenanondh

Lincoln University 2005
ABSTRACT

Abstract of a thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of M.C.M

FACTORS AFFECTING EXPATRIATES’ PERFORMANCE WHEN THEY WORK WITH THAI GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS: AN INITIAL EXPLORATION

By Sirinart Theenanondh

Effective performance of expatriates is recognised as a major determinant in the success or failure of organisations. The literature on expatriate management emphasises that the intercultural adjustment and intercultural communication competence of the expatriates, as well as cross-cultural training for the expatriates and the family/spouse, are important indicators for expatriates’ effectiveness. In addition, it has been shown that expatriates who develop network ties with host nationals can adjust to a foreign environment more easily than those who do not. However, there has been no empirical study regarding this in Thai government organisations.

The purpose of this exploratory, qualitative study is to determine the factors affecting the performance of the expatriates working with the Ministry of Labour (MOL) in Thailand and to propose suggestions to the MOL on how to better manage the expatriates working for them. Drawing on a number of intercultural adjustment and intercultural communication theories, the Map, Bridge, Integrate (MBI) model is utilised to unpack the cultural differences between expatriates and host nationals. The strength of ties, based on social network theory, is drawn on to explain the pattern of relationships between expatriates and host nationals.
A Pilot study, using an email questionnaire with eight United Nations (UN) and Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) expatriates working with the MOL, was conducted to refine the adequacy of the reference and data collection strategies. The semi-structured, in-depth interviews were then carried out to examine the attitudes and perceptions of expatriates about their adjustment and adaptation to the cultural diversity that impinges on their performance. The participants were 14 international expatriates working with the MOL during the time of data collection. All interviews were tape-recorded, transcribed and analysed using interpretive content analysis, discourse analysis, and protocol analysis.

This empirical study provides robust evidence that besides the factors deliberately investigated in this study, there are many other factors that influence expatriates performance when working in different cultures. It was found that these expatriates understand cultures more than they had before they came to Thailand. However, the degree of adjustment and accomplishment they varied, partly resulting from personality characteristics and their home country values.

Subsequently, the themes emerging from the findings – the personality characteristics of the expatriates and national values - are also discussed. Furthermore, this study will provide guidance to the Thai government about what to consider when receiving international expatriates into their organisations and how to manage cultural diversity in their workplace. Finally, this study proposes some ideas for future research.

**Keywords:** expatriates, intercultural adjustment, intercultural communication, ties strength, cross-cultural training, national values, personality characteristics, government organisation
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<td>Anticipatory Adjustment</td>
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<td>Bangkok</td>
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<td>CCT</td>
<td>Cross-cultural Training</td>
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<td>CS</td>
<td>Cognitive Skills</td>
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<td>Instrumental Ties</td>
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<td>Japan International Cooperation Agency</td>
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<td>Local Cultures</td>
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<td>MBI</td>
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<td>Orientation to Knowledge</td>
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Justification

Success of a multicultural organisation is not just dependent on its excellence and reputation. Long-term commitment, staff continuity and its cultural composition are also very important (Page, 1994). Effective performance of expatriates is widely recognised as another major determinant in the success or failure of an organisation. Multinational organisations use expatriates because they lack qualified management and technically skilled human resources, and need to maintain trust with key foreign businesses. Other reasons are to control local operations and for important representational and management development purposes (Brewster, 1997; Manev & Stevenson, 2001; Suutari & Brewster, 2001; Tung, 1987; Welch, 2003).

The internationalisation of organisations in both the public and private sectors normally involves negotiation, agreement and exchange between people from different national cultural values and traditions (Harris & Ghauri, 2000). It is noted that the different experiences, insights, approaches and values, as well as preferences for different management practices, contribute to the many different perspectives and performance at work that can lead to problems with interaction (Abramson, Lane, Nagai, & Takagi, 1993; Wilson, 1994). Americans, for instance, negotiate by encouraging the other side to exchange information expeditiously and prefer time efficiency. They focus on the points of disagreement and attempt to solve them. Their future relationships rely on legal contracts. Japanese, however, negotiate by attempting to develop strong interpersonal relationships and legal contracts are not acceptable substitutes for interpersonal trust. Thus, it can be assumed that different cultures systematically select and use different information or processes to evaluate business situations. Therefore, in
order for the expatriates to be successful and perform at a high level, there is a need for increased understanding of multiculturalism in order to reduce intercultural conflicts (Abramson et al., 1993).

There are several salient factors that should be considered when addressing expatriates’ performance. These include the local environment/cultures, job factors (job requirement and job responsibilities), inter-personal relationships (relationship development between expatriates and host nationals), availability and the effectiveness of cross cultural training, language skills, family situation and personality characteristics of the expatriates (Brewster, 1997; Caligiuri, 2000a, 2000b; Hutchings, 2003; Lane, DiStefano, & Maznevski, 2000; Manev & Stevenson, 2001; Suutari & Brewster, 2001; Tung, 1987). Undoubtedly, the cultural dimension is the main constituent of these factors.

Hofstede created a five-dimensional value system and drew a world cultural map in the 1980s. This work has been one of the most comprehensive and cited papers in this field to date. Its components have been studied and measured by a number of researchers in this area. The Map, Bridge, Integrate (MBI) model of managing cultural diversity for personal and team effectiveness proposed by Lane, DiStefano and Maznevski (2000) is one of the effective models underlying elements of culture that are relevant to business, with links to management theories and practices, that inspired by Hofstede’s work.

Besides Hofstede’s research, MBI model is influenced by the studies of famous scholars in the area of intercultural communication and international management behaviours such as Hall (1960), Kluckhohn and Strodtback (1961), and Trompenaars...
and Turners (1998). The model focuses on the three basic skills of Mapping to understand cultural differences among members, Bridging to communicate effectively, and Integrating to bring these perspectives together and build on them (Lane et al., 2000).

Combining the process of globalisation and the development of effective expatriate management, this model has been applied in a wide variety of countries, situations, organisational levels and functions. The results have demonstrated that when the three skills are executed well, multicultural interaction between individuals or among team members is high (Lane et al., 2000, p.25). The basic model is shown in figure 1.

![MBI Model Diagram](image)

**Figure 1:** MBI model

**Source:** Lane, DiStefano and Maznevski, (2000)

The link between globalisation and increasing levels of expatriation has been widely acknowledged. While globalisation increases, the number of organisations needing to operate internationally also grows (Richardson & McKenna, 2002b). Nevertheless, this is of no concern to most Thai government organisations because they have gained the expatriates through technical cooperation/assistance, almost free of charge, through aid and international cooperation agencies. The most important thing for them is how to make the full use of the expatriates and how to keep the high calibre expatriates with the
organisations until their work is complete. Unfortunately, as Brewster (1997) indicates, there has been almost no research into expatriation or the management of expatriates in non-commercial organisations including government organisations. Moreover, the use of qualitative approaches in the studies of expatriates has also been limited (Richardson & McKenna, 2002b).

This situation is common in many countries including Thailand. Despite the wide acknowledgement of the coming of expatriates into the country, to meet the demands for skilled and professional manpower, in response to globalisation and the vision to be a modernised nation, the study on expatriate management in Thai government organisations has, seemingly, been overlooked.

According to Thai government policy on Public Sector Reform, which came into force on 3 October 2002, the Ministry of Labour’s (MOL) main tasks are required to promote employment, protect workers’ rights, organise a labour relations system, provide social security and ensure fair payment to fulfil people’s needs, not only at the national level but also at the international level. As a result, the need to bring in international expertise is crucial. However, unofficial feedback from expatriates working with the ministry and local staff working with the expatriates have revealed some hidden hindrances and discrepancies that influence work performance/ accomplishment.

These conflicts might originate from the host nationals’ belief that the expatriates are culturally equipped when they are appointed to work in another country and the expatriates might expect the same. What has happened is that while the organisation believes they are giving good attention and respect to the expatriates, the expatriates
might feel neglected or treated disrespectfully. This can lead to an unpleasant working environment and ineffective operations.

Therefore, the focus of the present research is to explore the factors affecting expatriates’ performance in the MOL concentrating on “Mapping the difference” of the MBI model to explain the cultural differences. Qualitative interviews were conducted with the expatriates who work with the MOL with the aim of hearing in detail how they describe and conceptualise the factors that affect their performance at work (Hutchings, 2002). This research aims to benefit both the expatriates and the organisation they work with in terms of self-analysis for the expatriates and improving management practices and strategies for expatriates in the government’s organisation.

1.2 Objectives

The specific research objectives are:

1. To examine the attitudes and perceptions of the MOL expatriates about their working experience with the MOL
2. To determine the important culture elements affecting in expatriates’ performance.
3. To suggest how the MOL can manage the cultural diversity in the workplace

1.3 Research Questions

As stated above, this research aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the internal/external organisational factors affecting expatriates’ performance when working with the Thai Government organisation?
2. How is culture structured in the Thai Government organisation?
3. How the organisations' culture influences the behaviour of expatriates?

1.4 Limitations

A few limitations of the study should be noted. Due to the small and unique characteristics of the participants (expatriates working with the MOL during the time of data collection), as well as the nature of the qualitative approach of the research, results may be subjective and should be generalised with caution.

1.5 Organisation of the Study

This research is divided into eight major sections. After this introduction, a review of the relevant literature is used to unpack the many dimensions of cultural diversity that relate to expatriates' performance. The theoretical model is explained in section three. Section four discusses the population, data collection and research methods. The data analysis and interpretation are explained in section five. The themes emerging from the results of the study are discussed in section six. Section seven provides implications for theory and policy recommendations for the Thai Government regarding international human resource management. Lastly, limitations and avenues for further research are outlined in section eight.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Intercultural Adjustment of Expatriates

Working in another country can prove to be culturally difficult if there is no preparation on how to interact with the host's culture (Lomax, 2002; Rasetti, 1998; Scott, 1999; Selmer, 2000a; Skov, 2003). A number of clear findings in the research on expatriate adjustment reveals that individuals who do not adjust properly to their international assignment will not perform well and will be psychologically withdrawn. They will likely cease work or return home prematurely (Selmer, 2000a, 2002). The two constituents of expatriate adjustment that have been investigated by a number of researchers (Bender, 1944; Richardson, 2000; Selmer, 1999a, 2000a, 2000b, 2002; Selmer, Ebrahimi, & Mingtao, 2000), and which will be taken into account in this study, are socio-cultural and psychological adjustment.

2.1.1 Socio-cultural and psychological adjustment

The extensive literature on expatriate adjustment indicates a general assumption that socio-cultural and psychological adjustment – the two components of expatriate international adjustment - are recognised as conceptually interrelated. However, they are distinctive concepts and refer to different phenomena (Bender, 1944; Richardson, 2000; Selmer, 1999a, 2000a, 2000b, 2002; Selmer et al., 2000).

Socio-cultural adjustment relates to the ability to 'fit in' or to negotiate aspects of the host culture as measured by the amount of difficulty experienced in managing everyday situations in that culture (Bender, 1944; Richardson, 2000; Selmer, 1999a, 2000a, 2000b, 2002; Selmer et al., 2000). This notion is based on cultural learning theory and
highlights social behaviour and practical social skills underlying attitudinal factors (Black & Mendenhall, 1991; Selmer, 2001, 2002). Richardson (2000) indicates that good adjustment, both sociologically and psychologically, creates a positive experience and reduces the chance of premature repatriation of the expatriates.

Psychological adjustment deals with subjective well-being or mood states such as depression, anxiety, tension and fatigue (Bender, 1944; Richardson, 2000; Selmer, 1999a, 2000a, 2000b, 2002; Selmer et al., 2000). It is based on a problem-oriented view focusing on attitudinal factors of the four stages of the adjustment process that occurs when entering a new culture.

The adjustment processes of expatriate adjustment both socially and psychologically include the honeymoon stage, where individuals are fascinated by the new culture and excited about new things (performance at work is quite low). This is followed by a period of disillusionment and frustration, called the culture shock stage, when work performance is usually lower. Next is the adjustment stage, which is characterised by the ability to adapt to the new culture, and then the mastery stage which has a small incremental increases in the ability to function effectively in the new culture (Black & Mendenhall, 1991).

In the subsequent sections, the diverse range of expatriate adjustment studied by researchers in this area is discussed further. The emphasis is on expatriates' adjustment to work and the work environment, and three main factors attributed to intercultural adjustment, including specific characteristics of the expatriates about cultural diversity, adjustment of expatriates' family/spouse, and cross-cultural training.
2.1.2 Conceptualisation of expatriate adjustment and the relevant literature

The abovementioned theoretical concepts of expatriate adjustment have been well developed, especially in relation to work and work environment characteristics. Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) proposed that the degree of cross-cultural adjustment should be treated as a multidimensional concept rather than a single phenomenon. In their theoretical model for international adjustment, they made a distinction between three dimensions of in-country adjustment (give attention to work adjustment) consisting of adjustment to work; adjustment to interacting with host nationals; and adjustment to the general non-work environment (Andreason, 2003a; Black, Mendenhall, & Oddou, 1991; Suutari & Brewster, 1998).

Anticipatory adjustment is another notion that is used to identify expatriate adjustment (Black et al., 1991; Black & Mendenhall, 1991; Richardson, 2000; Selmer, 2002; Suutari & Brewster, 1998). The essence of anticipatory adjustment is that individuals, through the acquisition of useful information about the new setting and vicarious learning, can adjust themselves to the new culture before they actually enter the new environment (Black & Mendenhall, 1991). Black et al (1991) and Selmer (2002) emphasise that the more accurate and appropriate expectations expatriates form, the more psychological uncertainty will be reduced, and the better their anticipatory adjustment, as well as the easier and quicker the actual adjustment, will be.

It has been recognised that assignment in another country poses multiple challenges for individuals in terms of tasks to master, roles to perform, and relationships to explore (Nelson & Quick, 1991). These features are consistent with the coping reactions which
are generally considered to be a process by which an individual attempts to minimise
the negative emotions that arise from the experience of negative events (Lowe &
Bennett, 2003). This attribute is also supported by the study of Davis and Nolen-
Hoeksema (2001) that explores the ways individuals try to make meaning of loss or
trauma and derive benefit from their experience. It is convincingly argued that meaning
making plays a central role in the process of adjusting to unfavourable circumstances
because it serves to maintain two aspects of sense of self that are often threatened by
loss and trauma or disturbance. They are a sense of self worth and fundamental beliefs
or assumptions about how the world works.

It has been generally found that the benefits of adjusting well fall into one of three
categories: growth in character, change in life perspective, and strengthened
relationships or increased sense of connectedness with others (Davis & Nolen-
Hoeksema, 2001). Nevertheless, difficulties in comprehending values and behaviours
towards others may lead to cultural crash/shock. Some expatriates are exhilarated at the
beginning of their overseas assignment. After a few months a form of culture shock
creeps in, and they begin to encounter frustration and feel confused in their new
environment. Inevitably, many of the most effective expatriates suffer this culture
shock. This may be a good sign, because it shows that the expatriate is becoming
involved in the new culture and is not isolating himself or herself from the environment.
As this initial and trying period ends, an expatriate’s satisfaction with conditions tends
to increase (Adler, 2003; Barker & Schulde, 1999; Caudron, 1992; Feichtinger & Fink,
1998; Herbig, 1997; Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1999; Richardson, 2000).
Therefore, in order for the expatriates to overcome the challenges they encounter, understanding the differences in cross-cultural settings and applying them to the role of the expatriate and the organisational structure, can assist in allowing better adjustments for the expatriate and gaining better acceptance from the local colleagues (Davis & Nolen-Hoeksema, 2001; Firoz, Maghrabi, & Kim, 2002; Richardson, 2000).

However, learning and adapting to culture in some countries takes longer and more time is need in preparation for performing in an unfamiliar work context and encountering a different way of life than in other countries (Katz & Seifer, 1996; Selmer, 2002). There are three main factors attributed to intercultural adjustment to be discussed in this review.

(a) **MBI model and Cultural Diversity**

First, using the Map, Bridge, Integrate (MBI) model, concentrating on “Mapping the difference” to explain *the cultural diversity in the working environment*. It could be assumed that the working habits of people from low power distance, masculinity and individualist countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Germany and USA might be more performance and ‘I’ oriented. They are interested in the present and the near future. Work performances are evaluated on the basis of personal, educational, and professional achievements (Groeschl, 2003; Hofstede, 1984; Lane et al., 2000; Luthans, 2001; Noypayak & Speece, 1998).

Whereas people from high power distance, femininity and collectivist countries such as Brazil, France, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand the emphasis is more on personal relationships and organisational integration and harmony. They are ‘we’ oriented and show strong loyalty to, and gain strong support from, their social group. Work
performances are evaluated on the basis of trustworthiness, loyalty, and compatibility with co-workers. They are futuristic in their approach and have very long term, future-oriented time horizons (Groeschl, 2003; Hofstede, 1984; Lane et al., 2000; Luthans, 2001; Noypayak & Speece, 1998).

As a consequence, the expatriate should know how to perform and conduct business in other countries. In order to be a successful expatriate, he/she must let go of his/her basic cultural assumptions and take on the internalised values of the other cultures. Failed expatriates do not acknowledge that their home country’s behaviours/customs are not always effective in other cultures. They hold themselves to their home country’s norms and customs and fail to adapt (Lane et al., 2000). It seems that national characteristics are one of the key aspects that contribute towards the effective intercultural adjustment of expatriates and have a considerable effect on management preferences and practices.

(b) Adjustment of the expatriate’s family/spouse

Second, many researchers have argued that adjustment of the expatriate’s family/spouse is an important factor in the success or failure of expatriates in foreign assignments. If the family/spouse is having trouble adapting to the different culture, it can affect the morals, emotions, and performance of the expatriate and increase stress (Andreason, 2003b; Black & Gregersen, 1991b; Caudron, 1992; Cavusgil, Yavas, & Bykowicz, 1992; Fish & Wood, 1997; Harvey, 1997; Harvey & Buckley, 1998; Richardson & McKenna, 2002a; Selmer, 2000a).

Since the first empirical study on factors related to spouse adjustment in a new environment was conducted by Black and Gregerson in 1990, the attention paid to this topic has increased (Andreason, 2003b; Black & Gregersen, 1991b; Harvey, 1997;
Harvey & Buckley, 1998; Richardson, 2000; Shaffer & Harrison, 2001). The remarkable results from Black and Gregerson’s study (1991b) indicate that if organisations want to reduce the substantial costs of expatriate failures, they need to seek the spouse’s opinion about overseas assignments including pre-departure training and social support for the family/spouse. This proposition is echoed by Suutari and Brewster’s research in 1998. They emphasise that the family/spouse is a source of potential difficulties for expatriates. The family/spouse need to be motivated to move abroad because the overseas assignment may cause extra stress on the marriage and the role of the family may be linked to the problems when making contact with host nationals.

One of the interesting studies was carried out in 2001 when Shaffer and Harrison developed a model of spouse adjustment to international assignments. It consists of three dimensions: how well the spouse builds relationships with host-country nationals, how well the spouse adjusts to local customs and the culture in general, and the extent to which the spouse has a sense of feeling at home in the foreign country.

The results showed that achieving successful adjustment in these three dimensions depends on the ability to re-establish the spouse’s identity in the new culture. This is because when one enters a new culture/environment, his/her self-concept or self-worth is often challenged because the normal ways of reinforcing identity do not work, for example, how to interact socially (Shaffer & Harrison, 2001). Thus, if the expatriate (as well as the family/spouse) and the host country nationals take this view into consideration, they would be able to prepare themselves, understand the circumstances more clearly and take proactive steps towards a successful adjustment.
(c) **Cross-cultural training**

The third factor is that of *cross-cultural training* for expatriates and their families/spouses, including training before leaving for international assignments, training while they are in their international position and training for those who return home after complete their assignments, all are necessary (Brewster, 1997).

Black and Mendenhall (1989) propose a social learning theory (SLT) and CCT rigor framework that can be utilised to determine the appropriate CCT approach for specific country contexts and situations. This framework is based on the central variable of the 'modelling process' (symbolic and participative) in SLT where the degree of difficulty contained in CCT methods are ranked from low to high depending on the cognitive involvement of the participants and the relative degree of rigor that specific training methods generally have (see figure 2).

**Figure 2: Modelling Processes, Rigor, & Training Methods**  
*Source: Black and Mendenhall (1989)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Rigor</th>
<th>Training Methods</th>
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<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td>EXPERIENTIAL</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Simulations</td>
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<td>Field Trips</td>
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<td>Role Plays</td>
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<td>Interactive Language Training</td>
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<td><strong>Analytical</strong></td>
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<td>Case Studies</td>
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<td>Classroom Language Training</td>
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<tr>
<th>Symbolic</th>
<th>Model Process</th>
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<td>Verbal</td>
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Later, their 1990 study reveals and echoes Mendenhall and Oddou’s study that the skills needed to be successful in a new culture can be grouped into three dimensions:

- skills related to maintaining self
- skills related to the fostering of relationships with host
- cognitive skills that promote a correct perception of the host environment and its social systems (Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985).

Culture is created, shared, and transmitted through communication. Cross-cultural communication training looking at the issues of different stereotyping, acceptance and respect for one’s opinion, divergent personal expressiveness, authenticity, understanding goal attainment and power dynamics is found to be an effective tool to improve these skills (Nixon & Dawson, 2002). Specifically, it should focus on improving ability in communication, providing useful stress management techniques, and nurturing abilities that suit the development of intercultural sensitivity and handling intercultural interaction. (Morley & Flynn, 2003). This training enables the expatriate and their families/spouses to learn and adjust to work and life in the new cultural context. Without this assistance, expatriates are likely to perform poorly in their international assignments or return back home prematurely (Selmer, 2000a, 2002).

Cultural learning and adaptation of expatriates on international assignments is very essential. Brewster (1997) believes that problems associated with cultural adjustment should be a factor in assessing expatriates’ performance. He, further, suggests that the home office’s management should be more lenient on assessing expatriates, considering that they may need extra time to succeed in the new job where there may be limited
home office support. It would be logical that once this is understood, failure rates of expatriates should decrease.

However, whether intercultural adjustment is viewed through culture shock perspectives or is treated as a multi-dimensional concept encompassing work, interaction, and overall adjustment; the focus remains on the expatriate adapting personal behaviour to the host culture and becoming socialised in the new circumstance and society (Morley & Flynn, 2003; Richardson, 2000). Furthermore, it should be noted that one of the best ways of coping with different cultures in living and working overseas is to be careful in the use of both verbal and nonverbal communication (Luthans, 2001). The purpose of the following section is, therefore, to delineate the issues regarding how intercultural communication competence of expatriates is conceived, addressed and discussed.

### 2.2 Intercultural Communication Competence

Sending and receiving messages with accurate interpretation and impeccable understanding is difficult, but when the sender and receiver are from different cultural backgrounds, the complexity increases (Taylor, 1998). This is because the degree of difference in the process of symbolisation, interpretation, transaction and contextualisation create divergent interpretations and expectations about what people regard as competency to create shared meaning (Daradirek, 2004).

Therefore, being able to communicate competently and confidently by listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and using various forms of communication to convey and receive information, instruction, ideas and feelings appropriately and effectively in a range of different cultural, language, and social contexts, are essential communication...
skills. In multinational organisations, poor intercultural communication may result in low morale, lack of teamwork, charges of discrimination, and cause other contradictory behaviours that can negatively affect productivity (Taylor, 1998). For example, the results of a study of organisational communication cultures in US-Thai parent-subsidiary organisations doing business in Thailand reveals tension between what the Thai employees perceived to be equitable and inequitable treatment of the relationship between the parent organisations and local employees in the subsidiaries (Stage, 1999).

Stage (1999) has found that Thai employees have a long-term view toward working in the subsidiary location. Many aspects of Thai culture influence business conduct, such as politeness, controlled expression of emotion, the importance of developing workplace relationships, gift giving, and awareness of the social stature of those with whom a person interacts. She recalls the comments of the previous Thai Prime Minister Anand Panyarachun, that Thai industry rests not on 'know-how' but 'know-who'. Whereas, American expatriates have a short-term view. They are more straightforward and need to state messages explicitly in written text. This tension originates from different cultural background and places Thai employees in a difficult position when dealing with the parent organisations.

Hence, being aware of national characteristics and communication modes can provide implications for cultural and communication behaviour of American or other western multinationals who wish to be successful in Thailand and most other Asian countries (Ulijn, O'Hair, Weggeman, Ledlow, & Hall, 2000). Likewise, in order to assess intercultural communication competency of expatriates, understanding of the traditional and interrelated blocks of intercultural communication competence and how the
intercultural ability has been developed is important. These issues are now discussed in
the following subheadings.

2.2.1 Conceptualisation of Intercultural Communication Competence

The terms intercultural communication competence or related constructs such as
effectiveness, success and adaptation are used interchangeably in a number of studies,
including this research (Spitzberg, 2000; Wiseman, 2002). They refer to the ability to
encode and decode meanings that correspond to the meaning held, depending on the
other person’s cultural background (Beamer, 1992; Daradirek, 2004; Martin &
Nakayama, 2003).

The acquisition of intercultural ability passes through three phases. Awareness refers to
the recognition that people from different backgrounds hold different values and
perspectives. Knowledge is the ability to learn about particular cultures, others’ symbols
and rituals as well as being able to know where others’ values differ from ours. Skills
are based on awareness and knowledge, and refer to the ability to get along in the new
environment (Hofstede, 1997). This ability can be classified into four levels:

- *unconscious incompetence* - no need to act in any particular way or ‘be yourself’
  level,
- *conscious incompetence* - may realise the unsuccessful communication but
  unable to figure out why,
- *conscious competence* - focus on analytical thinking and learning the difference,
- *unconscious competence* - successful level, occurs when analytical and holistic
  parts are functioning together, lets go of conscious thoughts and relies on
  holistic cognitive processes.
Notably, a combination of holistic and analytical thinking is important and necessary for higher levels of intercultural communication competence (Martin & Nakayama, 2003) and leads to three common and central effectiveness outcomes: professional effectiveness (task performance), ability to adapt to the new culture (personal/family adjustment) and intercultural interaction (the ability to establish healthy interpersonal relationships) (Dodd, 1998). Martin (1993) reviews the literature by intercultural researchers in the 1970s and 1980s and develops a three level typology, which is that most global type of behaviour consisting of:

- First, high order cognitive and behavioural processes, including global encoding/decoding skills, understanding cultural rules, and linguistic competence.
- Second, midrange constructs, including interaction management, social relaxation, empathy, assertiveness, sociability, politeness, and rule conformity.
- Third, molecular behaviour - the most specific level of resolution for behaviours, e.g. head nods, facial expressions, and proxemic orientation (Martin, 1993; Wiseman, 2002).

In addition, Martin proposes that the interest in intercultural competence arose from the practical concerns of the expatriates. The conceptualisations and measurements of competence, therefore, usually focus on the expatriates' attitudes, skills and general ability to function in an intercultural setting (Martin, 1993).

One of the interesting and often cited studies was the early study of Ruben (1976) which covers knowledge, attitudes, behaviours, and motivation - the traditional and interrelated blocks of intercultural communication competence (Martin & Nakayama,
Ruben proposes seven categories in evaluating effective international communication in overseas assignments. These include:

- **Display of respect** is the ability to express and convey respect to another person through eye contact, body posture, voice tone and pitch, and general displays of interest.

- **Interaction posture** is the ability to respond to others in a descriptive, non-evaluating, and non-judgemental way.

- **Orientation to knowledge** comprises what one knows, perceives and believes about oneself, others, and various aspects of communication.

- **Empathy** is the ability to know what it is like to 'place oneself in another person's shoes'. Since empathic skills are tied to one's culture, s/he cannot be empathic without knowing something about others' experiences and lives.

- **Self-oriented role behaviour** depicts one's capacity to be flexible and to adopt different roles for the sake of greater group cohesion and group communication.

- **Interaction management** is the skill to contribute to an interactive situation based on a reasonably accurate assessment of the needs and desires of others.

- **Tolerance for ambiguity** refers to ease in dealing with situations where there is much unknown. This is one of the most difficult things to attain.

These seven sets of behaviour have been operationalised and widely applied, using both self-report and observer ratings, to evaluate the effectiveness of overseas technical assistance personnel and participants of intercultural communication competence workshops in many countries (Hawes & Kealey, 1981; Martin, 1993; Ruben & Kealey, 1979). They will also applied in this study.
2.2.2 Intercultural communication competency of expatriates in international assignments

At this point, some interesting literature on intercultural communication competency of expatriates in international assignments, using Ruben’s seven sets of behaviour as a basis to evaluate international expatriates’ effectiveness, with a number of variables to probe the relationship between expatriates’ characteristics/skills/attitudes/expectations and intercultural managerial success, are reviewed. Then, a profile of the effective international expatriate emphasising skilled behaviours that enhance competency for building favourable relationships in intercultural circumstances is discussed.

First, Rubin and Kealey (1979) extend the work of Rubin (1976), using the above-mentioned seven skills to explore the relationship between interpersonal and social behaviour, and patterns of success and failure in cross-cultural adaptation. The study visualises the challenges of living and working in a new culture and identifies and measures skills that predict the success of international assignments by assessing pre-departure training programmes and in-the-field follow up studies provided for expatriates and spouses working in Kenya. The results indicate that each of the seven dimensions predicts patterns of success and failure in the intercultural effectiveness of expatriates and spouses with varying degrees of adequacy.

Two years later, building on the results of the study in Kenya, a study by Hawes & Kealey was conducted to identify the overseas effectiveness and the indicators needed to develop the profile of international advisors. They apply a number of variables related to job effectiveness, personal and cultural adaptation, transfer of skills, receptivity of nationals, and personal characteristics, to assess interpersonal skills,
attitudes and expectations of 250 Canadians (including spouses) and 90 nationals working and living in Afghanistan, Haiti, Kenya, Pakistan, Peru and Senegal. As anticipated, the results of this study and Kealey's study in 1989, which examines the overall adaptation and effectiveness of 277 Canadian technical advisors and 120 nationals posted to 20 developing countries, confirm the significance of the seven skills in the Kenyan study (Hawes & Kealey, 1981; Kealey, 1989).

To extend the work of Hawes & Kealey (1981) and Kealey (1989), Clarke and Hammer (1995) examine the intercultural effectiveness of Japanese and American managers who are working for the same organisation in Japan. The study investigates the influence of three personal characteristics (personal expectations, initiative/self-confidence and family communication), and two social skill factors (intercultural skills and self assertion skills) on three dimensions of intercultural managerial success (job effectiveness, personal-family adjustment and quality of intercultural interactions. The overall results highlight the importance of social skills as a predictor of American and Japanese manager's intercultural effectiveness because these skills establish and maintain effective intercultural relations and assist greater cultural adjustment of the managers and their families. They further emphasise and support the previous studies that the ability to communicate effectively in other cultures is crucial to expatriates' success in global assignments.

In two further studies, Hammer, Gudykunst, and Wiseman (1978) and Hammer (1987) investigate some other major domains of intercultural effectiveness among 53 Americans travellers in the former study, and 210 North Americans in the latter, regarding their educational experiences in other nations. Based upon a measure
consisting of 24 general abilities considered to be influential in one's intercultural effectiveness, the analysis yields three general behavioural skill/ability domains: ability to deal with psychological stress, ability to communicate effectively, and ability to establish interpersonal relationships (Hammer, 1987; Hammer, Gudykunst, & Wiseman, 1978).

Intercultural communication competence is generally considered as an ability or a set of skilled behaviours. Nevertheless, experience and ability to communicate successfully in one culture does not necessarily transfer to another (Spitzberg, 2000; Ulijn et al., 2000). Thus, this competence should be viewed as a social evaluation of behaviour that encompasses appropriateness and effectiveness in relation to norms, valued rules and expectancies of the relationship in each cultural context (Spitzberg, 2000).

A model of intercultural communication competence proposed by Spitzberg (2000) offers a profile of the effective intercultural communicator that can be applied to the expatriates' effectiveness. In brief, it can be assumed that the expatriate's intercultural communication competence is likely to increased if s/he is motivated, credible, knowledgeable, possesses interpersonal skills, meets the expectation of the host nationals, reflects similarities, is able to strike a balance between autonomy needs and intimacy needs, manifests trust, offers social support and has access to multiple relationships.

Clearly, it has been found from the literature that success or failure in overseas assignments is, predominantly, due to the intercultural competence of the expatriate (Clarke & Hammer, 1995). Furthermore, communicative sensitivity, which is the ability
to develop a positive emotion toward understanding and appreciating cultural differences so as to promote appropriate and effective behaviour in intercultural communication (Chen & Starosta, 2000), seems to be most often emphasised as being a crucial aspect of intercultural competence (Ruben, 1976).

One of Spitzberg (2000)'s ideas of special interest and likely to related the findings of the literature reviewed here is that the responsibility of intercultural adaptation should involve knowledge, motivation, the skills of the expatriates and the host nationals to interact effectively and appropriately an international environment.

Despite there being a great deal of research on the importance of intercultural communication competence of expatriates and host nationals on overseas assignment, little has been done in Thailand with none in Thai government organisations. Therefore, it is very interesting to see whether this issue has been overlooked or not considered to be of priority when evaluating expatriates' performance in those organisations and why?

### 2.3 Tie Strength

International management researchers suggest that managerial networks are important factors for coordination and integration in multinational organisations. Stable interactions and relationships are based on enhanced socialisation that instil espoused business values and increase reliance on horizontal links among the parties. These network ties provide the basis for normative control as well as facilitate cooperative behaviours and the successful adoption of organisational practices (Manev & Stevenson, 2001). Nevertheless, contemporary literature on organisational...
communication reveals an emerging consensus that network tie dynamics in organisations are under-explored (Barry & Crant, 2000).

Haythornwaite (1999) defines a social network as a set of actors that can be individuals or aggregate units such as departments, organisations and families, and the relations that hold them together. The key is that the actors exchange resources including data, information, services, and mental, social or financial support which, subsequently, connect them in a social network. In this sense, resource exchange is considered ‘social network relations’ and the actors who maintain the relation are said to maintain ‘network ties’.

An important aspect of network ties is the understanding that in a network, relationships can be varied and the indispensable properties of network ties are their strength and complexity (Manev & Stevenson, 2001). According to Granovetter (1973), the strength of ties involves a combination of the amount of time invested in maintaining the tie, the emotional intensity and degree of intimacy (mutual confiding) of the tie, and the level of reciprocal services which characterise the relationship (Granovetter, 1973, 1983; Manev & Stevenson, 2001; Nooteboom & Gilsing, 2004; Preece & Maloney-Krichmar, 2003).

2.3.1 Strong and Weak ties

Tie strength varies in quality from weak to strong. Social network theorists distinguish between the two broad, sometimes overlapping types of social ties as instrumental or weak ties and expressive or strong ties (Ashman, Brown, & Zwick, 1998; Batjargal, 2000; Haythornthwaite, 1999; Levin, Cross, & Abrams, 2002; Nooteboom & Gilsing,
Instrumental or weak ties, such as work-related-advice ties, arise from performance at work. They facilitate the transfer of physical, informational or financial resources the organisations need for the successful implementation of their missions (Ashman et al., 1998; Manev & Stevenson, 2001; Umphress et al., 2003). Batjargal (2000) states that weak ties measure the number of “acquaintances”, characterised by less frequent and more transient contact (Paolillo, 1999). By having access to different resources, a weak tie can bring to the individuals resources that are unobtainable from close associates (Haythornthwaite, 1999). Therefore, weak ties are regarded as performance boosting devices (Burt, 1992): vaguely defined relationships provide that crucial freedom to act upon opportunities and entrepreneurs with structural autonomy are likely to gain most from not being bound by expectations and obligations (p.11). It is this exposure to different others that gives the weak tie its significance (Haythornthwaite, 1999).

Expressive or strong ties provide friendship and social support (Manev & Stevenson, 2001). Strong ties are the number of “friends” (Batjargal, 2000), and are characterised by frequent interaction, association in more than one social capacity e.g. two people being both siblings and business partners, and territorially based groups e.g. campus soccer teams (Paolillo, 1999). When compared to instrumental or weak ties, strong ties are more intimate and special. They involve more self-disclosure and more than just instrumental exchanges. Those who are strongly tied, with a sense of mutual relationship, are likely to show similarities in attitudes, background, experiences, and access to resources (Haythornthwaite, 1999, 2001). In organisations, strong ties are
described as enhancing organisations’ performance directly through trust building, information transfer, and joint problem solving arrangements (Batjargal, 2000).

In summary, expressive ties are normative and affective based, whereas instrumental ties are information and cognitive based. Expressive ties are useful in daily work/lives and equally important in mobilising social resources (Bian, 1997). In a group with strong ties, people are more motivated to provide normative information and affective support within the same social circle (Haythornthwaite, 1999; Umphress et al., 2003). Strong ties of trust and obligation also provide a social basis for what Bian (1997) calls ‘unauthorised activity’. This denotes exchanges or transactions that may be illegal, socially disapproved, or for which mechanisms of coordination are either insufficient or unavailable in formal organisations. For weak ties, Granovetter (1973), in his famous article on 'the strength of weak ties', proposes that weak rather than strong ties are appropriate for accessing new information and resources beyond those available in their own social circles (Ashman et al., 1998).

Therefore, effective and suitable ties in each organisation can be strong or weak. Besides emphasising the differences in the time spent in interaction, emotional intensity, intimacy, or the reciprocal services characterising the tie as Granovetter (1973) speculates, it should be noted that the culture of those organisations and their members’ nature are the important factors that define the type of tie strength in organisations.

### 2.3.2 Expatriates and the ties

The abundance of research on social ties recognises and demonstrates the effects of Granovetter’s tie strength in organisations (Ashman et al., 1998; Bian, 1997;
Based on social network theory, this empirical research has provided mixed findings on the relative efficacy of tie strength. Specifically, on information acquisition in the areas of job search (Bian, 1997; Granovetter, 1973, 1983), status attainment (Bian, 1997; Lin, 1999), knowledge sharing and information/resources transferred across organisations (Ashman et al., 1998; Hansen, 1999; Matsumoto, 2000; Nooteboom & Gilsing, 2004; Preece & Maloney-Krichmar, 2003). Other researchers have examined the link between the ties and interpersonal similarities in employees' perception of justice (Umphress et al., 2003) and the effect of the dual roles of strong and weak ties upon media use (Haythornthwaite, 2001).

As already mentioned, managerial networks are important factors for coordination and integration in multinational organisations (Manev & Stevenson, 2001). It is, therefore,
interesting to uncover the type of social ties the expatriates and the host nationals have developed while performing overseas assignments and to explore the influence of intercultural adjustment and intercultural communication competence on tie strength that result from expatriates’ performance.

2.4 Précis of chapter 2

Although much research regarding expatriates’ performance has been conducted, in various aspects and dimensions, none has been done to find out what factors affect expatriates’ effectiveness when they work with the Thai GO. This means that more knowledge about this important issue is needed. Therefore, the MBI model will be employed in this research to explain cultural differences between expatriates working in Thailand and the host nationals. Specifically, the degree of intercultural adjustment and intercultural communication competence of the expatriates will be examined to find out whether how they are associated with social ties/networks developed between the expatriates and host nationals and to what extent that these factors influence expatriates’ performance.
CHAPTER 3: MODEL

3.1 Theoretical Framework

The literature review of the previous chapter provides the theoretical roots for the conceptual development and empirical work of this study. In this chapter three distinguishable factors that may account for the observed effective ties that affect expatriates' effectiveness are considered. They are intercultural adjustment, intercultural communication skills, and cross-cultural training for expatriates and their families.

Explanations for the resulting effective ties in expatriates' performance is based on theories that emphasise the relationship of intercultural adjustment, intercultural communication skills, and cross-cultural training for expatriates and their families, on the one hand, and the relationship between these factors and the strength of ties, on the other.

3.1.1 Relationship of intercultural adjustment, intercultural communication skills, and cross-cultural training for expatriates and their families.

The conceptualisation of expatriate adjustment in the literature review is derived from different approaches and measures, mostly self-reporting and self-rating, utilised by scholars in the field of expatriate adjustment (Morley & Flynn, 2003). Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) propose a model of expatriate intercultural adjustment to (see Figure 3) demonstrates factors related to anticipatory adjustment and in-country adjustment. The model illustrates the importance of relationship or communication
skills, the effect of intercultural training on adjustment in the period before departure, and the influence of family-spouse adjustment on the mode and degree of intercultural adjustment determined by expatriate's work, interaction, and general adjustment.

Figure 3: Framework of International Adjustment
Source: Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991)
*Numbers in parentheses indicate the numbered facet(s) of adjustment to which the specific variable is expected to relate.

These determinants of work-related adjustment have also been discussed and investigated by a number of researchers (see, for example, Black et al., 1991; Black & Mendenhall, 1991; Nelson & Quick, 1991; Richardson, 2000; Selmer, 2002; Suutari & Brewster, 1998). However, this model has not been tested empirically. It is likely that even though the model clearly explains the international adjustment of the expatriates it captures too many dimensions and it is hard to examine them all practically in one study.

According to the abovementioned constraint, intercultural adjustment and intercultural communication skills are selected and regarded as independent variables in this study. These variables will be measured by the degree to which the expatriates adjust to three
items, namely work adjustment, interaction adjustment, and general adjustment (Black & Mendenhall, 1991; Morley & Flynn, 2003). These deal with the ability to fit in the host cultures as measured by the number of difficulties experienced in everyday situations (Brewster, 1997; Selmer, 2000a; Selmer et al., 2000) and the personality qualities inferred from the messages and manners of the expatriates with host nationals (Dodd, 1998; Martin, 1993).

Cross-cultural training for expatriates and their families provides professional and personal assistance when needed, including help for making the smooth transition to working/living in different cultural settings and improving the expatriates’ performance (Ashamalla & Crocitto, 1997; Martin, 1993). Cross-cultural training is considered as an effective *moderating variable* since it has been proposed as a means of facilitating effective interaction and seems to have a positive impact upon skill development, adjustment, and performance of the expatriates (Stewart & Mendenhall, 1990).

However, for the purpose of this study, cross-cultural training will include training provided for the expatriates and their families/spouses before leaving for international assignments and training while they are in their international position. This variable will be measured by the degree of satisfaction of the expatriates on the cross-cultural training programmes and the extent to which the expatriates find the training contributes to the formation of social ties between them and host nationals.
3.1.2 *Relationship between intercultural adjustment, intercultural communication skills, cultural training for expatriate and the families, and their strength of ties*

The studies of Granovetter and associates reviewed in this present study support the size of tie strength among professional, technical, and managerial workers, predominantly in the areas of job search (Bian, 1997; Granovetter, 1973, 1983), knowledge sharing and information/resources transfer across organisations (Ashman et al., 1998; Hansen, 1999; Matsumoto, 2000; Nooteboom & Gilsing, 2004; Preece & Maloney-Krichmar, 2003). Up to now, research has aimed to understand the relationship between effective ties drawn from social networks. Intercultural adjustment and intercultural communication competence of expatriates, has not been conducted. Hence, tie strength will be regarded as the *dependent variable* in this study. Besides aiming to investigate its relationship with intercultural adjustment and intercultural communication competence, tie strength will be examined to see whether it affects expatriates’ performance. This can be measured by the size, breadth and depth of expatriates’ social networks in the new foreign setting (Johnson et al., 2003). The theoretical model that will be applied in this study is shown in figure 4.
The model is based on two theoretical assumptions. First, the effective ties, either strong or weak, between the expatriates and host nationals depend on two main factors: socio-cultural adjustment and intercultural communication skills.

Second, cross-cultural training for the expatriates and their families may facilitate intercultural adjustment and improve intercultural communication competence, which enables expatriates to form relationships or networks with others in their host country.

In the next chapter, based on literature review and the proposed theoretical framework, a discussion of how these assumptions might be empirically addressed will be given.

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CHAPTER 4: DATA COLLECTION

4.1 Participants

The participants in this study were the international expatriates; either experts, specialists, or volunteers who had been working with the MOL during the time of data collection. They were asked to describe their feelings, attitudes, and perception of working with the Thai GO, the challenges encountered and adjustments made either in the work or non-work environment.

The list of expatriates was obtained from the Office of the Permanent Secretary, MOL. There were 37 of them. Twelve expatriates have offices in the MOL. Twenty-five expatriates were based in their organisations, which were the United Nations and the Embassy of their respective countries. This was based on an important characteristic of their 'international character' - with a wide range of international experience, either in terms of personal history or work experience including their office sites, and most importantly their willingness to participate in this study. The expatriates were recruited through contact persons (counterparts in their workplaces), and through in-person contact by the researcher, to increase the likelihood of their participation and limit the impact of self-selection bias.

4.2 Data Collection Procedures

This study was conducted in two stages. The first stage commenced with a pilot study using a questionnaire survey and was followed by in-depth interviews in the second stage. There were a range of data collection procedures used depending on the type, location, and accessibility of the participants. A multi-step process had been taken to
collect data. In general, the participants were contacted in advance to inform them about this study and to enquire about their interest in taking part in the research. The distinction is, in the pilot study, participants were contacted through contact persons at the MOL, whereas the in-depth interviews followed the initial contact either by phone calls, e-mail or a brief casual meeting to introduce the researcher to the participants and to discuss the details of the study.

4.3 Data Collection Method

This research is an exploratory study. It is the first study to find out what factors affecting expatriates’ effectiveness when they work with the Thai GO and to explore the influence of intercultural adjustment and intercultural communication competence on tie strength that affect expatriates’ performance. The qualitative methods used in this study are semi-structured, in-depth interviews and a questionnaire survey. They have a naturalistic approach since there is no control over the specific settings (Fierro, 2004; Hoepfl, 1997) but rather an attempt is made to understand the entire environment and how participants are perceiving the situation they are in.

4.3.1 Questionnaire survey

In this study, a questionnaire survey (Appendix 1) was used in a pilot study as a logical blueprint to predicting factors affecting expatriates’ performance, synthesising the issues discussed in the literature review, whether they accurately represent the concept being investigated, and designing the questions used for the in-depth interview. It contains nine questions concerning respondents’ attitudes and perceptions when they work with the Thai GO. The use of the questionnaire survey will be described in greater depth in the discussion of the pilot study.
4.3.2 Semi-structured, in-depth interview

(a) Approach and empirical setting

The design for the interviews includes a combination of unstructured and semi-structured questions addressing a range of issues related to the expatriates’ experience of living and working in Thailand. The researcher followed a predetermined set of questions representing the following dimensions: intercultural adjustment, intercultural communication competence, cross-cultural training needs and the strength of ties (Appendix 2). These questions formed the basis of all interviews. The data gathered from the interviews will be used to describe the memorable events and the more insightful comments will be used for theory building.

Some expatriates were not in Thailand when the interviews were conducted. Twenty expatriates were invited to take part in the study and fourteen expatriates agreed to participate. Two expatriates could not participate because of schedule difficulties and four expatriates declined citing their concerns about the sensitivity of the issues discussed in the research.

Careful selection is most essential for exploratory research. Eisenhardt (1989) recommends that four or more subjects are needed to explore theory or enrich findings where the subjects are to be compared. Considering the generalisation in this study will be to the theory, not specific population to test the theory, and the specific characters of the respondents as identified earlier, fourteen respondents are a reasonable number for the results to be sufficiently empirically grounded (Harris, 2003).
Of those who participated in the interviews, eleven respondents were male and three female. This consisted of seven Japanese, five Germans, one Australian, and one Luxembourgian. All respondents had a minimum six months working experience with the MOL, the maximum is four years, and the average is 2.3 years. Eight respondents worked at the MOL (seven in Bangkok and one in a regional office). Five worked at the UN, BKK and one at the embassy. Thirteen respondents were interviewed in English and one in Thai because the respondent was more familiar with Thai than English.

(b) Time and place of the interviews

The interviews were undertaken in June – July 2004. Twelve interviews were conducted at the respondents’ offices: the MOL (in BKK and its regional office), the UN and the embassy. Two interviews were held in a public location (the cafeteria) because the expatriates shared offices with other colleagues. All interviews took place during work hours. The shortest interview took 45 minutes. The longest took 2 hours and 15 minutes. Most of them took about 1 hour.

(c) Interview protocol

To ensure that concerns for the dignity and well being of the respondents were taken into account over the expected benefits to research knowledge, the preamble presented the issues and attempted to minimise perceived pressures by giving an explicit explanation about the issues and the necessary reassurances about confidentiality.
Before the interviews, respondents were provided with a copy of the information about
the study and a statement of confidentiality about the recording of the interviews and
the use of the interview transcriptions (Appendix 3). Lists of interview questions were
also offered to enable the respondents time to reflect on the issues to be discussed. This
provided an opportunity for the researcher to interact with the respondents and build a
certain level of trust and confidence before conducting the interviews.

All interviews were tape-recorded. There was no taking note during the interview in
order not to interfere with eye contact and non-verbal communication. Gestures used
and movements such as pauses, laughter, sighs and other non-verbal sounds were noted
immediately after the interviews. At all stages throughout the process expatriates were
assured that the information provided would be kept strictly confidential. In addition,
they were informed that their names, and the name of their organisations would not
appear on any data collected. The data from the tapes were transcribed and, in some
cases, returned to the respondents to ensure accuracy. Due to the tight schedules of the
respondents, it was impractical to request all of them to be involved in this feedback
process. All interviews were transcribed verbatim and then analysed using content
analysis and the interpretive analysis of discourse through the use of verbal protocols.
The use of these types of analyses will be discussed in more detail under the topic of
data analysis strategy.

It should be noted here that even though no one refused to be recorded, the very
personal issues, which might be detrimental to their relationship with their counterparts
in the MOL and professional status, were often discussed before, during or after the
interviews. This was consistent with the study of Richardson & McKenna (2002), which
discovered that the negative characteristic of being an expatriate academic is the "precariousness" of their situation.

4.3 Data Analysis Strategy

4.3.1 Analysis approach

Protocol analysis, content analysis and discourse analysis will be applied on the data gathered. This aims to analyse intercultural adjustment; intercultural communication competence; and satisfaction of the expatriates on training programmes along with their contribution to the formation of ties to explain the relationships of the variables being studied.

In order to uncover the the epistemology of the assumptions which shape expatriates' behaviours and performances, Protocol analysis, the main analysis tool, will be used to elucidate explicit and inferred implicit cognitive processes, decision making, problem solving, and the analytical process of the respondents (Newnham, Pantebre, & Spark, 1999). This analysis method pays close and careful attention to what the respondents said, particularly, the focus is on how they said with their emotions at a subconscious level. To this end, the use of content and discourse analyses will allow bringing these details to be interpreted more accurately. The content of the interviews will be reviewed in terms of their frequency of appearance as they appeared in the interview transcripts, as well as connotatively interpreted by the conceptual relationships among words, concepts, sentences, themes or quotations and matching patterns (Newnham et al., 1999; SDSU, 2004). The study of linguistic relations and structures in discourse will help to make the respondents' doubts, judgement, comprehension, and term definition observable and easier to understand. For this purpose, the specific notations (Table 1)
that represent the acts and mood states of respondents will be used in the verbatim transcriptions. It will provide a means for the researcher to elucidate the manner by which environmental forces shape respondents' cognition, and subsequent collective actions. For example, '/.../' will be used when the irrelevant messages are skipped. '.(' means pause. '(0.3)' means a 3 second pause. It can be assumed that the longer the pause, the greater the anxiety, hesitancy, and insecurity of the respondents. These notations provide important contexts for understanding the emotional and circumstantial settings for interpreting the content of the dialogue and make sense of what the respondents were really saying. Put simply, in order to reveal the analytical and comprehension process of the respondents using protocol analysis, content analysis would be an issue, and discourse analysis would disclose the total picture of the circumstances.

Table 1: Notations for the interview transcription

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/.../</td>
<td>skip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(</td>
<td>pause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.5)</td>
<td>time line during each pause e.g. (0.5) = pause 5 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[...]</td>
<td>respondent and researcher speak at the same time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;...&quot;</td>
<td>word or expression commented upon by respondent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>{}</td>
<td>descriptions of respondent's meaningful gestures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=</td>
<td>insinuates into the conversation before the other finishes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(-&gt; -&gt; -&gt;)</td>
<td>respondent accelerates the speaking tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[^^^]</td>
<td>respondent sighs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(;_.:.;)</td>
<td>respondent cries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(SM)</td>
<td>respondent smiles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(LG)</td>
<td>respondent laughs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(SSL)</td>
<td>respondent laughs slightly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(SL)</td>
<td>respondent speaks and laughs at the same time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(MT)</td>
<td>respondent mutters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bold</strong></td>
<td>terms selected by the respondent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(Italic)</em></td>
<td>researcher's observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Underlined</strong></td>
<td>word or expression stressed by respondent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***</td>
<td>respondents' organisation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, the interpretive goal of this study is not the 'truth' rather the goal is a hermeneutic understanding or verstehen by having empathy for the inner states of the
respondents and recognising that the inner states they have, resulted from individuals’ experience (Brower, Abolafia, & Carr, 2000; Schwandt, 1998). From this perspective, data will be context dependent, the patterns of meaning in the conversation and the empathic or verstehen understanding conceptualised from the verbatim interview transcriptions will be visualised and interpreted into theoretical concepts along with careful consideration on the real circumstances the respondents encounter.

4.3.2 A protocol for identifying factors affecting expatriates performance

According to the discussion above, the protocol for the analysis of factors affecting expatriates’ performance is developed and indicates how these factors have been operationalised (Table 2). This protocol covers six key elements in the understanding of determinants on the success or failure of international expatriates. First, intercultural adjustment criteria demonstrates the varied dimensions of expatriates’ adjustment including anticipatory adjustment, work adjustment, interaction adjustment, and general adjustment. Second, cross-cultural skills criteria, which are the skills needed to be successful in a new environment and consist of the skills related to maintaining self, fostering relationships with host nationals and cognitive skills. Third, intercultural communication competence criteria in evaluating effective international communication in international assignments comprise a display of respect, interaction posture, orientation to knowledge, empathy, self-oriented role behaviour, interaction management, and tolerance of ambiguity. Fourth, tie strength criteria characterising the form of interactions and relationships between the expatriates and host nationals are defined as instrumental and expressive ties. Fifth, expatriates’ performance criteria should be considered when addressing expatriates’ effectiveness including local
cultures, job factors, inter-personal relationships, cross-cultural training, language skills, family situation, and personality characteristics. Sixth, degrees of adjustment criteria illustrate that the level of expatriates’ performance is dichotomous, assessed as success or fail. In addition, the ‘other’ category at the end is included to cover any uncodable aspects of the information provided by the respondents (Harrison, Dibben, & Mason, 1997).

Table 2: Classification of Though Segments in the Protocols: Evaluation Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intercultural Adjustment Criteria</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anticipatory Adjustment (AA)</td>
<td>The ability to adjust to the new culture before actually encountering the new environment (Black &amp; Mendenhall, 1991).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Adjustment (WA)</td>
<td>The ability to adjust to the new job requirements and differences in organisational system in a foreign country (Andreason, 2003a; Suutari &amp; Brewster, 1998).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction Adjustment (IA)</td>
<td>The ability to create and sustain social contact with individuals in a foreign country (Andreason, 2003a; Suutari &amp; Brewster, 1998).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Adjustment (GA)</td>
<td>The ability to adjust to the foreign culture and living conditions (Andreason, 2003a).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cross-cultural Training Skills Criteria
(cf. (Black & Mendenhall, 1990; Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cross-cultural Training Skills Criteria</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintain Self (MS)</td>
<td>The skills resulted from the activities that strengthen self-esteem, self confidence and mental hygiene of an individual to make them feel comfortable and familiar with the foreign culture more easily and quickly e.g. replacing favourable activities in the home country with existing activities in the host country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fostering Relationship (FR)</td>
<td>The skills resulted from activities that enhanced an individual’s ability to interact effectively with host nationals e.g. host culture’s language course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Skills (CS)</td>
<td>The skills resulted from activities that promote a correct perception of the host environment and its social systems e.g. intercultural communication training.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Intercultural Communication Competence Criteria (cf. (Ruben, 1976))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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</table>

| **Display of Respect (DOR)** | The ability to express and convey respect to another person through eye contact, body posture, voice tone and pitch, and a general display of interest. |
| **Interaction Posture (IP)** | The ability to respond to others in a descriptive, non-evaluating, and non-judgemental way. |
| **Orientation to Knowledge (OTK)** | The ability to know, perceive and believe about oneself, others, and other aspects of communication. |
| **Empathy (EMP)** | The ability to know what it is like to 'place oneself in another person's shoes'. |
| **Self-Oriented Role Behaviour (SRB)** | The ability to be flexible and to adopt to different roles for the sake of greater group cohesion and group communication. |
| **Interaction Management (IM)** | The ability to contribute to an interactive situation based on accurate assessment of the needs and desires of others. |
| **Tolerance for Ambiguity (TFA)** | The ability to deal with situations where much is unknown or difficult to attain. |

## Tie Strength Criteria

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
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</table>

| **Instrumental Tie (IT)** | A relationship that facilitates the transfer of physical, informational or financial resources the organisation needs for the successful implementation of their missions (Ashman et al., 1998; Manev & Stevenson, 2001; Umphress et al., 2003). Characterised by less frequent and more transient contact (Paolillo, 1999). |
| **Expressive Tie (ET)** | A relationship that involves more than self-disclosure and instrumental exchange (Haythornthwaite, 1999, 2001). Characterised by frequent action (Paolillo, 1999) and similarities in attitudes, background, experience, and access to resources (Haythornthwaite, 1999, 2001). |

## Criteria Affecting Expatriates Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| **Local Cultures (LC)** | An implicit agreement among host nationals concerning what their actions mean that is based on their cultural beliefs, values and assumptions (Lane et al., 2000). |
| **Job Factors (JF)** | A specific set of tasks and duties performed by an individual that either facilitate or inhibit intercultural adjustment; these are: role conflict, role discretion, and pre-departure experience (Andreason, 2003a; Black, 1988). |
Inter-personal Relationship (IR) | The relationship developed between an individual and host nationals (Manev & Stevenson, 2001).
---|---
Family Situation (FS) | The ability of spouse or family members to adjust to changes in the new culture/environment (Suutari & Brewster, 2001).
Personality Characteristics (PC) | Dispositional motives predisposing an individual to behave in certain ways, given particular situations, to accomplish certain goals (Caligiuri, 2000b).

### Degree of Adjustment Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Success (S)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fail (F)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These criteria were categorised based on the literature review. The criteria and its description will provide more substantive evidence to explain cultural diversity in the working environment and identify the most appropriate way to create favourable working relationships among people from different cultural backgrounds. Most importantly, it will enable the Thai Government to understand how to manage differences in the workplace and make full use of international expertise.
4.4 Pilot Study

The pilot study was conducted in March 2004. The questionnaire was e-mailed to thirty seven United Nations (UN) and Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) expatriates working with the MOL through the contact person at the MOL. Each individual questionnaire was accompanied by a cover letter for each participant (Appendix 5). The cover letter included a statement introducing the researcher and explaining that the research was being carried out for academic purposes only. The nature and merit of the research was briefly outlined. It was stressed that the study was completely confidential, that the research was only concerned with the cumulative results, and that no individual respondent would be identified.

A follow-up e-mail was sent one week after the deadline because there was no response from the prospective participants. It was found that some returned questionnaires had vanished and could not be traced. Therefore, the researcher decided to e-mail the expatriates directly. This resulted in eight questionnaires being returned and all were completed.

The results demonstrate three interesting findings. First, it was found that the motivation to work internationally for all the respondents was for the experience of learning and experiencing others' culture. They also stated that it is the opportunity to contribute to the economic and social development of developing countries, for paving a better career path, for the excitement of travelling and for the belief in the reputation of the home office.
Second, all the respondents were informed about Thais’ working habits, values and practices. The work-related problems they anticipated before they began to work in Thailand were intercultural communication; and problems originating from cultural differences and the language barrier. The person who indicated that there were no problems had visited Thailand before coming to work and was familiar with the country and the work situation. Third, most of the respondents stated that they had faced those anticipated challenges and also faced problems of organisational culture and the emphasis on personal relationships rather than on the basis of personal, educational, and professional achievements.

These results introduce two interesting observations. First, did frustrations about organisational culture and working conditions originate from intercultural adjustment or communication competence or inadequate cross-cultural training? Second, from their answers, it appears that all the expatriates have a fair understanding and were well prepared about cultural diversity. It is likely that they would have less of a problem learning about different practices in different cultures. Hence, it would be interesting to discover if the hidden conflicts existing in the workplace resulted from the lack of creating effective relationships. These findings provide the direction and scenario for the interview. Most of the questions asked in the pilot study were effective and were used again in the interview.

In the next chapter the key themes will be scrutinised, and the research questions will be unfolded using the above data analysis strategies. This will begin with the empirical findings using protocol analysis and, then, the interpretation is followed using content and discourse analysis to articulate further themes.
CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS

After the interviews were completed and transcribed, the analyses described in the previous chapter were employed to interpret and demonstrate a range of issues significant to expatriates' performance when working with the Thai GO. With this aim, on the basis of protocol analysis, using content and discourse analysis to articulate the themes described in the literature review, the data gathered was compared with criteria developed from the theories to identify the determinants for the success or failure of international expatriates.

The results of verbal protocol frequency analysis are presented in an accumulated form (Table 3, p. 49) with a more extensive and systematic approach in order to examine the proposed theoretical framework. The frequency matrix indicates the skills most frequently utilised and the determinants for success/failure of an international assignment that were most frequently pointed out by the expatriates. In addition, the excerpts from transcribed interviews provide the prolific evidence for visualising and shedding light on major factors affecting expatriates' performance and relationship development between expatriates and host nationals.

As Table 3 demonstrates, the expatriates most frequently referred to interaction adjustment and work adjustment (59 utterances/14 expats and 58 utterances/14 expats, respectively) when discussing their intercultural adjustment ability, followed by general adjustment (32 utterances/14 expats) and anticipatory adjustment (14 utterances/9 expats).
Among the skills resulting from cross-cultural training, fostering relationship (FR) skills and cognitive skills (CS) were mentioned more often than the ability to maintain self (MS). The results revealed 6 utterances/2 expats, 4 utterances/3 expats, and 3 utterances/2 expats, respectively.

Table 3: Verbal Protocol Frequency Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No. of utterances</th>
<th>No. of expats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IA</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GA</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FR</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOR</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IP</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTK</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMP</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRB</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TFA</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ET</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LC</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JF</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IR</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCT</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LS</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FA</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| P3 = 2, P4 = 3, P5 = 1, P6 = 1, P7 = 2, P9 = 1, P10 = 2, P13 = 1, P14 = 1 |
| P1 = 6, P2 = 1, P3 = 5, P4 = 1, P5 = 14, P6 = 3, P7 = 1, P8 = 2, P9 = 11, P10 = 4, P11 = 2, P12 = 4, P13 = 3, P14 = 1 |
| P1 = 3, P2 = 6, P3 = 5, P4 = 2, P5 = 11, P6 = 5, P7 = 1, P8 = 5, P9 = 3, P10 = 6, P11 = 4, P12 = 5, P13 = 1, P14 = 2 |
| P1 = 2, P2 = 1, P3 = 2, P4 = 2, P5 = 1, P6 = 2, P7 = 3, P8 = 2, P9 = 5, P10 = 3, P11 = 4, P12 = 1, P13 = 2, P14 = 2 |
| P4 = 1, P5 = 2 |
| P1 = 4, P5 = 2, P11 = 1 |
| P1 = 11, P2 = 2, P3 = 4, P4 = 3, P5 = 13, P8 = 3, P9 = 1, P10 = 5, P11 = 1, P12 = 3, P14 = 1 |
| P1 = 2, P2 = 1, P5 = 2, P8 = 2, P10 = 2, P11 = 1, P12 = 1, P14 = 3 |
| P1 = 3, P2 = 2, P3 = 1, P4 = 1, P5 = 1, P6 = 2, P8 = 2, P9 = 2, P10 = 1, P11 = 1, P12 = 3 |
| P3 = 6, P5 = 5, P6 = 1, P13 = 1 |
| P1 = 1, P3 = 2, P5 = 6, P11 = 1, P12 = 2, P14 = 1 |
| P1 = 1, P3 = 2, P4 = 1, P5 = 1, P10 = 1, P11 = 2, P12 = 1, P14 = 2 |
| P1 = 1, P3 = 1, P4 = 1, P10 = 3, P11 = 2, P12 = 3, P13 = 1, P14 = 1 |
| P1 = 5, P3 = 10, P4 = 1, P5 = 13, P6 = 2, P8 = 1, P9 = 4, P10 = 11, P11 = 3, P12 = 1, P13 = 4, P14 = 1 |
| P1 = 10, P2 = 1, P3 = 8, P4 = 1, P5 = 9, P6 = 3, P7 = 1, P8 = 1, P9 = 2, P10 = 3, P11 = 2, P12 = 2, P13 = 7 |
| P1 = 9, P2 = 4, P3 = 14, P4 = 2, P5 = 12, P6 = 7, P7 = 2, P8 = 5, P9 = 6, P10 = 6, P11 = 6, P12 = 6, P13 = 1, P14 = 3 |
| P1 = 8, P2 = 2, P3 = 4, P4 = 3, P5 = 3, P6 = 2, P7 = 4, P8 = 1, P9 = 5, P10 = 2, P11 = 1, P12 = 4, P13 = 1 |
| P1 = 4, P2 = 2, P3 = 2, P5 = 4, P7 = 1, P8 = 3, P9 = 1, P10 = 3, P11 = 1, P12 = 1, P13 = 1, P14 = 1 |
| P1 = 2, P2 = 1, P3 = 1, P4 = 1, P5 = 1, P7 = 1, P9 = 4 |
| P1 = 7, P2 = 4, P3 = 4, P4 = 7, P5 = 13, P6 = 6, P7 = 2, P8 = 6, P9 = 10, P10 = 9, P11 = 11, P12 = 7, P13 = 3, P14 = 4 |
| P1 = 3, P3 = 1, P4 = 1, P6 = 2, P9 = 5, P10 = 1, P11 = 7, P12 = 3, P14 = 1 |
| P2 = 5, P4 = 1, P5 = 9 |

In terms of intercultural communication competence, orientation to knowledge (OTK) yielded the highest frequency (47 utterances/11 expats) and the least mentioned skill was display of respect (DOR) at 6 utterances/3 expats. These rates of recurrence might
result from the nature of the interview approach which allowed the expatriates to
express and share their opinions and viewpoints but inhibited the opportunity for the
researcher to observe how the expatriates expressed and conveyed respect to another
person through body posture, eye contact, voice tone and so on.

It is interesting to note that personal characteristics (PC) of the expatriates and the inter-
personal relationships (IR) between the expatriates and host nationals are factors most
mentioned as affecting the performance of the expatriates in this study. The results
provided a very high frequency for these two factors (PC-93 utterances/14 expats, IR-83
utterances/14 expats), followed by local cultures (55 utterances/11 expats) and job
factors (50 utterances/13 expats). Availability and effectives of cross-cultural training
(CCT - 40 utterances/13 expats) and family adjustment (FA - 11 utterances/7 expats)
that were considered to be one of the major factors influencing expatriates’ performance
in the proposed model seemed not to play as important role as expected. This fact will
be discussed in the greater length later under the relevant subheadings.

Finally, the results of this verbal protocol frequency analysis show that nine expatriates
succeeded in adapting their personal behaviour to the host cultures and appeared to have
good relationships with host nationals. On the other hand, three expatriates, who held on
to their home country’s behaviours/values, found more difficulties in adjusting to the
international environment.

In the following subsections, these results will be described under five headings:
intercultural adjustment and expatriates’ performance, the role of cross-cultural training,
the intercultural communication competence of the expatriates, the Thai government
organisational culture and expatriates’ adjustment, and ties that bind. The purpose is to articulate the influences of the factors affecting expatriates’ performances and organisational effectiveness as proposed in the theoretical framework.

5.1 Intercultural adjustment and expatriates performance

5.1.1 Anticipatory adjustment (AA)

The basic premise that the accurate acquisition of the host’s country information and prior international experience would enable the expatriates to reduce uncertainty before entering the new living and working conditions (Black et al., 1991; Black & Mendenhall, 1991) was an important first step in expatriates’ adjustment but was not a potential explanation for factors significantly affecting expatriates’ adjustment in this study.

All 14 respondents received fundamental information about ‘life and living’ in Thailand either through cross-cultural training or short visits before coming to work. Most of them were rich in international experience. As Table 3 (p.49) summarises, nine expatriates made anticipatory adjustments before they experienced the new settings. However, it is interesting to find only one expatriate in this study who had never worked internationally and never visited Thailand previously but who showed less initial euphoria in behavioural adaptations than the more experienced expatriates.

While the highly experience expatriates expressed their views as follows (turn 1,2)

Example 1

01 P3: I was not aware that was so difficult in Thailand /...Thai (0.1) mentality is one of the worst ((LG)) not the worst (.) sorry (.) it's one of the most difficulties (.)

51
one other highly experienced expatriate said:

02 P5: /.../ you know I've been working in international setting before /.../ I came fresh here and it was set well OK (0.1) you know Thailand is not the same do (/) do (/) do that (/) (-> -> -») /.../ here you said (/) fine (/) you put aside huh? ”

the first time expatriate recalled:

03 P6: I thought that Thai people may enjoy comfortable life much more than the Japanese (.) it not really relax (0.3) if there are many works (.) they can work till very late (.) sometimes I also help (.)

Note: /.../ = skip, (.) = pause, (-> -> -») = accelerate speaking tone

What emerges from the preceding statements is that the information acquired pre-departure might cause negative reactions for some expatriates if the actual circumstances are not identical to what they perceived or expected and, so, subsequently, they found it difficult to cope with the difference.

5.1.2 Work adjustment (WA)

In order to examine whether, and to what extent, the expatriates can adjust to the new job requirements and differences in the organisational system of the Thai Government (Andreason, 2003a; Suutari & Brewster, 1998), they were asked about their experience of working with the Thai GO and the level of adjustment they felt to their jobs and responsibilities. It should be noted that the discussion about work adjustment here is based on a problem oriented view and the fact that all respondents have been through the adjustment processes from the honeymoon to mastery stage (Black & Mendenhall, 1991).

The most common experience raised by the respondents who have their offices in the MOL (and have been working in Thailand 1-4 years), was of difficulties caused by
differences in working styles. They were quite overwhelmed with the working habits and common work practices in the Thai GO. (turn 4 and turn 6), while all respondents who were based in their organisations faced less pressure and had more positive point of views about the working style of Thai officials (turn 7).

Example 2

04 P3: /.../ get this task and then you go around () and think something and then you write in down in the paper maybe () and give it to them () and that might be totally wrong () because you don’t know what they’re doing () what’s the system? nobody tells you really () and then, you never get the feedback what they are doing () this is what I think it is the most () it is really worse (0.2) and b-a-d behaviour (-> -> ->) /.../. it’s very difficult /.../

05 R: Because they don’t know?

06 P3: /.../ don’t ask me (LG) and this is the main problem if you reflect /.../ we cannot work if we are not informed /.../ and this () they do not understand () they think we are not satisfied for some reasons () and then () they treat us more nice and give us some lunch () it’s not the case () we are used to work together ()

Example 3

07 P14: /.../ generally () it has been quite nice experience and my work has been very successful /.../ we have a very good cooperation ()

Note: /.../ = skip, () = pause, (-> -> ->) = accelerate speaking tone, (LG) = laugh, underline = words stressed (see full list in Table 1, p. 41)

It seems reasonable to argue that the kinds of work adjustment phenomena, as mentioned above, are in line with differences in organisational systems and work environment, as well as difficulties relating to the style and extent of communication. In the following excerpts, P2 and P5 were the expatriates working at the MOL, which means they have worked in Thai organisational settings. Difficulties in adjusting their roles and attitudes towards unfamiliar working habits and organisational system are obvious (turns 8, 10, 11).

Example 4

08 P2: /.../ the difficult might be person () my responsibility is here difficult () (he shows his job description) especially (0.2) for the public influences () and services /.../ umm (0.2) there are (0.3) yes () always there are some problems () because the expectation and the achievement () here always some gaps /.../ as the different problem of policy, comprehension and implementation () hard to see () how to make it (whisper when says 'how to make it').
Example 5

11 P5: From the (job) description I think I fit in to it (.) but there might also be some problems on how to do (.) it doesn't clear what it is because expert is not expert /.../ as an expert (.) you don't have authority (.) no responsibility (.) and umm (0.2) and if you don't have authority (.) no responsibility that means you work through the people (.) get the people work with expected results from you (.) but they would not find a result (.) it's a very (.) very (-> -> ->) complex issue (0.2) I didn't expect it to be so complicated (.)

In what follows, the expatriates worked for their own organisations in the international setting. At the surface level, the work environment is the first antecedent that moderates the mode of adjustment (Black et al., 1991). It is easier, in fact, for them to adjust to the new situations by changing their roles to match themselves better or by changing their attitudes and behaviours to match the role expectations (Black, 1988) in the more familiar environment (turn 12), organisational system (turn 13) and, especially, when the job and responsibilities are clear (turn 14).

Example 6

12 P9: I can say I'm very quite satisfied my circumstances like my secretary and my colleagues in this office /.../

Example 7

13 P10: Err (0.2) to be honest (.) I say it wasn't easy to adjust to those responsibilities here (.) But that wasn't because err so much (0.1) because of Thailand (.) it was because ahh /.../ *** resources very limited and last year was a peak year /.../ and also start to work during the peak was quite dificult (.) but now (.) so far (.) I feel that (0.1) I'm having had that experience (.) I'm comfortable and very well adjusted to the work now (.)

Example 8

14 P11: Umm (0.1) well (.) I don't think err there was much adjustment needed (.) the job I have to do is predictably defined (.) it was a learning process at the beginning (.) /.../ but now that I know the whereabouts of the job I umm (.) adjustment (.) let say 2 months adjustment time (.)

5.1.3 Interaction adjustment (IA)

In this study, effective social interaction with host nationals has been found to play a greater role in expatriates' performance than their technical competence. None of them mentioned difficulties in applying their expertise to the job assigned them but most of them pointed out that language skills was one of major obstacles in dealing with host
nationals as demonstrated in the following excerpts (example 9).

Example 9

15 P12: /.../ due to my inability of speaking Thai (.) and due to different form of expressing frustrations (0.1) it’s (.) very hard sometimes to understand (.) underline problems or ongoing problems for me as a foreigner /.../ being in your own culture and reaching out to another culture to come to understanding (.) sometimes I don’t have energy to do that the way I would like to do it (.)

another expatriate revealed:

16 P5: /.../ it’s a matter of language problem (.) yeah (.) so (.) umm (0.1) not many people speak language (.) and speak English (.) only takes them a along time to :::o lose their shyness (.) to speak English (.) When they do that it’s OK (.)

To tackle this complex situation, one of the expatriates who is recognised as a well adjusted expatriate exposed his tactic (turn 17):

Example 10

17 P12: /.../ I (0.2) have (0.1) learned over the years (0.1) to read (.) and to weight certain passions by my counterparts (.) so I would not necessarily read them in the same way (.) as few years ago and would be a little bit more realistic in the interpretation of (0.1) whatever the statement has been made (.)

Besides the language barrier, the other significant interaction problem related to the Thai hierarchical system as one expatriate remarked:

Example 11

18 P5: /.../ seems to me from my observation /.../ the person who gets in contact to you (0.1) has to follow the hierarchical line /.../ it’s (.) the perceptions (.) and very different perceptions within the Thai’s team (.) and Thai people what they expect from the expert

This circumstance (turn 18) caused incompatibilities in relationships between the two parties. Together with an unclear work condition, it can result in an unproductive work performance. And even worse, according to unofficial report from the MOL staff (two weeks after the interview was conducted), it made one expatriate decide to return home prematurely.
5.1.4 General adjustment (GA)

Considering the general adjustment dimension with regard to the foreign culture and living conditions, every expatriate in this study was satisfied and did not have major difficulties with practical arrangements in Thailand. Only two expatriates felt a bit uncomfortable with the low speed-internet and air-pollution in Bangkok. Apart from that, they have good impressions of living in Thailand, as described in the following excerpts (turn 19-22).

Example 12

19 P1: My emotion (/.../ err (0.1) complex (.) yeah (.) err both happy and some:::e stress maybe (.) my private life (.) I'm very happy (.) I enjoy (.) I enjoy my life here (.)

20 P4: /.../ I can feel oriental :::l values (0.1) in Thailand /.../ people take care (.) each other (.) /.../ Thai culture is the culture of smile (0.3) normally it comes from politeness (.) so (.) it's very impressed (.)

21 P5: A living I feel very positive (.) and umm (0.2) it's easy living (.) huh? and umm (0.1) the people are very kind and very open nah and they try you know umm (0.3) to communicate (.)

22 P9: /.../ I often eat at the street vendor (.) because I like phad-thai (.) kuay-tiew (=noodles) you know /.../ I can say (.) hygienic and err (0.1) the cost is very reasonable and when I eat on the street I can feel really I stay in Thailand /.../ and of course I invite my family together (.)

The findings on intercultural adjustment showed that the in-country adjustment ability of the expatriates in this study (consisting of adjustment to work, adjustment to interacting with host nationals, and adjustment to general non-work environment (Andreason, 2003a; Black et al., 1991; Suutari & Brewster, 1998) had a greater influences on expatriates' performance than anticipatory adjustment. It can be argued that preparation for performing in an unfamiliar work context and a different way of life in the host country is one of the crucial elements in an overseas assignment, and an important mechanism that has been considered to facilitate intercultural adjustment is cross-cultural training (Black & Mendenhall, 1990). Therefore, the role and influence of cross-cultural training is discussed in the next subsection.
5.2 The role of cross-cultural training

Cross-cultural training (CCT) always has a positive influence upon skill development, adjustment, and performance. The relationship between CCT and the formation of ties between expatriates and host nationals in the theoretical framework of this study is based on the belief that skills resulting from CCT would enable expatriates to form favourable relationships with the host nationals. These acquired skills are observed under three dimensions: first, skills relating to maintaining self, second skills related to the fostering of relationships with host nationals and, third, cognitive skills that promote a correct perception of the host environment and its social systems (Black & Mendenhall, 1990).

5.2.1 Maintain self (MS)

As expected, the development of greater feelings of well-being (turn 23) and self confidence (turn 24) was found in the expatriates who received intensive CCT before their departures.

Example 13

23 P4: For life style also at leisure time (.) I can play golf here in Thailand (.) so (0.3) it's good for me - exercise (.) very easy (.)

24 P5: I find it very challenging to work in a country where /.../ you develop instrument (.) in cooperation to get that (.) with the self confidence (.) on both sides /.../

However, it appeared that there were expatriates who received CCT but still faced difficulties in maintaining self because they were not able to form and maintain work and non-work social alliances. In contrast, there were expatriates who did not receive CCT but who were able to transform their stress into fruitful learning experiences (see
example 8). They were capable of strengthening their self-esteem and mental hygiene to make them feel comfortable in the foreign environment.

5.2.2 Fostering relationships (FR)

The ability to communicate is an important means of forming good relationships. Therefore, language skill is one of the critical elements that allow effective interaction between the expatriates and host nationals. Through the interview, expatriates who received substantial CCT referred to the language barrier as a blockade to creating relationships and a source of other subsequent misinterpretations and misunderstandings (turn 25).

Example 14

25  P5: I don't speak Thai (.) the person responsible for international cooperation does not speak English (0.1) /.../ it makes a difficult by the language /.../ I not very satisfy (.) /.../ because of a lack of communication (.) a lack of team spirit (.) a lack of togetherness (.) a lack of respect (0.1) umm (0.3) I think it's a lack of communication ()

Conversely, there was one expatriate who did not receive either CCT or a language course but could distinguish and understand the hierarchical positions in the relationships among people and successfully adjusted himself to the foreign environment (turn 26).

Example 15

26  P12: I have (0.1) also personally learned a lot in terms of (0.1) err (0.2) interact with people and I think I less judgemental because of my exposure to different culture /.../

5.2.3 Cognitive skills (CS)

In general, it was noticed that the expatriates were ready to adjust and had appropriate perceptions relative to host nationals. One expatriate stated it was emphasised in the intercultural communication training that in order to be successful in foreign assignment
it is important to “... make friends with local people (. ) local culture (. ) and respect local people (. )
respect the culture of local people”. Most expatriates in this study had correct perceptions of
the host environment and its social systems (turn 27, 28) but had different ways of
reacting to facing the situations based on their personality characteristics and personal
background.

Example 16

27 P5:  /.../ it’s government situation that /.../ has to face a lot of difficulties (. ) face a lot of
competition and offside (0.1) and things have to change (. ) to adjust and I understand
/.../ I think one of the ::e problem was hierarchy which hindrance a lot of development (. )

28 P12:  /.../ I still need to learn a lot in terms of patience (. ) and in terms of (0.2) in terms of
finding a right balance between (0.2) assisting in (0.1) activities and expecting (0.1) the
counterpart to do certain activities by themselves (. )

It can be assumed on the basis of this evidence that CCT has a positive impact on
expatriates’ accurately perceiving host nationals and host cultures but there was no
indication to show whether CCT allowed these expatriates adjust more speedily to the
new working and living conditions. Accordingly, the expatriates who were more
satisfied in their new environment and adjusted quicker were the expatriates who did
not receive CCT and were based in their organisations (international settings – see
example 8), whereas the expatriates who were less contented and adjusted later were the
ones who received CCT and were based in the MOL (see example 5).

The expatriates’ abilities to retain self-esteem, create good relationships with host
nationals, and have a correct perception of the host environment and its social systems
are very important, but not enough for the expatriates to be successful in overseas
assignment. The ability to communicate competently and confidently through various
means of communication is another essential factor that may result in high/low morale,
and cause other contradictory/favourable behaviours that can positively/negatively affect productivity (Taylor, 1998). This is now discussed further in more details.

5.3 Intercultural communication competence of the expatriates

For the purposes of this study, Ruben (1976)’s seven categories in evaluating effective international communication in overseas assignments were selected to explore the intercultural communication competence of the expatriates.

5.3.1 Display of respect (DOR)

If ‘positive regard for another person is an important component in effective interpersonal relations…’ as Ruben (1976, 1979) pinpointed, it can be argued that the display of respect skill of most expatriates in this study was found to be positive at a superficial level but underneath lay nuisances and dissatisfactions.

Example 17

29 P5: /.../ one day I came across the corridor here (.) and I saw big pile of boxes and people sending letters (.) I said oh (.) oh what are you doing (.) huh? (.) ((SL)) you’re sending mails all over the country (.) yeah /.../ we make a training need analysis (.) oh (.) you make a training need analysis /.../ it would be (.) in my portfolio (.) to look for training need analysis /.../ if you are not asked for it (.) if you are not even informed what’s going on (.) how can you act?

From the above excerpt (turn 29), the expatriate expressed her respect to the local staff by showing minimal concern and did not express her feeling of disappointment for not being informed of work directly related to her assignment that she considered very important. It was found that other expatriates seemed to face similar situations and reacted in the same way. These incidents resulted in low morale, a lost sense of teamwork, and negatively affected the organisation’s reputation and achievement as one
expatriate daringly exposed "... I not very satisfied /.../ because of a lack of communication /.../ a lack of team spirit /.../ a lack of togetherness /.../ a lack of respect /.../ umm /.../ I think it's a lack of communication /.../

5.3.2 Interaction posture (IP)

The content of the next excerpt (turn 30) implies that even though the expatriate might feel irritated with the circumstances, he had ability to respond in a descriptive and non-judgemental way. His descriptive statements contain factual information although it was shown through the senses. However, he was able to maintain the respectful and trustworthy relationship with the host nationals and succeeded in his international assignment.

Example 18

30 P12: /.../ the ministry's always doing very well and expressing its needs to work /.../ and so on /.../ for someone who has passionate about this topic umm might be easy deceived /.../ sometimes it's gap /.../ like the wishful thinking and the reality /.../ you know what I mean?

On the other hand, it was somewhat difficult for some expatriates based in the MOL to respond in a non-judgemental way (turn 31, 32). The following statements clearly showed how they felt about the climate they were in.

31 P1: /.../ my counterpart /.../ he cannot speak English very well /.../ and::: /.../ not only the linguistic difficulty /.../ err::: /.../ he is not so good at coordinating issues /.../ coordination people /.../

32 P5: very close ministry doing the similar form /.../ it is funny that they do it /.../ two ministries do it /.../ why do they have been forced to do?

It is interesting to note here that all expatriates based in the MOL were unable to perform interaction postures as effectively as the expatriates based in their own organisations. These findings support the previous literature that this skill is related to
cross-cultural interpersonal functioning. When the expatriates executed it well, the quality of the relationship between the expatriates and host nationals was improved.

**5.3.3 Orientation to knowledge (OTK)**

There are two justifications for how the expatriates perceived and explained their beliefs, knowledge, values and perceptions. The better adjusted expatriates, who recognised that these insights were individual in nature and whose views of what ‘true’ or ‘right’ were likely to be different (turn 33), could adjust to the host nationals’ practices easier than the expatriates who, to some extent, viewed these insights valid for them (turn 34).

Example 19

33 P10: /.../ in BKK people make allowance for the fact that you’re westerners /.../ in *** (0.1) they don’t make allowance because they don’t understand the westerners have the different cultures /.../ if you make a mistake in *** people will tell you (LG) and so /.../ I think it was err a very useful cultural experience /.../

34 P5: Here /.../ something which has to deal with hierarchy /.../ that hindrances works /.../ because umm (0.2) it can’t be initiative /.../ something umm (0.2) where delayed (0.1) simply by the way that /.../ we perhaps did not know how to address approach /.../ various issues /.../

**5.3.4 Empathy (EMP)**

Most expatriates appeared to have the ability to know what it is like to ‘walk in another person’s shoes’ and knew how to deal with more subtle issues. Yet they had different levels of aptitude to maintaining self and different ways to displaying empathy (turn 27, turn 35-38).

Example 20

35 P1: /.../ low rank people make some suggestion and if it fails /.../ I’m pretty sure /.../ he will be punished /.../ nobody make any suggestion to the superior /.../

36 P10: I think (0.1) interested in other cultures /.../ it’s the first thing /.../ not being scared
(.) umm because something different/.../ also (0.1) an appreciation that not everything about your own culture is right (.) you can learn something from other culture as well (.) and (0.2) I think patience is very important too (.)

37 P12: I think I have (0.1) also personally learned a lot in terms of (0.1) err (0.2) interact with people and I think I less judgemental because of my exposure to different culture (.)

38 P14: /.../ fundamental is cultural sensitivity /.../ respecting each culture glorious (.) specific features (.) and then trying to work in that context /.../ for some Thais it's more difficult because this is their country (0.1) and they haven't worked abroad and they haven't had the same exposure /.../ if we are after all umm (0.3) working in their countries (.) so (.) we have to take into account of this context (.)

39 P2: /.../ Thai people err way of thinking (0.2) not so flexible (.) rigid (0.1) my driver (.) he don't understand (.) when I asked him (.) to drive to Central /.../ how did he can't understand ?

It can be seen in the excerpts 27, 35-38 that the expatriates were able to gain and reflect the host colleagues' thoughts, feelings and experiences. Apparently, these expatriates were able to maintain and strengthen positive relationships with their colleagues. In contrast, excerpt 39 is an example of the expatriate who was unable to accept the limited language skills of host nationals. However, he did not realise his limited language skills both in Thai and English and was unable to reflect his counterparts' deliberations and experiences.

5.3.5 Self-oriented role behaviour (SRB)

As expected, for the benefit of greater group cohesion and fruitful communication, the well adjusted expatriates were able to adopt appropriate role behaviours in response to their organisational context and social groups. These roles included initiation of ideas (turn 40), harmonising (turn 41), and compromising (turn 42). On the contrary, some expatriates performed roles which could be considered as negative behaviour from their colleagues' points of view and were highly resistant to ideas of others or tried to cultivate a highly positive personal image by noting professional qualifications, the
home office’s reputation and complained that the host cultures’ practices were dysfunctional in the current situation (turn 43).

Example 21

40 P5: /.../ the minister () or the permanent secretary () they should have a vision () what they expect () of experts () and how they want to work with experts in 5-10 years () why? (0.1) for what? (0.1) how long? (0.1) at which level? (0.2) and how? (0.1) and then () they communicate that vision (0.1) that’s the reason why I work for them (0.1)

41 P1: It’s quite different working in Japan and working in Thailand of course /.../ but we can understand each other /.../

42 P10: /.../ getting what you want in a nice way and polite way is very important in Thailand /.../ in western cultures we have a little bit of a cowboy attitude business and that doesn’t work () it’s not appreciated in Thailand ()

43 P2: /.../ they should respect our expert (0.2) in this program (0.3) every country should respects expert () expert standpoints ()
R: I’m sure as you said the problem is the language.
P2: I think so (0.2) not so good () in general speaking (0.1) Thai people is not good at English, huh? /.../ some persons have different concept for English words ()
R: Like the word ‘expat’ /.../
P2: This is hard () expat (0.3) can misunderstand () (whisper: it’s bad word) /.../ it means (0.1) “criminal” (0.2) criminal () some person to (0.2) send ( 0.2) send him to ah ah Island /.../ Japanese err (0.4) experts think like me /.../

5.3.6 Interaction management (IM)

All through the interview process the expatriates proved to have very effective management of interactions. They made considerable efforts to provide valuable and practical information under the time constraints on both the researcher and themselves.

Taking into account the skill in interaction management between the expatriates and host nationals, two expatriates’ explanations in the following excerpts (turn 44, 45) clearly depicted their abilities in initiating and terminating interactions based on the needs and desires of their counterparts.

Example 22

44 P3: /.../ the last task was something out of my professional experience () so () I recommend it

45 P13: /.../ policy is not made of things that can be solved by scientific issues () always sometimes you have to decide () which is the work of politician /.../ in that sense () we have limitation but I don’t think that’s a problem ()
5.3.7 Tolerance for ambiguity (TFA)

The expatriates displayed different levels of ability for being at ease in dealing with ambiguous situations. All of them were happy and did not have difficulty in terms of adapting to the living environment (turn 19-22) but some had noticeable discomfort with unclear work conditions (turn 46-48), especially the expatriates based in the MOL. Naturally, the complicated hierarchical system in Thai organisation was often raised as the original discomposure among all expatriates (turn 49).

Example 23

46 P5: /.../ we are running behind information /.../ so (.) it's very difficult to be useful if you are now to do 70% of guesswork /.../ we had a meeting in March this year (.) we suggested some points already /.../ but interference in Thai culture (.) that makes a big problem /.../ at the moment I'm very demotivated /.../ to be frank (.) I've worked in quite a number of countries I n-e-v-e-r faced t-h-a-t /.../

47 P11: /.../ difficulties were the fact that /.../ this job didn't existed before /.../ my responsibilities were not very clear (0.1) I had to create pretty much myself (0.1) and sort it out (.)

48 P12: Sometimes people say yes (.) and then afterwards (.) they inform someone else the national programme coordinator not national programme officer umm (0.1) that they don’t agree (.) that’s another problem or another issue (.) challenge (.)

49 P5: I think one of these problem was hierarchy which hindrance a lot of development /.../ hindrance (.) any kind of innovations (.) hindrance any kind of communication (.) passing around /.../ hindrance also the governmental institution (.) to adjust their own roles to the changing environment (.)

It can be noticed throughout the findings that organisational culture and management processes of the host country play an integral, direct role in expatriates' performance, but have, at most, an indirect role in expatriates' behaviours. Expatriates' ability to understand and adjust to organisational culture different from their own, and their ability to use appropriate means of communication in those different settings are important to them and the organisation they work for. The elements of Thai organisational cultures that result in expatriates' performance, therefore, are the next concerns to be discussed.
5.4 Thai government organisational cultures and expatriates' adjustment

The issue of expatriates’ adjustability in foreign assignments is undeniably influenced by the patterns of organisational cultures in the host country. The constituents of organisational cultures discussed here will touch upon the host cultures’ belief, values and assumptions related to work practices, elements of the job affecting expatriates’ adjustment, relationship development between expatriates and their local colleagues, availability and effectiveness of cross-cultural training, expatriates’ knowledge of the host country’s language, and ability of family/spouse in adjusting to new environment. These factors are interrelated and play crucial roles in expatriates’ adjustment.

5.4.1 Local cultures (LC)

As discussed earlier in the literature review, among a number of factors, the expatriates’ satisfaction and perceived effectiveness with living and working in a foreign culture, their intercultural communication abilities, and their abilities in developing and encouraging relationships in a foreign setting depend, predominantly, on the host cultures.

In terms of work atmosphere, the most often mentioned element of Thai working cultures by eight expatriates in this study was the hierarchical system in the Thai GO. It was found that the Thai hierarchy, where there is considerable dependence on subordination to bosses either in the form of an autocratic or paternalistic boss (turn 51, 54) and many layers in making decisions (turns 50, 52), are nothing new for them but are sometimes quite hard to cope with. For example:
Example 24

50 P5: I want to complain about the matter but I have to write the letter to my counterpart she gives to her boss and the boss gives to the international department the international department translates into Thai and from Thai it’s again translated into English and then to send to people I think that the Thai culture society is very locked up and close society a lot of regulations it’s controlled internally you respect hierarchy because they keep it controlled

51 P3: /.../ this land they have strong umm hierarchic thinking so that makes it’s difficult to work as a team because maybe the subordinate will not open his mouth in front of his boss that’s the culture this is what I dislike so you can’t organise things in a very short time here in Thailand if you don’t have a high position you cannot do anything here

52 P9: I understand the MOL’s decision making process is very complicated need approval from the top level not their failures but kind of structure problem at the ministry

53 P10: hierarchy is very important in Thailand and also being polite being saying things quietly also help you get what you want

54 P11: /.../ coming from Europe I have difficulties to adjust to umm mainly the fact that Thailand is a very hierarchical society umm when it come to age differences and the status and the society who you are in society very hierarchical

Thai value hierarchical thinking and what can be seen from the above excerpts is Thai’s politeness resulting from the attitude term ‘kreng jai’, and the culture of face saving and criticism avoidance. Kreng jai describes a feeling of not wanting to impose on others and being considerate. The high value of ‘kreng jai’ makes young Thais quiet in the presence of their elders. In the workplace, when the boss makes a mistake, the subordinate might keep quiet or present the mistake as his/her own. Thus, while the Thai colleagues expressed their politeness through acts of ‘kreng jai’, face saving and criticism avoidance, the expatriates, especially those from the western cultures, may find this value hard to grasp.

5.4.2 Job factors (JF)

The potential work-related factors found to facilitate or inhibit expatriates’ work adjustment in this study are role conflict, role discretion, and pre-departure knowledge
(Andreason, 2003a; Black, 1988). Role conflict described the behaviours that may be present in contrast to the preferred role in the host environment (turn 55), role discretion or role flexibility allowed expatriates to adapt their work role and setting to themselves rather than adapting themselves to the work situation (Andreason, 2003a) (turn 56).

These two job factors were demonstrated in the following excerpts:

**Example 25**

```plaintext
55 P1: /.../ my mission is (...) is ahh:: advisory activities (...) so (...) the results that not come out suddenly /.../ but *** does not want that (...) *** expects clear instant results (...) so (...) it's discrepancy between the expectation of *** (...) and err what I can do here (...) that's the main problem of mine /.../ I should feel a lot of stress (...) between the expectation from *** and the results (...) from the communication between (...) the *** and myself (...)

56 P9: /.../ I have to of course very much you know (...) collaborative with local government and deal with local people and let them do it (...) my role is again (...) serving to the people and facilitating the people to work /.../ very important (...) we should be very organise /.../ even if we have some problems /.../ instead of blaming somebody (...) we have to /.../ make it positive and find very practical solutions (...) we should be always action oriented work (...) or output oriented (...) not problem oriented /.../
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It can be seen then that the greater the role discretion, the easier the adjustment. This can lead to greater satisfaction with the international assignment for the expatriates and result in higher performance (turn 56). In contrast, the greater the role conflict, the less the degree of adjustment.

In addition, as described in literature review, pre-departure knowledge in the form of previous international experience or pre-departure training had the potential to provide and prepare the expatriates for what they would face in the new environment and enabled them to prepare them to deal with the new work situation. However, as shown in turn 57, it was not always the case that the expatriates equipped with previous international experience had a speedy adjustment per se if, to a certain extent, the expatriates' perceptions of work practices were rooted in their home culture despite having been exposed to foreign cultures.
In my consultancy work before, I never have the feeling that I go and teach them something they know very well but it’s a matter of exchange ideas and I found it’s very exciting to have that in Thailand here. Perhaps it’s government situation has to face a lot of difficulties perhaps I interpret the way that you don’t want the time that you don’t want to share the insecurity and the situation that they are working question marks with outsider.

5.4.3 Inter-personal relationship (IR)

As in most Asian countries, the emphasis of the high-context and collective Thai culture on social harmony and pleasant relationships considerably affected the expatriates' adjustment and performance. Inter-personal relationship was the issue most raised by every expatriate (83 utterances). When the Thais communicate, they express their politeness through being considerate and taking into account others’ feelings as well as remaining calm and compromising when facing difficult situations. However, this value may differ notably from the expatriates' opinion (turn 58, 59).

Example 26
58 P3: Gosh (LG) (0.1) I think the politeness is the sense that I think the way of thinking sometimes not the way of doing. Thai society tries to not to hurt anybody and that’s mean you’re not moving.

59 P12: Compromise is very important here I guess. Here people seem to be at peace with reality they don’t express or they express the way I don’t understand.

Generally, workplace relationships involve rights and responsibilities. Agreements can, and should, be made formally. From the Thai perspective, this obligation is not as important as strong relationships between business partners and this perception was recognised by all fourteen expatriates (turn 60-63).

Example 27
60 P1: Human relationship seems more important in Thailand in the case of public err officials in Thailand if you have a close contact with the political leaders you might have a very good chance to be promoted very easily.

61 P3: At the beginning you have to make everything official but once you know that person it was no problem to talk to them and inform of privacy or whatever.

62 P9: We should not be too straightforward we should not err (0.1) blame or criticise
anybody in public (/.../) otherwise they feel very much insulted then (/) our work relationship will be very much damaged (/.../) so we should pay the most attention to keeping and developing good relationship (/)

63  P10:  /.../ in Thai culture /.../ you also gain some status from who you know /.../ in Thailand they impress you by explaining who they know (/) where in Australia they try to impress you with fact and figures (0.1) and how much we know /.../ if you have a good relationship with that person (/) with that agency (/) they will do it for you umm and you don’t need to push /.../

Three expatriates shared their views about their working relationship with Thai colleagues:

Example 28

64  P2:  /.../ we are outsiders (/) we are not included in your (0.3) hierarchy (0.3) outsider (/) (0.2) so (/) we cannot order them (/) we cannot order something (/)

65  P5:  /.../ I want to be respected as umm (0.1) as a professional level (/) as a colleague (0.2) and they would be respected in return (/)

R:  Do you think you’re treated appropriately at the moment?

P5:  No /.../ I’ve a feeling that (/) the international experts are talked about but not talked with (0.2) and when we asked for the meeting (/) the meeting never takes place (0.2) and we don’t even get confirmation of reception of the letter

66  P12:  I need to find the ways of (0.1) communicating my goal in a way that (/) my counterpart identifies and shares the same sense of urgency /.../ what I find quite (.) difficult to assess is the question (0.1) to ::::0 what extent (/) we should actually compromise (/) not in terms of goals (/) but in terms of actions to achieve those goals (/)

However, the following statements were always mentioned when the expatriates were asked about their general interactions with Thai colleagues:

Example 29

67  P10:  I enjoy interacting with Thai people who (0.1) who have a little bit of experience overseas /.../ so (/) I can ask them a question along the lines /.../ and they can explain that to a foreigner because they understand what foreigners don’t understand about Thailand (/)

68  P11:  I’ve met Thai colleagues here and I’ve spent a lot of time with Thai colleagues and umm (0.1) they have been very helpful (/) and err integrating (/) me (/) into their lives /.../ my professional relationship with people from the ministry umm (0.1) is (0.1) rather informal (/) I would say (/)

As seen from example 28 and example 29, it might be argued that, in general, working relationships between the expatriates and the Thai officials at the MOL have not
reached a point where the expatriates could assume that they gained enough trust and respect from their Thai colleagues. This circumstance, as one expatriate stated ‘it’s hindering (quality of) work’.

5.4.4 Cross-cultural training (CCT)

As suggested in the literature review, pre-departure and/or post-arrival cross-cultural training is one of the keys to expatriates’ effectiveness. In this study, nine expatriates had received CCT or orientation before coming to Thailand. According to these expatriates, the provision of CCT/orientation and the criticism of its effectiveness were alike:

Example 30

69 P1: *** has a::: orientation program but it is for the (0.1) for general (.) err (.) it’s a general orientation program /.../ a little some (0.1) cultura:::l (0.2) issues but in general terms (.) not specifying Thai (0.1) issues (.)

70 P3: In general Germany allocates a time between six weeks and three months /.../ with err German organisation which is involved in technical assistance programs /.../ I was in six week (.) because they said I have so much experience /.../ we have certain training (.) like intercultural management (.) intercultural affairs /.../ the history of the country you’re going to and language courses /.../ I have to tell you (.) one thing which is lacking is no introduction and there was no introduction at *** (.) no supports (.) you just came here and then you sit here and you don’t know what to do (.)

71 P4: I joined about (0.2) 2 weeks orientation course in Japan (.) they taught many things about (0.2) this job /.../ and of course (.) after orientation (.) they gave us err Thai language lessons /.../ the language course is err (0.1) not so (0.1) effective because err (.) at the moment err (.) I don’t speak err Thai very well (.) other course is (.) err very (.) very good (.) err (0.1) I think so (.) yes (.) they introduce how to (0.2) how to (0.2) how to (0.2) how to (0.2) how to (0.2) how to (0.1) err (0.1) contact to people (.) how to communicate the people (.) in the different cultures (.)

On the basis of the above evidence it was shown that expatriates were quite positive about the value of CCT and orientations. In spite of this, as noticed in turn 70, CCT and orientation has been accepted as a mechanism to facilitate cross-cultural interactions but the MOL did not provide post arrival training/orientation for the expatriates working with them. In fact, the provision of these CCT not only helps the expatriates be familiar
with the new environment better and faster but it also shows the host nationals' consideration and hospitality in assisting the expatriates to integrate smoothly and satisfactorily into new sphere of life.

It is also interesting to see that other forms of preparation seemed to work well, than other formal CCT:

**Example 31**

72  P9:  I've never attended any formal class about the cross-cultural things (.) etc (.) etc (.) but /.../ I was involved in many research and training projects /.../ so (.) I could gradually get how to call it (.) cross-cultural sense (.) how to work with the people from other cultures (.) other background (.)

73  P11:  I haven't received any training /.../ but /.../ I've been to international high school /.../ my university was very international /.../ being in an international setting such as the *** is nothing new for me (0.1) /.../ I've been to Thailand before (.) err so (.) I kind of knew what's awaiting me (.)

It seemed, to the expatriates in this study, that the CCT/orientation they had received helped them to get broad ideas about what they were going to experience but practical sessions such as simulations or role-play would allow them to have hands-on experience. Therefore, the expatriates in example 31 who had experience in different cultures were likely to better handle the setbacks in cross-cultural adjustment than the expatriates in example 30.

**5.4.5 Language skills (LS)**

It has long been known that proficiency in the host country's language was paramount for effective interaction adjustment between the expatriates and host nationals (Andreason, 2003a). This is because language barriers can make it difficult for the expatriates to form meaningful relationships with the host nationals.
Although it was found in this study that a language course was on the agenda in the CCT, however, the course was too short (1-2 weeks) to enable them to communicate with the Thais once they came to Thailand. Twelve expatriates described the influence of Thai language skill on their working lives. They pointed out that the language barrier caused discrepancies in creating effective communication and collaboration (turn 74, 75) and underlined the need and benefit of knowing the Thai language (turn 76, 77).

Example 32

74 P5: /.../ it's a matter of language problem /.../ the person /.../ responsible for international cooperation does not speak English /.../ so (/) the communication is therefore a little bit limited /.../

75 P12: /.../ due to my inability of speaking Thai (/) and due to different form of expressing frustrations (0.1) it's (/) very hard sometimes to understand (/) underline problems or ongoing problems for me as a foreigner (/)

76 P3: This is important (/) I can only advice err for any expat and for MOL (/) if you get people in here (/) give them at least secretary /.../ who can (/) excellent in English or Japanese or whatever it is (0.1) and the second is language teacher /.../ they need this (/) so (/) make it obligatory (/)

77 P7: /.../ for me it's good I think (/) because I can speak Thai a little (/) and be able to read Thai document /.../ my Thai colleagues don't have to prepare English document (/) so it's very easy to contact me (/) /.../ if they (the expats) want to work in Thailand (/) they have to learn the language because Thai people's English is not good (/)

5.4.6 Family adjustment (FA)

It has been well known that family/spouse adjustment is one of the most frequently cited reasons for the expatriates returning home prematurely. Among fourteen expatriates there were six married, six single, one divorcee and one de facto. All the singles and the one de facto received support from family/partner to work overseas. Five of those who were married travelled with their family/spouse. Their family/spouse was quite prepared and familiar with living in different cultures, as demonstrated in example 33.
Example 33

At the beginning it's difficult for her but she adjusted very fast she has no problem because she is artist she is working here whether she's here or another place she's always working.

She likes she likes my work and how to call it condition now very much she is quite comfortable stay in BKK because she has many friends I have to travel a lot on missions seems this is acceptable for them though I have to pay special attention whenever I'm in BKK I try to go home as early as possible and spend weekends as much as possible sometimes I can take them to my mission if it's not complicate.

It can be assumed from the specific characteristics of these expatriates that the findings coincided with Andreason (2003b) and Shaffer & Harrison's (2001) studies that a positive attitude toward the international assignment, a willingness to relocate, and the ability to establish identity in the new environment for the expatriates' spouse/family were important to expatriates' adjustment and effectiveness.

The roles and influences of all the constituents of organisational cultures as described above, provide an entire picture of how these elements affect expatriates' perceptions, performance, and their capability to create good relationships with the host nationals to reach organisation's and individuals' goals. In Thai context, stable interactions and relationships are important for coordination and integration in all types of organisation. This is because these network ties provide the basis for normative control and facilitate cooperative behaviours and the successful adoption of organisational practices (Manev & Stevenson, 2001). In the following subsection the strength and complexity of these ties between the expatriates and their Thai colleagues are explored.
5.5 Ties that bind

It was found that the findings supported the conception of network ties, that is, the expatriates’ ability to form relationships with their Thai colleagues is a major contribution to acquiring information about Thai organisations, to relieve pressure, and to increase understanding of the Thais’ common work and non-work practices and perceptions (Johnson et al., 2003), as two expatriates emphasised:

Example 34

80 P11: knowing networking and connection is still one of the most important factors in anything that happens in the workplace.

81 P12: I think the important factor (affecting success and difficulty in this assignment) is to (0.1) have alliance (.) if you work for a country programme it’s hard (.) for example it’s very important to have umm (.) to work with umm (.) Thai colleagues in the office to understand much better than I do what’s going on (.)

Having been described in the literature review, there were two (always) overlapping types of relationship - instrumental ties and expressive ties. The following examples demonstrate the form of relationships found in this study.

5.5.1 Instrumental ties

It was found that work-related ties are the basis of instrumental ties between the expatriates and Thai colleagues at the MOL. Eight expatriates referred to the importance of creating and sustaining workplace relationships (turn 82). While the expatriates based at the MOL mentioned that they were not provided with the expected support (turn 83), the expatriates based at their organisations were satisfied with this type of relationship (turn 84). It was interesting to see that there was no evidence of any expatriate in this study who associated with Thai colleagues in the MOL beyond the boundary of a professional basis. This might be as a result of expatriates’ adjustment ability and/or complexity of Thai organisational cultures.
Example 35

82 R: /.../ how do you see the importance of developing workplace relationship?
83 P1: /.../ most important (.) very (.) very important (.) I think I have err very good relationship with the staff of *** I (0.3) yes (.) we have very good (.) well communicated (.)
83 P3: I had a counterpart and my counterpart was a *** but he hasn’t (.) hardly had time for me (.)
84 P14: /.../ maintaining good personal relationship (0.1) on the professional basis of course (.) I mean we have like regular contact (.) we exchange information outside from work (.) I don’t relate with my counterpart (.)

5.5.2 Expressive tie

Given the specific characteristics of a high-context and collective society, functions of expressive ties were given great attention in the success of working and living in Thailand. Those relationships with strong interpersonal bonds considered that expressive or strong ties were characterised by reciprocity, mutuality and interdependence (Higgins & Kram, 2001) (turn 85, 86). This type of bond tends to create positive attitudes and meaningful relationships between the two parties and enhance organisational performance.

Example 36

85 P10: /.../ I have Thai friends and Australian friends in BKK /.../ I have very good friends from *** (.) I’ve still met them /.../ I really enjoy that Thai people that they always talk about food (.)
86 P12: /.../ when it came to the informal level like the role of networks (.) and personal relations are incredibly important in my point of views (.) my experience with people from the government or from the other organisations (.) that has been quite a::: a strong experience which I think it’s different from some western countries (.) incredibly /.../ in a country I’m from Germany you would much more rely on formal processes /.../ as an expatriate (.) it’s very important to build trust (.) I think I can but it’s very important to build trust over a long period of time so that you are actually not a stranger (.) right?

In addition, based on the fact that, whereas, instrumental ties provide opportunities, with structural autonomy, to gain resources that are unobtainable from close relationships, it is also unavoidable that the expatriates come into contact with host nationals outside the
workplace. The overlapping relationships in these types of strength were illustrated in
the following excerpts.

Example 37

87 P4: /.../ it’s relationship neh?? it means work also after work (/) if we can have good
relation (/) including private tie /.../ this leads to success of my job /.../ we must keep
our (0.2) way of work (/) pattern err (0.1) to :::o (/) to accomplish our :::r our task (/) neh?

88 P10: I think it’s important to have a relationship that (0.1) not so much as friendship
outside work (/) although (/) I have many Thai friends /.../ within Thai government (/) I
like to (0.1) build the relationship that (/) you talk about thing rather than work /.../
even if at one point they say no to something that you ask or you say no to something
that they ask (/) you’ve got other thing in the relationship that outside work (/) that you
know that doesn’t damage anything in the long term (/)

As already mentioned, the development of ties between the expatriates and Thai
colleagues at the MOL were instrumental ties. However, it appeared that the
relationships between the expatriates and their Thai colleagues in their organisations
were in the form of both expressive and instrumental ties. It might be argued that this
scenario could result from all the factors stated in the model studied, consisting of the
intercultural adjustment and intercultural communication competence of the expatriates,
the CCT effectiveness, as well as the specific characteristics of the Thai Government
organisation’s cultures, and will be discussed further now.

5.6 Discussion

Organisations these days are more internationalised than when Hofstede did his work.
Thus, this leads to a greater need for meaningful inter-personal cross-cultural contact in
economical, political and social arenas (Black & Mendenhall, 1990). This study
provides robust evidence that there are many elements influencing expatriates
performance when working in different cultures and these expatriates understand other
cultures more than previously.
Andreason (2003) suggests it is not, necessarily, the expatriates who perform well in their home country who are able to adjust well in a different culture. The results of the four dimensions of adjustment (anticipatory adjustment, work adjustment, interaction adjustment, and general adjustment) in this study showed that a major factor contributing to expatriates' difficulties was an inability to adjust to the Thai working culture, not a lack of technical expertise.

The expatriates did not find difficulties in adjusting to Thai culture and living conditions when they interacted with Thais in general. Most of them stated that "...Thai culture is very willing to embrace err (0.1) foreigners (.) people are very (.) very willing to talk to you (. ) and to engage with you (0.1) and to enter to dialogue with you (.) if you show some interests". Since the nature of maintaining good relationships, harmony and being cooperative are given high value in Thai society (O'Sullivan & Tajaroensuk, 1997), people from different cultures always find Thai people are very kind and helpful on the one hand, but there is probably an element of not wanting to make others feel embarrassed or lose face by declaring ignorance, on the other. For that reason, this practice might be relevant for maintaining relationships at a superficial level but might cause consequential misunderstandings and misperceptions in the situations where expressions of different ideas and perspectives are crucial, such as in professional interactions.

Underlying this is a strong Thai hierarchical orientation, particularly in the Thai GO. The Thai public officials are not predisposed to offer their ideas openly, especially in a group consisting of higher status persons. It is understandable that expatriates from low-context and individualistic cultures who were more able to assert their ideas would feel uncomfortable in this setting. In the course of this study it became clear that the need to
ensure that all ideas should be heard was not met in the Thai GO, and, according to some expatriates, their working environment was unsatisfactory.

Effective intercultural adjustment requires knowledge, skills, and attitudes to know and understand that cultures are different. A successful international assignment should begin with appropriate anticipatory adjustment in order that the expatriates can intuitively understand different values and meanings in different cultures before actually entering to the new environment. However, in most cases it was found that they did know but some of them did not have skills to deal with it, or maybe their attitudes were not very positive.

Thus, orientation/ pre and post arrival CCT for expatriates and their families/spouses are very important for all aspects of adjustment and expatriates’ effectiveness, not only on the expatriates’ side. Some kind of orientation or training module for both expatriates and host nationals on how they can better understand and work with people from different cultural background should be established and should be compulsory in the Thai GO.

Another important constituent to enrich expatriates performance is the degree of intercultural communication competence. Expatriates’ abilities to communicate competently and confidently with Thai colleagues at the MOL were varied in terms of the type of the ability and the extent to which that ability was used.

Among others, orientation to knowledge (OTK) and self-oriented role behaviour (SRB) yielded the highest scores (47 utterances/11 expats and 19 utterances/11 expats
respectively). Even so, these utterances could not truly verify that they were more skilful in these two abilities than the others. It could be the nature of the interview process and the questions asked that allowed the researcher to realise, and facilitated the expatriates to express their views on how they knew, perceived and believed about themselves and their Thai colleagues. Some aspects of communication competence such as display of respect (DOR) and interaction posture (IP) might generate higher frequencies if the researcher had the opportunity to observe when the expatriates communicated with Thai colleagues. What can be presupposed here is, OTK and SRB were the abilities used most often to enhance important interactions by the expatriates in this study.

All societies rely on relationships but not many societies place greater emphasis on all forms of relationships than Thailand (O’Sullivan & Tajaroensuk, 1997). Though the expatriates realised this scenario better than before, occasionally very deep cultural elements underneath, which complicated the formation of relationships, were still hard for them to understand and adjust to. For instance, the relationship associated with hierarchical thinking and the unique characteristics of Thai cultures such as politeness, kreng-jai (to be considerate and reluctant to impose on other person), and bun-khun (the reciprocity of goodness). The expatriates might feel daunted by this complexity and the best way to keep the work going was to maintain relationships with the MOL officials only in the form of weak ties.

Despite the importance, the data gathered from the expatriates did not demonstrate any attempt to develop strong ties between expatriates and the MOL officials. Social supports/networks among expatriates themselves seemed very strong and were
satisfactory enough to alleviate work stress and allow them to get with their lives. As seen from these findings, they concurred that strong relationships were very useful in the Thai context but chose not to have relationships with the MOL officials beyond a professional basis. It might be argued that different cultural frameworks and language barriers were major obstacles in creating strong ties between the expatriates and the Thais in this study.

5.7 Limitations of the model

The highlight of the proposed model was to investigate factors affecting relationships development between expatriates and host nationals. It is known that meaningful relationships make successful international assignment possible and enhance an organisation's effectiveness. Two theoretical assumptions place emphasis on the influence of intercultural adjustment and intercultural communication competence on the type of relationship developed between expatriates and host nationals, and the role of CCT in strengthening these skills and relationships.

These findings supported previous research on the importance of intercultural adjustment, intercultural communication competence, and CCT on relationship development between expatriates and host national and organisation effectiveness.

However, after scrutinising all the data, two interesting observations should be made here.

First, CCT is a means of facilitating the ability to fit in the host cultures and has a positive impact on skill development and expatriates performance, but would not
achieve its ambition without taking into account different national cultural values and traditions of the expatriates and host nationals. National cultures, therefore, should be integrated into the model, not merely used to understand the cultural differences among them as in initial intention of this study, but to go further and get synergy from diversity in the workplace.

Second, one of the important determinants of meaningful relationships is the individuals' personality characteristics. Personality traits proved to facilitate relationship development and influence expatriates success in overseas assignments (Caligiuri, 2000a, 2000b). Hence, it should be considered and investigated in this study as well.

In the next chapter, these two emerging themes will be discussed in the greater length, using protocol, content, and discourse analyses.
CHAPTER 6: EMERGING THEMES

This chapter will seek to explore the internal and external factors affecting expatriates' performance when they work with Thai Government organisations. This will be done through the use of protocol analysis to reveal the cognitive and analytical processes of the expatriates, particularly, in understanding the influences of subjective characteristics like intercultural adjustment, intercultural communication competence, national values and personality characteristics of the expatriates. The analyses of content and discourse will be also used to articulate these themes.

Having shown in the previous chapter that, national values and expatriates' personality characteristics can facilitate the establishment or obliteration of the relationship between expatriates and host nationals, and organisational effectiveness, therefore, this chapter will provide an illustration of the roles and importance of national values and expatriates' personality characteristics - the new themes emerging from the findings, to shed much-needed light on factors influencing expatriates' effectiveness in overseas assignments.

6.1 Nature of Statement Type

As a part of verbal protocol analysis, the classification of thought segments in evaluation criteria is an excellent choice for achieving a rich source of data and allowing meaningful interpretations with respect to the research objectives. This is because richness and variability of the dialogues are great assets to obtaining the actual feelings and perceptions from expatriates' conscious thoughts (Harrison et al., 1997).
In view of this, before proceeding to discuss the internal and external factors affecting expatriates performance, the interview statements and the frequency in which these statements appeared are divided into seven statement types of thought segments. This aims to encapsulate the cognitive processes of the expatriates (shown in Table 4 and 5) (Harrison et al., 1997) and allow the interpretation of feelings, meanings, motives, values, experiences, and opinions underlying each statement.

Table 4: Classification of Thought Segments in the Protocols: Statement Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>non-evaluative statement consisting of verbatim or paraphrased quotation of information provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recall</td>
<td>non-evaluative information based on the past experience of the respondent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preconception</td>
<td>judgemental statement based on previous experience/background knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inference</td>
<td>statement that involves a judgement on some part of the information provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>statement that seeks further information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>statement of intention or action to be performed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment</td>
<td>uncodable or irrelevant statement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Harrison, Dibben & Mason, 1997)

Likewise, besides the qualitative approach, the quantitative analysis was used to make the findings more systematic. The ideas and opinions were translated into variables, and then values for properties and comparisons. The frequency matrix in Table 5 (p.85) indicated thought segments appearing most frequently (% in column) and the categories of factors affecting international assignments most frequently pointed out by the expatriates (% in row).

Based on the analysis of statement types (Table 5), the percentages at the end of each column illustrated the distribution of thought segments that appeared in the interviews, the percentages in rows showed the percentage distribution of thought segments for each expatriate. It was interesting to see that the percentage distribution yielded the
same results when compared to rankings of the first three priorities of thought segments for each expatriate in Table 6. As seen in Table 5 (in column), most expatriates perceived and made judgements regarding factors affecting their performance primarily on the basis of preconception (24.23%) and description (19.15%). There was relatively little use made of inference (14.81%) and recall statements (13.81% - in column, and little use of question (10.69%) and action statements (5.93%). It was consistent with Table 6, where the first ranking consisted of preconception (8 expats – 57.14%), description (5 expats – 35.72%), and inference (1 expat – 7.14%).

Table 5: Frequency of Thought Segments in the Protocols

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Recall</th>
<th>Preconception</th>
<th>Inference</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>32</td>
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<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>16.11</td>
<td>7.78</td>
<td>18.33</td>
<td>18.89</td>
<td>17.78</td>
<td>7.78</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>21.90</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>25.71</td>
<td>10.48</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>17.14</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>32.54</td>
<td>8.73</td>
<td>23.02</td>
<td>9.52</td>
<td>9.52</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>11.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>24</td>
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<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>20.51</td>
<td>14.53</td>
<td>15.38</td>
<td>10.26</td>
<td>11.11</td>
<td>9.40</td>
<td>18.80</td>
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<td>42</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
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Table 6: The first three priorities of thought segments

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<th>P3</th>
<th>P4</th>
<th>P5</th>
<th>P6</th>
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<th>P10</th>
<th>P11</th>
<th>P12</th>
<th>P13</th>
<th>P14</th>
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<td>I</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
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<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Q</td>
<td>Q</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>I</td>
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<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: P = preconception, D = description, I = inference, R = recall, Q = question, C = comment

From the above results, the percentage of occurrences in rows and columns provided a clearer and more logical picture of the salient factors affecting expatriates’ performance and shows that they were brought about predominantly from the type of thinking process or though segments. It might be argued that expatriates naturally brought their preconceptions to bear on their perceptions and opinions about the situations and people they have encountered. According to the ‘precariousness’ characteristics of expatriate academics as Richardson & McKenna’s (2002) study revealed, the expatriates chose to express dissatisfaction through the use of preconceptions per se as well as descriptions of their working and living experiences. It could be argued that their preconception statements were based on previous experience, either directly or indirectly. Those ideas were formed beforehand and, in some cases, without adequate evidence but with confidence. It was understood that these statements showed that they were sharing an experience, not making a judgement.

In this study, most of expatriates’ preconceptions about Thai ways have been developed from what they had learned from pre-arrival CCT, other expatriates who had experience in Thailand, or their anticipation of living and working life in Thailand when compared to the countries they had worked in before. It was this partiality that prevented the objective consideration of the issues or situations. Description statements were non-.
evaluative. This made the expatriates feel more comfortable in providing general but rich information to the researcher, allowing a reading between the lines instead of the expatriates speaking their minds.

Nevertheless, it was interesting to detect from the interview process that, at times, the more insecure the individual, the more psychological distress s/he showed. And these expressions were conveyed through inference and recall statements. It was found that the expatriates drew conclusions or made logical judgements on the basis of circumstantial evidence and prior conclusions. For example, "...I'm not quite sure though at the moment I'm very demotivated... it's difficult to get motivation well the question is where do you get motivation?" Question statements were used in responding to the issues that the expatriates considered sensitive and did not want to commit themselves to. In some cases, question statements were used when they wanted to express their uncertainty about the truth or fact of the existence of something or a challenge to the accuracy, probity, or propriety of the others. For example,

**R:** If you can talk to the minister, to the PM, what would you recommend?
**P2:** I'll ask that you (.) you have such a power? (...) I must say I have (0.1) no such a power (...)/
**R:** What is your most impressive cultural experience while working internationally?
**P2:** Most impressive (0.2) so (.) I ask you (.) what is culture?

This scenario was found among Japanese expatriates based at the MOL. While the question statements were given by German expatriates when they intended to lead the researcher to make a judgement based on their description statements. For example,

"... no one told me (...) what are the changes (.) what are the procedures here (...) how can you as an expert support something which you don't know?"

As explained above, this evidence provides useful insights to the policy makers to make more responsive plans and policies dealing with international human resource
management, and for the academics to use this mechanism to investigate further the factors that might have been overlooked in previous research.

Furthermore, as seen in this study, analysis in the qualitative stage was made regarding the relevant phenomena and the nature of simplifications and approximations. The findings were inferred from interpretations of information drawn from the data collected and backed up by theory. At this stage, to answer specific research question on what internal and external factors affecting expatriates’ performance when they work with Thai government organisations, interpretations of the protocols were coded in seven categories on the basis of the descriptive framework developed earlier in this study and the two emerging themes. These seven categories were composed of intercultural adjustment, intercultural communication skills, cross-cultural training, ties, personality characteristics, national values, and others - a category to cover any aspects that are not codable such as gender, educational background, and international experience of the expatriates. Intercultural adjustment, intercultural communication skills, tie, and personality characteristics were considered as internal factors that were possessed, and could be altered, by the expatriates. Cross-cultural training and national values were considered as external factors that affect expatriates’ performance and the development of ties between expatriates and host nationals.

It should be noted here that, upon using this method, encouraging agreement was found between the respective segmentations and the assignment of categories to these segments. In some instances, the segments were coded with the same category. In others, segments were categorised differently because they could have a different interpretation.
Table 7: Verbal Protocol Frequency Analysis of Factors Affecting Expatriates Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Recall</th>
<th>Preconception</th>
<th>Inference</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>(%)</th>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>6.45</td>
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<td>13.75</td>
<td>26.74</td>
<td>14.34</td>
<td>9.70</td>
<td>6.17</td>
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In Table 7, based on the analysis of statement types, the percentages in rows illustrated the distribution of thought segments of each factor affecting expatriates’ performance.

The percentages at the end of each column showed the distribution of thought segments that appeared in the interviews which yielded the same picture as showed in Table 5.
that, these results were brought about predominantly from preconception, description, and inference statements.

6.1.1 Internal factors

From Table 7 (rows) it is shown that, as expected, ‘intercultural adjustment’ (IA) is the most important factor influencing expatriates’ effectiveness (37.33%). It was predominantly illustrated through preconceptions, inferences, and descriptions (28.73%, 16.92%, and 13.31%, respectively). There was relatively little use made of recall (13.06%), question (9.95%), and action statements (8.08%).

Although the definitions of preconceptions, inferences, and descriptions could be partly based on prejudice, this finding confirmed the results of previous studies on the importance of IA on the success of overseas assignments (Lomax, 2002; Rasetti, 1998; Scott, 1999; Selmer, 2000a; Skov, 2003). It should be noted that action statements (Table 5 - in column) occurred least (6.17%). But compared to all the factors (both internal and external), IA was most frequently illustrated through action statements (48.87% - the highest score of the thought segments). Since these action statements were based on intentions or actions performed, this figure gives enough evidence to fill the gap of prejudice, as stated, and it can be assumed that IA is the most important factor affecting expatriates’ performance in this study.

It is interesting to find that ‘ties’ or relationships between the expatriates and host nationals is the second important factor (26.56%) and this was illustrated through preconception (36.77%) and question (12.26%) statements. It can be claimed, as the findings demonstrated, that the strength of ties yielded outstanding results in this study.
because the awareness of expatriates about, and the effect of, fundamentals of Thai organisational and national cultures.

Before coming to Thailand, the expatriates recognised and anticipated that Thai organisations, especially government organisations, were hierarchical organisations in which everybody’s status has been clearly defined and obviously taken into account. In addition, they were aware that Thai people give particular prominence to the issue of people, so, it is important to have and use connections (O’Sullivan & Tajaroensuk, 1997) in all kind of relationships. This preconception was useful for the expatriates to understand better the cause of the actions of their Thai colleagues and to learn how to adjust and work effectively in the different settings. On the other hand, the expatriates who had strong feelings towards this practice would feel overwhelmed and decide to leave if the intensity of the different practices was higher than expected and too hard to cope with. For some expatriates, the issue of relationships based on organisational and national cultures is considered sensitive. They chose to contribute their ideas and opinions through question statements to avoid judgemental testimonies. Therefore, it might not be an exaggeration to say that tie strength should be one of the goals of, and part of, the means to ensure expatriates’ effectiveness and organisational success, but would be hard to establish.

More detailed analysis of the results suggested that the importance of the personality characteristics (PC) of the expatriates (13.18%) is the third most important factor. PC was one of the themes emerging in this study. It was not integrated in the model studied but arose from a wider range of statement types and played a greater role than the other
internal factor in the model, which was intercultural communication skills (ICS - 5.71%).

PC was illustrated through preconception (39.44%), inference (14.79%), and description (12.32%) statements. According to the nature of these statement types, it was undeniable that there would be some bias in this assessment. Nevertheless, the findings have provided reliable evidence that PC is a fundamental element to establishing and strengthening two important factors affecting expatriates’ performance - good relationships (ties) and effective intercultural communication (ICS).

ICS was illustrated through preconceptions (26.02%), recalls (20.33%), and inferences (18.70%). It was noticed that ICS did not get as substantial a result as expected. Possibly, most expatriates had a lot of experience both living and working overseas and believed that their intercultural communication skills were sufficient to work in Thailand. Language skills, especially speaking competence, was pointed out by some expatriates as a major barrier in their communication with Thai colleagues. For expatriates based at the MOL, inability of Thai colleagues to speak English seemed to be the root of dissatisfaction and miscommunication in the workplace. In fact, there were various forms of communication used to convey and receive information, instruction, ideas and feelings appropriately and effectively. Unfortunately the data gathered did not provide enough support to reveal what was the most appropriate and practical form of communication between the two parties.

In summary, some expatriates did not, initially, have a strong relationship with Thai colleagues at the MOL. After passing through a certain period of adjustment, some
expatriates found working with Thai colleagues a valuable experience, while others were still miserable. Considering internal factors alone, it can be assumed that these mindsets originated from the expatriates’ observations and perception at the outset. Later on, the circumstances could become either better or worse when their preconceptions naturally changed and evolved in response to their personality characteristics and intercultural communication skills. Therefore, the expatriates would possibly identify that the intercultural adjustment or intercultural communication issues they were encountering were shaped by other factors and not his/her specific personality or impact of intercultural adjustment ability. This might be the reason why these internal factors have played important roles and been investigated in the studies of expatriates’ effectiveness for decades.

6.1.2 External factors

External factors over which expatriates had little or no control, like cross-cultural training (CCT) and national values (NV) could also influence the success of overseas assignments. As described in the theoretical framework, CCT before could help with awareness-raising of what to expect and how best to behave or integrate into the new culture/environment. Its crucial role was anticipated be exhibited in this study but it was interesting to see from the results (see Table 5 – in row) that CCT (3.11%) received least attention while greater attention was placed on national values (6.92%) – the other theme emerging from the findings.

CCT was mainly illustrated through description (46.27%) and recall (16.42) statements. While other factors were primarily illustrated through preconceptions, CCT was the only factor that showed the highest proportion of description statements. Since most of
the content of pre-arrival CCT courses seemed to be broad and general rather than deep and specific and, for some courses, they were quite short. Moreover, there were only two expatriates who received post-arrival CCT. Hence, the results did not reveal clearly that CCT was a sufficient reason for expatriates' success, or that the skills necessary for them to be inter-culturally effective were gained from the CCT.

It could be argued that this scenario ensued because of the specific characteristics of the expatriates in this study. Most of them had international experience before coming to Thailand. They agreed that CCT was helpful to a certain extent but they had gained better intercultural communication skills and, consequently, intercultural effectiveness through cultural learning processes. As one of them stated "...I have experience here (0.1) in Thailand before (. ) so (0.1) my assignment in Thailand again (. ) so ((LG)) it's not so useful for me ((LG))"

An effective and responsive type of CCT should be more objective and intensive. One expatriate suggested that the very useful course she had been provided was "...course within the specific training ::g the special course of Thai language /.../ intercultural communication (. ) conflict resolution (. ) conflict solving /.../ planning (. ) monitoring (. ) evaluation ::n /.../ in such a way that (. ) they separate the groups /.../ within a cultural setting (. )". However, there was only one expatriate in this study who was provided with this type of CCT. It was found that CCT was part of the services organisations provided for the expatriates but the necessity of CCT was not the very first concern either for the organisations or the expatriates themselves.

A more important external factor in this study seemed to be national values (NV). It was the most frequently mentioned factor through preconceptions (43.62%) and a relatively
substantial proportion on inferences (16.78%), descriptions (10.74%), and recalls (10.07%). It can be confirmed and suggested by this figure that NV should be taken into account as an important external factor contributing to intercultural adjustment or when dealing with people from different cultural backgrounds. At the same time, it should be noted that, unavoidably, comments made regarding this issue might be subjective to some extent or probably based on prejudice.

Consistent with the findings in the previous sections, NV undoubtedly reflected expatriates’ adjustment and willingness to alter his/her attitudes and behaviour to adjust to host cultures. The degree of adjustment was, therefore, influenced by the cultural backgrounds and expectations of both expatriates and host nationals. For example, when dealing with Thai colleagues, the Japanese and Australian expatriates appeared to understand and to be more accepting with the complexity of working practices and hierarchical systems in the Thai GO rather than the Germans. In spite of this, the findings demonstrated that cultural difference was not a difficulty for some German expatriates who understand and try to embrace and adjust themselves to the new cultural environment. On the other hand, some Japanese expatriates who had negative feelings about the difference in working habits between the Thais and Japanese were found not to succeed in their overseas assignment, as expected. This confirmed previous research that an understanding of national values contributed to relationship development between expatriates and host nationals, which lead to success or failure in expatriation (Herbig, 1997; Hofstede, 1984, 1997; Salk & Brannen, 2000; Stening & Hammer, 1992; Suutari & Brewster, 1998, 2001; Varner & Palmer, 2002, 2005).
Apparently, national values and personality characteristics of the expatriates play crucial role in the success or failures of overseas assignment. Therefore, at this point, the features of these two emerging themes will be elucidated to show how they influenced performance of the expatriates in this study.

6.2 National values

National values have often been suggested as a significant predictor contributing to intercultural adjustment. A degree of nationalism is ascribed to each country, and frames people's attitudes, perceptions and behaviours. In attempting to apply the concept of cultural map to observe and understand the ways in which values differ, the results of this study clearly demonstrate the different values the expatriates might embrace in the areas of work focus, orientation to time, use of space, and ways of thinking regarding relationships among people from different nationalities (Lane et al., 2000).

Respondents in this study consisted of seven Japanese, five Germans, one Australian and one Luxembourgian. Based on Hofstede and his colleagues' framework, as described in the literature review, different national values were found to be associated with the expatriates and their Thai colleagues in this study. The discussion on the role and importance of national values is undertaken for two purposes: to see, through the lenses of the expatriates, how culture is structured in the Thai GO, and to investigate the influences of national values and the Thai GO culture on the expatriates' behaviours. However, it should be noted here again that generalisation of the results is to the theory, not a specific population to test the theory.
6.2.1 Thai Government organisation’s culture through the lenses of expatriates

A little evidence on Thai GO and expatriate management is likely to support the notion that Thai officials and expatriates might be different in personal and professional values and work practices. However, the understanding of this issue becomes crucial to the internalisation of organisations either in the public or private sectors. According to the expatriates in this study, some differences and similarities were found between them and their Thai colleagues in the Thai GO.

Individual organisations in Thailand, especially government organisations, are found to develop a ‘culture’ of their own but to different degrees depending on national values. At the same time, the way in which culture in the Thai GO is perceived by people from other cultures is relative, and also differs in degree in relation to their home country’s national values as well (O’Sullivan & Tajaroensuk, 1997).

As stated earlier, all expatriates in this study recognised the functions and consequences of the strong relationship and hierarchical system in the Thai GO. However, the extent of affection and sentiment between Japanese and German expatriates were dissimilar.

While the Japanese conceded and compromised “... in western way maybe you have to (.) be straightforward /.../ but in the Thai culture (.) Japanese culture we tend to say more indirectly (.) right? /.../ but of course perhaps our problem may be more structural not personal /.../ I understand the MOL’s (.) decision making process is very complicated /.../ it takes long time /.../ I have to understand them and I have to help them to clear the procedures and ((LG))”, the German observed that “... this land (.) they have strong umm hierarchic thinking /.../ makes it's difficult to work:: as a team /.../”.

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These scenarios were likely to be the result of expatriates’ efforts to fit between the Thai GO’s values and values the expatriates deemed appropriate based on perceptions and experiences they brought from home. These national differences always accounted for variations in the concepts of status and organisational structure. Thai and Japanese were found to have similar views in these terms because of the influence of Confucianism where paternalistic attitudes, top-down obligations, bottom-up loyalty and obedience are employed to a great degree (Lewis, 1997).

On the German side, even though the vertical structure was clear, substantial value was placed on consensus. Criticism was open and energetic if the others failed to be consistent with all the claims "I’m surprised (.) I would not have expected (.) at all. /.../ so (.) the more you leave the people outside (.) and don’t work with them as a team (.) the higher is the danger (0.1) as you create wild elephant (.)". Furthermore, status and promotion must be established according to the standards of formal qualifications. Working procedures or any instructions should always be written down and stated firmly and unambiguously (Lewis, 1997) "... we don’t know about organisational changes here /.../ we cannot work if we are not informed (.) we want to know the procedures (.) in order that we can support more /.../ but until now (pats his desk) noone told me (pat his desk harder) what are the changes (.) what are the procedures here and the and this organisation and (.) and (.) and (.) we haven’t known this ". This is also an example of what Lewis (1997) referred to as a part of German’s nature of ‘unstoppable drive towards order and conformity’ and was found in all German expatriates in this study.

It is arguable that, the Australian’s observation can be seen as a combination of the Japanese and German above "...it’s also important in all working life that’s (.) who you know is always important and to get ahead is always (.) very important to form good relationship with the people
you work with (. ) the difference I think (. ) in Thai culture is that (. ) you also gain some status from who
you know /.../ where in Australia they try to impress you with fact and figures (0.1) and how much we
know (. )". Therefore, it can be assumed that the Australian's flexibility, positivism and
egalitarianism (Lewis, 1997) shape the way of thinking and reacting of the Australian expatriate to the new environment. This helps to establish the fact that, at a certain level, these attitudes facilitated expatriates' adjustability to work and living conditions in Thailand. The expatriates who possessed these mind-sets were likely to understand what motivates Thai people and were aware of self-presentation when dealing with the Thais (O'Sullivan & Tajaroensuk, 1997).

6.2.2 Influence of national values and Thai Government organisational culture on the expatriates' behaviours

It was found that expatriates from small power distance, masculinity, and task oriented countries such as Australia, Germany and Luxemburg stated that unequal distribution of power in the Thai GO, where large power distance, femininity, and person orientation characterised its attributes, was perceptible. Turn 89 is a clear example of this argument.

Example 38:

89 P5: /.../ you just wait for someone to suggest next things /.../ then nothing would be easier for the Thai people /.../ particular expertise (.) are not available at the particular time (.) for that particular prize in Thailand /.../ only reason why we are here /.../ to use other networks because we are out of a particular hierarchy (.)

As shown above, the expatriates from these cultures expected to work in organisations that were predictable with low, or without, hierarchy. It was also important for them that roles and procedures should be clearly defined. With these different perceptions, frustrations may arise because it was contradictory to common practices in the Thai GO where the hierarchy, seniority and emphasis on relationships among people are dominant values (Luthans, 2001).
In comparison with the Japanese, the impact of masculinity with high uncertainty avoidance made the Japanese expatriate more assertive and materialistic when compared to Thai colleagues who tended to be less competitive and whose working style tended to rely more on paternalistic leaders. One expatriate stated that “It’s quite different working in Japan and working in Thailand /.../ the way of thinking and the err (0.3) the (0.1) pattern of action etc /.../ Thai organisation /.../ doesn’t have practice (.) which call (.) bottom up decision making system. /.../ of course (.) we need very clear decision made by tops /.../ but everyday (0.1) everyday decision making should be made by the lower level for the progress of the organisation”.

Nevertheless, the same dimensions of both Japanese and Thai societies on high uncertainty avoidance, person orientation, and status-based relationship facilitated the Japanese expatriates’ ability to understand better and adjust faster than the former group in terms of establishing and maintaining workplace relationships by trying not to show their feelings outwardly. As one Japanese expatriate stressed “...my principal /.../ we should not be too straightforward (.) we should not err (0.1) blame or criticise anybody in public /.../ otherwise they feel very much insulted then (.) our work relationship will be very much damaged (.)”. While one German expatriate openly and naturally expressed sensations “…I’m not interested in kind of great officer (.) public officer you are /.../ I don’t bother about it (0.3) but that’s bother here (.) and here you have to praise that person (0.1) temporarily (.)”.

This line of argument coincides with Hall & Hall (1990)’s verdict on German’s values that place great importance on contracts, precise words and honesty rather than focusing on building relationships and saving face. Since they tended to be more individualistic and task oriented (Lewis, 1997), they may decide that it is not worth working in the organisation where the assignment is no longer satisfying or meeting their expectations. It was found, from this study, that one expatriate could not cope with the stress
instigated from different ways of thinking and communication. Too much frustration and burnout made the expatriate terminate the assignment before time.

Given that different cultures have different assumptions about how people relate to one another, their approaches to time and space are different. (Trompenaars, 1994). Lane et al (2000) suggested that among others, monochronic and polychronic time systems are important to intercultural business because a proper understanding of the differences between these two time systems is helpful for effective intercultural communication.

Monochronic time dominated work practices of the expatriates from Australia, Germany and Luxemburg, while Japanese and Thai cultures represented examples of polychronic time. Monochronic expatriates were low context. They committed to their job rather than human relationships, adhered to plans, and needed transparency in all spheres of work (Lane et al., 2000). Work relationship is always “...on professional basis of course /.../ we have like regular contact (...) we exchange information /.../ my experience /.../ is very (...) very positive /.../ outside from work (...) I don’t relate with my counterpart (...). Unable to get access to information from polychronic colleagues who changed plans easily for the sake of good relationships made them “...think it is really worse (0.2) and b-a-d behaviour /.../ you have to find out (...) whether you are right or wrong /.../ then you know that they have been working with many many many many foreigners but (...) to find out where are the papers of this foreigner (...) they almost disappeared all (...)."

On the other hand, Japanese and Thai share some characteristics of polychronic time. The work is always undertaken in a harmonious atmosphere with a commitment to human relationships (Hall & Hall, 1990; Lane et al., 2000; Lewis, 1997) as one Japanese expatriate indicated “...without the (0.2) keeping good relationship with local people our
work cannot be successful (0.1) so we should pay the most attention to keeping and developing good relationship (.).

However, the degree of polychronical manifestation tended to be differentiated by masculinity/femininity values. The masculine Japanese tended to be more assertive, tough and focused on material success. For example, they considered the practice of having private facilities to be more unnecessary than the feminine Thais who were likely to be more concerned with quality of life. As one expatriate stated "...it's too much to have err toilet for me (.) but this is some symbols of the status in Thailand, isn't it? ". According to masculine characteristics, the expatriate inferred that having a private toilet was a sign of showing status or material success. This could be inherent hierarchical thinking in both nations. Nevertheless, it might be Thai host's intention was to show how they cared for the personal hygiene of the expatriates working with them.

In terms of territoriality, space can communicate power and a sense of privacy as well as demonstrate the construction of networks or social ties. This attribute is developed and influenced by national values but its width and depth depends on relationships with other people, emotional states, cultural background, and activities the expatriates performed (Hall & Hall, 1990; Lane et al., 2000).

In view of that, territoriality or personal space can contribute to the complication of intercultural communication that resulted as the expatriates oriented themselves beyond the host nationals' space. The results from the interviews showed that personal space was well developed among the expatriates from Germany, Luxembourg and Japan rather than the expatriates from Australia and their Thai colleagues. The Japanese's notion above about the toilet facility they were provided and the German's indication...
that “... if you don’t have a high position (.) you cannot do anything here (0.2) you have to have an office here (.) like this (0.1) to show that you’re good advisor (.)” clearly demonstrate their perspective on territoriality that private offices and facilities in the area reserved for them or other high ranking officials showed power and status. While the Thai officials offices at the same level as the expatriates were surrounded by subordinates to ensure they were informed that all information and the situations in the organisation were under control (Hall & Hall, 1990).

6.3 Personality characteristics

Through analyses of trait adjectives and factor analytic studies, personality characteristics have been shown to influence people to behave in certain ways in particular situations to achieve certain goals (Costa & McCrae, 1998). The ‘Big Five’ personality characteristics: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Openness or Intellect provide a useful taxonomy (Costa & McCrae, 1998; Digman, 1990; Goldberg, 1993) to measure and predict a variety of criteria variables considered to represent behaviours of some social and cultural significance in many studies (Caligiuri, 2000a, 2000b; Costa & McCrae, 1998; Digman, 1990; Goldberg, 1993; Howard, Medina, & Howard, 1996).

Personality affects individuals' performance once they enter a new environment, particularly a culturally and demographically different environment. Regarding intercultural adjustment, Caligiuri’s study (2000b) revealed that the Big Five factors were mechanisms associated with successful adaptation of expatriates and their completion of overseas assignments.
Back in 1990, Digman accumulated the variants of the Big Five identified by a number of students during the year 1949-1990. These variants (summarised in Table 8) were recognised as a framework for analysing individual personality characteristics and will be used to interpret expatriates' personality in this study. Besides, to ensure validity, the degree of each personality dimension which varies from person to person, the five personality characteristics: extraversion (introvert, ambivert, extravert), agreeableness (challenger, negotiator, adapter), conscientiousness (flexible balanced, focused), emotional stability (resilient, responsive, reactive), and openness (preserver, moderate, explorer) (Howard et al., 1996) will also be taken into account.

Table 8: The Five Different Personality Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personality Characteristics</th>
<th>Extraversion</th>
<th>Agreeableness</th>
<th>Conscientiousness</th>
<th>Emotional Stability</th>
<th>Openness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>social adaptability, assertiveness, sociability &amp; ambition, power, activity,</td>
<td>conformity, likeability, paranoid disposition, friendly compliance, love,</td>
<td>will to achieve, dependability, task interest, superego strength, thinking</td>
<td>emotional control, anxiety, adjustment, affect, secure</td>
<td>intelligence, independent, tolerance of new ideas, flexibility of thought,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>positive emotionality, interpersonal involvement</td>
<td>sociability, level of socialisation</td>
<td>introversion, prudence, work, impulsivity, constraint, self-control</td>
<td></td>
<td>artistically sensitive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Howard et al (1996) suggested, because its effectiveness and ease of use, personality characteristics are very useful adjuncts to data gathered and the evaluation process especially when time and financial resources are not available to conduct more extensive investigations. Therefore, to be consistent with the nature of this study, extraversion and emotional stability (see Table 9, p.105) that would, by definition, be most frequently found among the expatriates (166 and 109 utterances respectively) were selected to be discussed in this study.

Turning first to extraversion, it can be assumed that extraversion is particularly useful in enhancing work-related relationships among people from different background. As
shown in Table 10, extraverts are likely to be more expressive and interact through verbal and non-verbal communication than introverts. Therefore, such interaction can increase the probability of exchanging more confidential information and strengthen all types of relationship. Especially in the status-based workplace like the Thai GO, the expatriates’ ability to establish good relationships with host nationals is critically important to intercultural effectiveness.

Table 9: Verbal Protocol Frequency Analysis of Expatriates’ Personality Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personality characteristics</th>
<th>No. of utterances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1 = 6, P2 = 8, P3 = 9, P4 = 7, P5 = 26, P6 = 1, P7 = 5, P8 = 17, P9 = 19, P10 = 19, P11 = 9, P12 = 16, P13 = 16, P14 = 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1 = 3, P2 = 4, P3 = 4, P4 = 10, P5 = 6, P6 = 4, P7 = 1, P8 = 1, P9 = 11, P10 = 8, P11 = 4, P12 = 7, P13 = 2, P14 = 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1 = 10, P2 = 9, P3 = 5, P4 = 10, P5 = 8, P6 = 3, P7 = 2, P8 = 5, P9 = 10, P10 = 7, P11 = 5, P12 = 7, P13 = 2, P14 = 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Stability</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1 = 3, P2 = 4, P3 = 9, P4 = 9, P5 = 20, P6 = 3, P7 = 1, P8 = 5, P9 = 14, P10 = 8, P11 = 14, P12 = 11, P13 = 3, P14 = 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1 = 2, P2 = 2, P3 = 12, P4 = 6, P5 = 12, P6 = 4, P7 = 6, P8 = 3, P9 = 5, P10 = 13, P11 = 8, P12 = 10, P13 = 3, P14 = 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was found that extravert expatriates were able to assert themselves while adjusting their behaviours to different circumstances or hierarchies within organisations to achieve personal goals either in terms of work or relationships with host nationals. Many of them indicated that in order to adapt successfully “… fundamental is cultural sensitivity (0.1) realising that things work differently in different cultures (0.1) respecting each culture glorious (. ) specific features (. ) and then trying to work in that context /…/ we have to adjust more than our counterparts (. ) if we are after all umm (0.3) working in their countries”.

Turning to emotional stability, which is another important dimension associated with intercultural effectiveness across different functions in an organisation. It is defined as the ability to remain calm in stressful situations and to show strong emotional reactions under unpleasant living and/or working circumstances (Caligiuri, 2000b; Digman, 1990;
Goldberg, 1993; Howard et al., 1996; Matveev & Nelson, 2004; McKenna, Shelton, & Darling, 2002).

It was interesting to discover that only the ability to discern different cultures, norms, and values was not enough to ensure intercultural effectiveness if the expatriates were unable to maintain the level of emotional stability to cope with stress (Caligiuri, 2000b; Matveev & Nelson, 2004; McKenna et al., 2002). The expression of one extraverted expatriate from Germany clearly supported this argument “…there might be language problem in it (.) but (.) every problem can be solved (.) if you (.) unless you want to see their need (0.3) umm (0.1) I don’t feel treated equally (.) and I don’t feel treated in the respected way”. One Japanese expatriate, who worked in the same environment, was more familiar in such settings. He stated that “…I should feel a lot of stress (.) between the expectation from *** and the results (.) from the communication between (.) the *** and myself /.../ but I say to myself “forget it /.../ I’m trying to understand people (.) around me /.../ I will be satisfied by what I can do /.../ it’s my character”.

A number of researchers indicated that while extraversion is the easiest trait to access, emotional stability might be the most difficult trait to judge accurately through limit exposure, such as through a short and structured interview. This is because people can show or hide parts of their personality or emotion for relatively short times if they feel insecure about expressing their true feelings (Matveev & Nelson, 2004; McKenna et al., 2002). Consistent with this reasoning, so far there is no research that directly links emotional stability to job performance (McKenna et al., 2002) or expatriate adjustment.

However, it is interesting to see that both extraversion and emotional stability were dominantly displayed in this study. Considering emotional stability, it was found that, for example, one expatriate probably tried to avoid encountering anxiety, hostility, and despondency, and was motivated to present his/herself as dedicated and dependable by
saying, "... I like it very much to (0.1) umm (0.2) internationally to stick the head together and look for solutions (.) because we have very global problems /. / they are much in the same categories (.) that's what the interest to work with a lot of people (.) in that setting (.)". These attributes might surface at the very beginning of the discussion. The same expatriate disclosed when the interview was about to finish that "... at the moment I'm very demotivated (0.2) and I feel very sorry about that (.) it's difficult to get motivation /. / and to be frank (.) I've worked in quite a number of countries I n-e-v-e-r faced t-h-a-t /.../". This could be concluded here, with the difficulty in assessing emotionality stability, that the individual's level of emotional is somewhat mixed depending on the national values and adjustment ability.

Although this explanation has been brief, on the grounds that the topic of the chapter has been themes emerging of the research, separate from the original model, it has nevertheless, served to clarify the broader and deeper identifying factors affecting expatriates’ performance, paves the way for the modification of the proposed model. It also helps provide implications for the Thai Government regarding international human resource management policy, as discussed in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 7: IMPLICATIONS

It is crucial to now refine the theoretical affiliations of the emerged themes and proposed model to suggest implications for theory and policy implications for the Thai Government organisations working with expatriates. The purpose is for academics to observe and examine the interrelationship of these variables, and for the policy makers in the Thai Government organisations to better deal with facing the inevitably problematic issues regarding international human resource management.

7.1 Implications for theory

The results of the analyses based on the model studied indicated that intercultural adjustment and intercultural communication skills were related to the establishment of relationships between expatriates and host nationals. Furthermore, orientation/pre and post arrival CCT for expatriates and their families/spouses has long been found to be important for all aspects of adjustment and expatriates' effectiveness. As discussed earlier, the results did not, however, strongly support this assumption. They showed little consistency in the relationship between CCT and expatriates' adjustment and communication competences. That was despite the fact that every expatriate (no matter whether they had been provided with CCT or not) agreed that CCT was very useful. It appeared that the expatriates who did not receive CCT adjusted to the new environment better than the ones who did receive it.

This inconsistency suggests two possibilities (1) whereas the benefits of CCT is unquestionable, CCT provided for the expatriates in this study might not be effective enough to enable the expatriates to make correct attributions about the reasons or causes
of host nationals' behaviour and generate the proper levels of self-esteem, self-confidence, and mental hygiene to interact effectively with host nationals (Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985). (2) As the themes emerged, national values and personality characteristics of the expatriates were found to have acculturative impacts on skill development, intercultural adjustment, and relationships between the expatriates and host nationals. Taken together, under such circumstances, it is reasonable to suppose that the effective ties between them may lie in the level of intercultural adjustment and communication competence of the expatriates which can increase or decrease the likelihood of intercultural effectiveness by considering their national values and personality characteristics. Hence, these two factors should also be taken into consideration as factors affecting expatriates' performance, and integrated into the model studied. As with a perspective display sequence, the model studied is here modified after further investigation.

![Figure 5: Schematic diagram of factors affecting relationship development between expatriates and host nationals (2)](image-url)
7.1.1 Model description

As described, the model studied is suitable for investigating the form and degree of relationships or network development between expatriates and host nationals. This model is based on the following assumptions.

First, cross-cultural training is regarded as an effective tool to improve intercultural adjustment and communication abilities that suit the development of intercultural sensitivity and facilitate intercultural interaction (Morley & Flynn, 2003; Nixon & Dawson, 2002). Therefore, CCT should reside in the model as a mean of facilitating and strengthening the effective intercultural adjustment and intercultural communicative skills of the expatriates.

Second, the research results coincided with the studies of Johnson et al. (2003), Morley & Flynn (2003) and Richardson (2000) which showed that the degree of intercultural adjustment, communicative skills, and tie strength are influenced by the expatriates’ potential to adapt personal behaviour to the host culture and become socialised in the new circumstances and society. And this line of argument will not be complete if the personality characteristics of the expatriates are integrated into the model without taking into account national values. This is because national values affect how expatriates react in foreign situations. In order to effectively create appropriate relationships (either weak or strong ties) with host nationals, a successful expatriate needs to understand and find most the suitable ways to deal with the differences between his/her own cultural priorities and their host nationals’ values, as well as their effect on behaviours and work performance.
7.2 Implications for Policy

This study offers evidence that challenges are inevitable for Thai Government organisations working with expatriates due to differences in cultural backgrounds and understanding. It has been found that most of the expatriates working in Thailand come from the countries where distinctive work and social cultures are different from Thai culture. It should be the responsibility of both parties to be more aware and receptive towards the differences. However, since the main objective of this study is to suggest how the MOL can manage cultural diversity in the workplace, this study will propose only policy implications for the Thai Government organisations.

The findings reveal that knowing and understanding cultural difference is not enough. Intercultural communication skills and positive attitudes of both expatriates and host nationals are also important to expatriates' performance and organisational effectiveness. As shown in this thesis, and with the support from previous research, CCT is a means of facilitating effective interaction and has a positive impact on skill development, adjustment, and expatriate performance (Ashamalla & Crocitto, 1997; Martin, 1993; Stewart & Mendenhall, 1990). Therefore, the message for policy here is that effective and responsive intercultural training is serving an important function for the expatriates and host nationals in their successful intercultural adjustment and relationship development.

The results of this study showed that the modality of the pre-arrival CCT/orientation provided for the expatriates who have come to Thailand, so far, has enabled them to have some basic learning and understanding of what the cultural differences are.
However, people do not just learn intellectually in the class or through formal training, but they also learn by doing and practicing.

Therefore, Thai Government organisations should, systematically, develop and conduct comprehensive post arrival training course/orientation for both sides of the equation - expatriates and their staff who have to deal with the expatriates. Particularly, attention should be given to differences in cultural and work values with regard to the specific organisational context, where both sides should be clear about the role and tasks of the expatriates, as well as the skills and knowledge that the expatriate will contribute to the new assignment.

In addition, the course should focus on developing working sessions that involve simulations of the real work life situation. The kind of skills needed may be realised and developed by trying to work together on something like a simulation, for example. This will also enable the establishment of appropriate and productive relationship between the expatriates and local staff.

Besides this, training needs assessment should be conducted periodically in order to provide the most practical course that meets the needs of expatriates and host nationals. Another important concern is to determine what type of training is necessary to achieve each organisation's goals. The focus should be on the benefits to the organisation, not only on individual development.

A further practical policy implication concerns developing a more international orientation and outlook of the Thai officials. Under the country's current circumstances,
starting with the unrest in the South, the Tsunami disaster, and the return of bird flu, it is unrealistic to expect that the Thai Government will be able to devote sufficient attention to the area of international human resource management. On the other hand, it is also unavoidable that it will be involved with the trend towards internationalisation in the world economy.

Hence, without a fundamental change of attitude, perceptions and behaviours in this regard, the relationships between the expatriates and the host nationals will possibly be relegated or at best kept on a professional basis – which does not seem satisfactory in Thai culture where expressive ties play crucial roles in all types of relationships. Thai Government organisations may need to look at a particular approach to effect such a change. For example, job-related intercultural communication, interaction attitudes and skills including dissimilarity openness should be encouraged and addressed in the workplan. One approach to this might be based on Thai government organisations’ culture that has traditionally espoused a long term orientation. They may find it advantageous to allocate some incentive in the fiscal budget, through an effective assessment scheme, such as 360 degree, for government officials who have outstanding performance in their undertakings with international expatriates.

Above all, prior to putting the above proposed implementations into effect, the Thai Government organisations should estimate the time and budget to be spent on those operations and benefits, in the long run, in terms of the organisational effectiveness and reputation in the international arena, compared to the expenses it bears if the expatriates return home prematurely and unsatisfactory, in terms of the lost of time, manpower, and reputation.
7.2.1 Ideal policy

As explained above, the appropriate reality from the findings has given ideas for developing well-conceived policies and effective procedures to guide and determine the present and future directions of expatriate management to suit the specific characteristics of the Thai Government organisations. The ideal policies will ensure that the proposed implications will materialise and so all the relevant parties would be working with the same set of rules and doing things the same way. In other words, these policies will provide the mechanisms to improve internal operations regarding expatriate management and maximise the organisation's reputation in the international arena. They comprise policies concerning the selection of expatriates, provision of orientation/CCT for expatriates and local staff working with them, and strategies to effect and sustain right and proper attitudes/perceptions/behaviours of local staff working with expatriates. These policies and other related procedures that translate the mandatory and discretionary policies into action are given in Table 10.

Careful selection of expatriates and provision of CCT for expatriates and local staff are not only a prerequisite for successfully accomplishing the task goals of the overseas assignment for the expatriates but also a means for preparing the human resources of the host country to be ready to meet the challenges of internationalisation. Until now the means of locating expatriates for the Thai Government has been through government contacts or international cooperation agencies, by sending a request for required expertise to respective governments or agencies. Recruitment and selection have been conducted in the home country, without participation of the Thai GO in these processes.
Table 10: Policies and procedures of expatriate management for the Thai Government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policies</th>
<th>Procedures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Selection of expatriates | * identify and propose more precise and intensive selection criteria to the international cooperation agency or the government who sends expatriates to work in the Thai GO (self-orientation, others-orientation and perceptual-orientation) (Black & Mendenhall, 1990; Tung, 1982)  
  * assist the home country’s organisation by providing the information necessary to be used in selection process |
| Provision of CCT      | * conduct training needs analysis (questionnaire survey, interview)  
  * define objectives of CCT (support three elements of assignment success: performance, adjustment & development (Bennett, Aston, & Colquhoun, 2000)  
  * select CCT consultant (Bennett et al., 2000) (if needed)  
  * determine appropriate CCT component for specific training cases and situations (using Black & Mendenhall’s framework as shown in Figure 2, p.14).  
  * define duration and timing of the CCT  
  * quality assurance (pre & post training assessment on technical competence, relational abilities, language skill, and understanding of different cultures (Tung, 1982)) |
| Ensure consistency of best practice | * establish objective performance standard for the local staff who work with international expatriates  
  * establish monitoring and evaluation system of expatriate selection and CCT programmes (for example, quantify the expenses of the full impact on early return of expatriate)  
  * endorse incentive scheme to encourage and sustain the effectiveness of CCT and best practices |

Therefore, a reasonable and practical policy and procedures for the Thai Government should be to emphasise identifying and proposing more precise and intensive selection criteria to the international cooperation agency or the government who sends expatriates to work in Thai GO organisations. Necessary information relates to suitability for each position in terms of knowledge, attitudes, and skills should also be provided. For

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2 This table is based on the studies of Bennett, Aston & Colquhoun (2000), Black & Mendenhall (1989, 1990), and Tung 1982
example, it should be recommended to the organisations in the home country that
abilities in three areas: self-orientation (technical competence, stress-reduction skills,
reinforcement substitution), others-orientation (ability to interact effectively with host
nationals) and perceptual-orientation (tolerance for ambiguity, nonjudgmental, open-
minded) (Black & Mendenhall, 1990; Tung, 1982), are examined in the selection
process.

One of the key aspects contributing towards achieving organisational goals and
intercultural effectiveness of expatriates is CCT for both expatriates and local staff. If
CCT is to be successful, it needs to be well-planned and tailored to the goals and needs
of organisation and individuals. In addition, as with any interventions, unless top
management support exists, the potential for successful CCT is low. For that reason, the
Thai senior executives might need to give greater attention to ensuring the consistency
of the CCT programmes by establishing objective performance standards for the local
staff who work with international expatriates, endorsing additional fiscal budgets to
improve CCT programmes, and establishing monitoring and evaluation systems for both
the selection criteria/process and CCT programmes.

7.3 Précis of chapter 7

The direct costs of failure which have been considered in non-government
organisations, and can involve overseas compensation, allowances and repatriation, are
high, but they are not the most serious matters for the Thai Government organisations.
The more concerning costs for the Thais are the indirect costs such as damaged
relationships with the host-country government or international cooperation agencies,
not to mention the potential loss of future technical and financial support.
Unfortunately, while the importance of having expatriates in the organisations has been realised in many respects, this matter has been overlooked in some Thai Government organisations. It appears that what has traditionally been missing is a strategic framework that links an appropriate international human resource management strategy with the organisation's international mission activity. As already mentioned, they have sourced the expatriates through government contacts and international cooperation agencies. The persons who were assigned to work with the expatriates might be unaware or unable to make the full use of the expatriates' expertise, either because they were not clear about the expatriates' roles and tasks, or their own personal and/or organisational limitations in dealing with the expatriates. No matter what the cause, this might be the right time for the Thai Government organisations to look carefully at their policy on how to prepare their human resources in response to globalisation and levels of need of the expatriates in their organisations.

The next chapter will draw a range of wider conclusions and provide a summary of the study, its limitations, and avenues for future research.
CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions can be drawn in three areas. First, a summary of the research of what has been achieved will examine factors affecting expatriates' performance when they work with Thai Government organisations. Second, there is a discussion of limitations of the study. And third, avenues for further research.

8.1 Summary of the research

This study built on past research which demonstrated the influence and the interrelationship of intercultural adjustment, intercultural communication skills, cross-cultural training and the development of ties between international expatriates who work with Thai Government organisations that affect expatriates' performance and organisational success. Based on the results of this study, there are three major conclusions.

One conclusion concerning factors affecting expatriates' performance is that the key to excellence in an overseas assignment may be targeted first to intercultural adaptability. The empirical data obtained from in-depth interviews with 14 expatriates working with the MOL, Thailand revealed that intercultural adjustment was ranked above intercultural communication skills and provision of CCT in determining significant factors that influenced relationship development between expatriates and Thai government officers. The findings strongly support the proposition that good adjustment is a crucial factor to bringing about positive attitudes and experience, as well as reducing the chances of premature repatriation (Richardson, 2000; Selmer, 2000a, 2002), and should be a factor in assessing expatriates' performance (Brewster, 1997).
Next, it was reaffirmed that good skills in intercultural communication would encourage high morale, a sense of team spirit and ownership, and cause other favourable behaviours that can create good relationships between the expatriates and host nationals, and have a positive impact on organisational performance (Taylor, 1998).

Likewise, it was interesting to find that CCT, which has been recognised as a major factor that plays an important role in skill development, adjustment, and performance of the expatriates (Black & Mendenhall, 1990), did not yield the expected results. One possibility was that most of the CCT provided for the expatriates in this study may not be intensive or comprehensive enough for some of the expatriates who had long overseas experience and who needed more specific courses to deal with very specific or more complicated situations.

The other two important factors coming out of the results were the expatriates' personality characteristics and national values. The results demonstrated that these two factors had a greater impact on the development of ties between the expatriates and their Thai colleagues than intercultural communication skills and CCT. It might be argued that the nature of the Thai Government organisations may be unique to the extent that understanding the difference in national values and personality characteristics that enhance work-related relationships among people from different background were the fundamental elements in improving ICS, defining the scope of CCT, and strengthening relationships. Therefore, these two factors occurred more frequently in the findings and should be taken into account as factors affecting expatriates' performance as well.
Extending the first conclusion to a more practical scenario, the second conclusion focused on the Thai Government organisational culture and its influence on expatriates' behaviour. Due to the influence of Confucianism, paternalistic attitudes, top-down obligations, bottom-up loyalty and obedience (Lewis, 1997) have been rooted in most of the Thai GO. To some extent, the Thai way of hierarchical thinking and behaving, characterised by high uncertainty avoidance, large power distance, femininity, person orientation, polychromatic time, and status based relationships, were the challenges to the expatriates from egalitarian societies, which were characterised by the other side of the equation. Regarding this diversity, the findings confirmed previous research (Caligiuri, 2000b; Digman, 1990; Goldberg, 1993; Howard et al., 1996; Matveev & Nelson, 2004; McKenna et al., 2002) that the extraverted and emotionally stable expatriates seemed to have less difficulty in adjusting to different circumstances than expatriates who were reserved, rigid and intolerant of new ideas or new settings.

The third conclusion underscores the Thai Government international human resource management strategy, an important strategy which has not been clearly stated in the National Economic and Social Development Plan. Responding to the need, and in order to make full use of international expertise, the Thai GO should, first of all, prepare their own staff to be emotionally and intellectually ready to work with international expatriates. This can be achieved, for example, through creating and strengthening job-related intercultural communication, interaction attitudes and skills including dissimilarity openness. Such activities, together with incentive and promotion scheme, should be put in the work plan to make the ideas realistic and sustained. In addition, comprehensive and responsive CCT programmes should be developed that both the Thai staff and expatriates attend together. A consultant of international management
might be needed to design and formulate the CCT. The working session including a simulation of the real work life fundamentals that make Thai people the way they are such as nationhood, religion, language, literature and monarchy should be on the agenda. Moreover, training needs analysis should be carried out periodically to ensure that the real need of both expatriates and host nationals have been met and are consistent with the costs and time spent.

8.2 Limitations of the research

Significant limitations on the subjectivity and generalisability were already considered and addressed in Chapter one. As a result, there was an attempt to lessen its likelihood during data collection and analysis. It is therefore, worthwhile to be discussed in a greater length here.

The potential benefits of qualitative analysis that provides understanding of the expatriates' views, revealing their attitudes, perceptions, behaviours and motives have been recognised in this study. Furthermore, the rich information gleaned was used to classify statement types, which were developed further to derive quantitative data to provide statistical reliability, as shown in the analysis Chapters. This approach is still able to be criticised on a number of levels. The major criticism is that given the unique characteristic of expatriates in this study accompanied by specific national values and organisational culture contexts and circumstances, it is difficult to benchmark and extrapolate to describe the population as a whole.

The next limitation inherent in this study occurred during the data collection and the interpretation of the data. Since the expatriates' ideas and opinions were based on
individuals' background and experience, conveyed to the researcher, and, finally, interpreted later by the researcher, the phenomena of imperfect recall and inherent biases may compromise the accuracy of expatriates' experiences. Also, even though both the expatriates and the researcher attempted to set aside personal beliefs, values, and experience, these constructs inevitably framed individuals' point of view and become part of the analysis. Consequently, the potential for bias affecting judgements is substantial.

Another limitation was due to the small number of participants (14). The study did not exhibit socio-economic characteristics of the expatriates, except for country of origin. Some objective characteristics, such as sex, age, field of study, number of years lived overseas also influence the expatriates' performance and are likely to be easier to measure than personality characteristics.

A final point to be made refers to the length of time needed to conduct this type of research. As mentioned previously, this research is time intensive and even more so if the process of longitudinal investigation on the relationship development between expatriates and host nationals is taken into account. It is probably better to consider this last point as a limitation and therefore, the need to consider the pragmatic implications when the future research is proposed.

8.3 Avenues for further research

With regard next to future research, despite the breadth and, at some point, depth of the study into the need for more attention to be given to factors influencing intercultural adjustment and relationship development between expatriates and host nationals, it was
found when discussing the implications for theory that some of the short comings may arise as a result of failing to notice the importance of national values and expatriates' personality characteristics. Future research should reduce the theoretical shortcomings of the proposed model by integrating these two variables into the future research framework. The MOL case has clearly provided evidence of the influence of these two variables in expatriates' adjustment ability and organisational success.

A further option should attempt to overcome the difficulty of generalisability and subjectivity, since the focus of this study was on the Thai context and this was the first study in the Thai Government organisations. The site of the study may have biased the findings and the statistical results were descriptive rather than predictive. Thus, future research should attempt to replicate and extend the focus of this study in other government organisations in Thailand or in other countries to test the validity of the results, for example, in the high power distance, femininity and collectivist countries that share five bipolar cultural diversity dimensions with Thailand such as Brazil, France, Singapore, and Taiwan (Lane et al., 2000).

In addition, since the generalisation of this study was to the theory, not a specific population to test the theory (Harris, 2003). Therefore, using only 14 participants may not allow sophisticated statistical analysis on socio-economic characteristics of the participants. However, the things that are quite clear cut, such as sex, age, year of overseas experience are objective and should be taken into consideration with the greater number of participants in the future research.
One further area for future research focuses on the participants of the study. Due to time constraints, the data collected and analysed was based on information derived from the expatriates. To get a complete and less biased justification, the focus of further research should be extended to investigate attitudes and perceptions of the host nationals on expatriates’ adjustment ability and performance. In addition, a longitudinal study may be worthwhile, especially to examine the benefits of CCT on expatriates’ performance and relationship development between expatriates and host nationals.
REFERENCES:


Appendix 1: Questionnaire survey

A SURVEY OF ATTITUDES AND EXPERIENCE OF EXPATRIATES
WORKING WITH THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR, THAILAND

Please answer the questions or check the relevant boxes

1. Have you worked internationally before?
   
   Yes. | No

2. Why are you interested in working internationally?

   ........................................................................................................
   ........................................................................................................
   ........................................................................................................

   Are any of the above reasons why you came to Thailand?

   Yes | No

3. Did you anticipate any work-related problems before you began to work here?

   Yes | No

   Please elaborate...................................................................................
   ........................................................................................................
   ........................................................................................................

   Have these problems come about?

   Yes | No

   Have any others problems come about?

   Yes | No

   Please elaborate..............................................................................
4. Were there any cultural areas of concern that you had when you decided to work internationally?

Have these concerns materialised now you are in Thailand?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Please elaborate.

5. How do you expect to be treated as an expatriate professional?

Do you feel you are being treated appropriately at the moment?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Please elaborate.

6. Do you think it is helpful to understand different insights, approaches, values and preferences for different performance at work when people from different national/cultural backgrounds are working together?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Please elaborate.
7. What is your country of origin?

8. I am hoping to be in Thailand carrying out further research. Are you willing to participate in this future research on the topic?

☐ Yes. ☐ No.

If yes, will you be in Thailand in June-July 2004?

☐ Yes. ☐ No.

☐ Not sure.

9. Further comments

Please feel free to contact me, or my supervisors in confidence either by email, or by post, at the addresses given above. If you would like to participate in the subsequent stages of this research or would like information about the final findings of this research please provide your email address:

NOTE: It will be several months before the findings are available.

Thank you very much for your participation. I appreciate it very much.
Appendix 2: Interview questions

1. Why are you interested in working internationally?
2. Is that one of the reasons to come to Thailand?
3. Before coming here, have you received any multicultural education or training to help you to adjust to your new environment?
4. How about your family/spouse? Have they travelled with you? Have they received any training?
5. If you have not been provided with any cultural training, what would you do to prepare for working internationally?
6. What problems did you anticipate before you started working with the MOL?
7. How adjusted do you feel you are to job and responsibilities?
8. How have you felt about your experience of living and working in Thailand? What are the emotions you have gone through?
9. What is your most impressive cultural experience while working internationally?
10. Were there any cultural areas of concern that you had when you decide to work internationally?
11. How did/do you deal with these areas of concern?
12. Is forming relationship with the local culture one of your goals?
13. How adjusted are you to interacting with Thai people in general?
14. How adjusted are you to working with Thai co-workers?
15. How do you expect to be treated as an expatriate professional?
Appendix 3: Information for participants

Lincoln University
Commerce Division
PO Box 84
Canterbury
New Zealand

... June, 2004

INFORMATION

You are invited to participate as a subject in a project entitled Factors affecting expatriates' performance when they work with Thai government organisations: An initial exploration.

The aim of the project is to examine factors affecting performance of the expatriates working with Thai government organisations.

Your participation in this project will involve in-depth interview. The interview will be taperecorded and then transcribed. It will take only one hour. Since participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You have a right to agree with or decline your participation in this research at anytime.

As a follow-up to this activity, you will be asked to check accuracy of the interview scripts.

In the performance of the tasks and application of the procedures, there is no risk to the research subject being anticipated.

The results of the project may published, but you may be assured to complete confidentially of data gathered in this investigation: the identity of participants will not be made public without their consents. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality,

The project is being carried out by Ms.Sirinart Theenanondh who can be contacted at 64-3-3253838 ext 8249, email: theenas2@lincoln.ac.nz. She will be pleased to discuss any concerns you have about participation in the project. The research supervisor, Dr. Mark Dibben can be contacted at 64-3-3253838 ext 8344, e-mail: dibbenm@lincoln.ac.nz.

The project has been reviewed and approved by Lincoln University Human Ethics Committee.
Appendix 4: Cover letter for pilot study

Commerce Division
PO Box 84
Lincoln University
Canterbury
New Zealand

1 March, 2004

Dear Sir/Madam,

A request to complete the questionnaire

I work for the Ministry of Labour and am currently studying for a Master of Commerce and Management in Lincoln University, New Zealand. I would like to request your help for research I am conducting to examine the factors affecting expatriates' performance when working with Thai Government organisations.

The attached questionnaire is part of my thesis. It is the preliminary survey prior to the main research which will be conducted in June and July this year. Your participation is voluntary and any information you provide will be confidential. While the results of this research may be published you will not be identified. I would appreciate it if you could complete and return this questionnaire to me via email by 15 April, 2004 at the latest.

I greatly appreciate your time and assistance in completing this questionnaire and supporting my research. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me: theenas2@lincoln.ac.nz or my supervisors, Dr. Mark Dibben: dibbenm@lincoln.ac.nz and Ms. Lyn Boddington: boddinl@lincoln.ac.nz.

Thank you very much.

Best regards

Sirinart Theenanondh
Appendix 5: Interview transcriptions

P = Participant
R = Researcher
*** = information deleted to assure confidentiality

June 18, 2004

R: How long have you been working with the Ministry of Labour?
P1: Err::: I have been here for one and a half year.
R: Have you visited Thailand before you come?
P1: Yes I've been to.
R: Many times?
P1: Not just 2 or 3 times just for a visit not for a business err err (0.3) maybe business but just stay one week or 5 days.
R: Have you been working in other countries before you come to Thailand?
P1: Oh yes. err in France and in Geneva Switzerland
R: Why are you interested in working internationally?
P1: Why? (LG)
R: Yes.
P1: Yeah yeah. Umm why? It's a difficult to answer. But abroad, umm just interested and I used to work for the in Japan and they don't have err many people who can communicate with foreign people. I just had a chance to study in So I could speak English better than other people. So they post they posted me to (0.2) to France and to Switzerland.
R: Why do you come to Thailand?
P1: the asked me to come Thailand. I'm very happy when I heard that the *** asked me to come. Yes! Because this is the project of and the public organization of Japan have a close contact and so Thailand made a request to and requested to the *** to send to find somebody who can work here. the *** asked me to come.
R: So, Thailand is not your choice? It's the job assigned.
P1: not necessarily but I'm very happy when I heard that the err have ah chose me as a candidate to this post yeah
R: Before coming here, have you received any multicultural education or training to help you to adjust to the new environment?
P1: No. I heard the *** has a such a a preparatory umm programme for every expert yes they give us ah for instance the orientation and yeah they gave us necessary information and how to work as a expert and somebody can take::: linguistic, linguistic err
R: = training I also took English courses
R: How about Thai language? Do you have to study Thai language?
P1: I didn't have any Thai course in Japan but I studied here Thai language very difficult. I think foreign language every foreign language is very difficult. But especially, I'm not so young. My brain is not flexible
R: [Not true]
P: ((LG)) So (.) I had a very very hard time to learn Thai language (.)
R: You’re talking about the orientation. How long does it take for the orientation?
P: Oh (0.2) I almost forgot (.) 3 or 4 months (.)
R: Very long.
P: Um (.) maybe 3 months (.)
R: Very good (.)
P: Yes! for the *** expert (.) (he always looks very proud when refers to himself as *** expert) *** has a very good orientation program (.)
R: How about your family and your spouse? Do they travel with you when you come here?
P: Err (0.2) they are not happy (.) about my ((SL)) =
R: Assignment here?
P: = yeah (.) because I have 2 daughters (.) they yeah (.) they said nothing (.) but my wife (.) she doesn’t like hot weather (.) so (.) I (.) I’ve come here alone (.) and my wife has a job in Tokyo (.) so (.) we are now live in distance (.)
R: You have to go back to Japan quite often.
P: No (.) no no no she comes (.) Quite often ((SL)) =
R: [Good]
P: = ((LG)) to check my behaviour (.) ((LG))
R: Oh, no... so, you have the preparation course before you come. Does *** provide the similar course to the family or spouse?
P: Yeah (.) yeah (.) partly yes (.) they have both training courses for experts and for spouse yeah both (.)
R: It’s your wife and your family decision that the =
P: =My wife also took a short oriented (.)
R: And they decide to stay there?
P: Yeah (0.4).
(P1 looks uncomfortable to talk about his family/spouse and orientation, so I decide to change topic)
R: Did you anticipate any work related problems before you began to work here?
P: Umm:::: yeah (.) yeah (.) yes I did (.) I did (.) because I used to work for the *** (.) so (.) this mission is::: I mean *** (.) the mission of *** of Thai MOL (.) just similar one (.) so (.) I could anticipate what err I would do here (.)
R: For example like what problem that you anticipate before you come?
P: Err::: just a:: because ah I was err::: informed before I come here (.) err in:::n the (0.2) cooperation program of *** (.) we have err so called “*** form” (.) it’s a form of a request (.) for request (.) for *** (.) so (.) in *** form my mission is clearly stated (.) so (.) I could anticipate (.)
R: You’ve quite long training and orientation before you come. So, you don’t have difficulty with the culture or aspect of different organization culture between Thai and=
P: No (.) no not necessarily (.) *** has a::: orientation program but it is for the (0.1) for general (.) err (.) it’s a general orientation program (.) not specify to Thailand (.) so (.) we have training::: courses (.) of course (.) we take a little some (0.1) cultural::: (0.2) issues but in general terms (.) not specifying Thai (0.1) issues (.) yeah (.) (0.4)
R: How adjusted you feel you are to job and responsibilities here?
P: Err::: not yet adjusted. ((LG)).
R: I don’t think so. I have heard that =
P1: Because the issue::: which is::: stated in *** form (.) is rather difficult one (.) yeah (.) yeah (.) but I (.) I thought this is a very very difficult mission for me so (.) I:::: (0.5) how can I say (.) I (0.1) I thought (.) it’s very difficult to make it very clear for the people outside (.) it’s not the project type::: program (.) if you have some kind of project (.) you have seen the result very easily (.) I think my mission is (.) is ahh:: advisory activities (.) so (.) the results that not come out suddenly (.) may be 2 years or 10 years later (.) ((LG)) but *** does not want that (.) *** expects clear instant results (.) so (.) it’s discrepancy between the expectation of *** (.) and err what I can do here (.) that’s the main problem of mine (.)

R: But when you arrived here, you had chance to talk to people?= 

P1: Yes (.) of course. 

R: =what is your responsibilities and=

P1: yeah (.) yeah (.) yeah and it is stated in my work-plan (.) so (.) we had a discussion but (0.4) the expectation of *** is too much (.) so (.) I::: I think (.) err I’ll do what I can do (.) that’s all ((LG))

R: How have you felt about your experience of living and working in Thailand? 

What are the emotions you have gone through during this one and a half year?  

P1: My emotion::: =

R: Yeah, you happy?? Or... frustrating, not only working but living with Thai people.

P1: = oh (0.1) yeah (.) yeah (.) yeah (.) err (0.1) complex (.) yeah (.) err both happy and some::: some stress maybe (.) my private life (.) I’m very happy (.) I enjoy (.) I enjoy my life here (.) but err (0.2) concerning my job (.) maybe::: 60% satisfy (.) yeah (.) less than 60% (.) 60% is the::: (SL) basic standard (.) ((LG)) for the satisfaction (.) so (.) of course (.) if you have 100% satisfy (.) it’s the ideal status I think (.) but maybe 60% satisfy because err my mission stated by *** form is quite difficult one (.) so (.) not very concrete one (.) very abstract (.) and as I said before (.) it is difficult to see the results clearly (.) so (.) that’s the main reason (.) I see it’s the obstruction (.) that’s the main point (.) and another point maybe communication problem (.) err::: my counterpart (.) the director general of *** (.) but it’s a formal thing (.) but in action (.) I have counterpart err::: (0.2) with the director of the (0.2) one division (.)

R: Which division?

P1: It’s a (0.1) division for *** (.) So (.) he cannot speak English very well (.) and::: (0.5) yeah (.) and not only the difficulty (.) not only the linguistic difficulty (.) err:::(0.2) he is not so good at (0.1) err coordinating issues (.) yeah (.) coordination people (.) I have err my staff here (.) One is my secretary and one is a coordinator (.) The coordinator is the employee (.) I mean official of *** (.) and the coordinator:: (0.3) tries to (.) of course (.) coordinate between the staff of *** and myself (.) even with her help (.) it’s difficult to understanding each other (.) in understanding each other (.) it’s not the problem of the language (.) but the (.) maybe::: (0.2) the problem of culture or ethics of work and etc (.) but it affects in every place (.) so (.) I don’t mind about that (.) Mai-pen-rai ( = Thai words mean “It’s OK” or “That’s fine”) (.) anyway (.) there is some difficulty (.) I will not say I can’t understand him (.) I will not say he can’t understand me (.) I will not say that (.) but we understand the difficulty (.) difficulty of each other (.) So (.) we take a lot of time to do one thing (.) so (.) I have limitation and he has limitation ((LG))=

R: At least you have 60% satisfy. It’s OK.
PI: So (.) 10% more (.) my satisfaction is 60% (.) so ((SL)) I have to do 10% more.  
R: Not difficult to do that, I’m sure.  
PI: Ohhh it’s difficult (.) it’s difficult (.) very (.) very difficult (.) it’s small percent 
(.) but it’s difficult to (0.1) to (0.2) overcome.  
R: Is it because of organization culture or what?  
PI: Umm::: (0.2) Umm (->->>) (0.1) maybe not (.) maybe personal one (.) I don’t 
know (.) I don’t know (.)  
R: Is it different from what you have been experienced when you were in Japan?  
PI: Different what?  
R: Different from when you were in Japan. You said you worked with *** in 
Japan.  
PI: Yes (.) it’s quite different working in Japan and working in Thailand of course 
(0.2) quite different (.) the way of thinking and the err (0.3) the (0.1) pattern of 
action etc (.) quite different (.) but we can understand each other (.) but the (0.1) 
even though we can understand (.) it’s not easy to change our behaviour and the 
way of thinking so::: (0.2)  
R: You have to come to the middle way.  
PI: Yeah (.) yeah (.) yeah (.) but it’s not middle way anyway (.) actually (.)  
R: What is your most impressive cultural experience while working internationally?  
PI: Here in BKK?  
R: Yeah, even in France or...  
PI: It’s quite different from country to country ((LG))  
R: Okey, let say =  
PI: In BKK?  
R: OK.  
PI: Quite (.) quite...umm (0.2) quite pleasant for me (.) and err::: what impress me 
most is the fluent, f-l-u-e-n-t (.) fluently (.) fluent state of Thailand in everything 
(.) you have a lot of food (.) you have a lot of land (.) you have a lot of culture (.) 
and (.) you have a lot of chances (.)  
R: And you don’t use it well.  
PI: ((LG)) anyway (.) a fluent society (.) not as fluent as in United States (.) you 
have many (.) many poor people here in Thailand (.) but err their faces are:::
very good err (0.1) compare to Japanese (.) yeah (.) you know err (0.2) face 
reading? can you read face?  
R: I have no talent in this science.  
PI: ((LG)) it’s not err (0.1) issue of beauty (.) even ugly people (.) have (.) can have 
very good faces (.) right? (.) very happy (.) very comfortable (.) sawasdee (.) 
(Thai word means hello) sabaiidee (.) (Thai word means “I’m fine”).., etc (.) so 
Thai people’s faces is very good (.) very good (.) compare to Japanese people (.) 
Japanese might seem to other Asian people that Japanese are rich (.) NOW!! 
NOW!! But their faces do not look happy (0.1) their faces are very bad (.)  
R: Because they work hard or =  
PI: Err (0.1) there might be many many reasons (0.1) anyway ahhh (0.3) physically 
or economically (.) Japanese people might be richer than Thai people but 
mentally (.) Thai people are much much happier than Japanese people (.) your 
face can tell (.) clearly (.) so (.) I ::: I like (.) yeah (.) I ::::(0.2) (.)  
R: Happy to hear that.  
PI: Yeah yeah yeah yeah (.) but the (0.2) but the ::: but in the organization or 
working in the organization is quite difficult (0.1) I think as far as I have 
pictures here (.) umm..(0.1) you (.) I mean Thai organization or Thai *** doesn’t
have practice (.) which called (.) bottom up decision making system (.) You
learn a lot in New Zealand or in Europe (.) Err (0.1) in Japanese public
organizations and in private company (.) younger people think (.) and they make
suggestions or proposal to the superiors (.) if the boss approves the younger
one’s idea (.) the idea will be realized (.) and if it fails (.) the boss will take
responsibility (.) not the younger people (.) yeah (.) they are free (.) so:: (.)
younger people is very free to make proposal (.) but actually in *** (0.2) low
rank people make some suggestion and if it fails (.) I’m pretty sure (.) he will be
punished (.) so (.) nobody make any suggestion to the superior (.) so (.) every suggestion is made by the top (0.1) one person or two three
persons cannot make every decision (.) right? =
R: Right.
P1: = and the organization cannot be very active (.) of course (.) we need very clear
decision made by tops (.) it’s very quick and very clear (.) it’s necessary (.) but
everyday (0.1) everyday decision making should be made by the lower level for
the progress of the organization (0.2) I mean the whole MOL (.) Ah (0.2) all
departments (0.2) they send young people to foreign universities (0.1) but (0.2)
why can keep quiet? (.) the graduates learn the system of decision making (0.1)
but they don’t change ((LG)).
R: Change takes time.
P1: ((LG)) only one person cannot change (.) but you have many many:::y
graduates from foreign universities (.) such as New Zealand (.) USA (0.2)
including yourself (.) young people learn (0.4) but I know organization culture
can’t be changed so easily (.) I understand (.) Umm (.) so:: (0.1). I think (.) err
(0.2) bottom up decision making (.) should be realized (.) and discussion among
low rank people should be more::: ((LG)) should be (.) should be::: (0.2) how
can I say (.) should be estimated (.) evaluated by::: high rank officials (.) (0.2)
discussion is most important thing, isn’t it? (.)=
R: Yes, it is.
P1: = you have many meetings (.) but do you have discussion?((LG)) Discussion
should be very very important (.) and while you have discussion (.) you have to
feel free from anything (.) if you feel some pressures (.) of your superior (.) you
cannot make free discussion (.) (0.3)
R: Do you think that forming relationship with local culture is one of your goals
when you come to work here?
P1: Ah:: (0.2) it’s ah:: (0.2) umm:: (0.3) yes and no (.) yes and no (.) as far as my
mission is concerned (.) (0.1) I don’t have to get in touch with outside people
instead of ah:: (0.3) except (0.1) the (0.2) employers I think (.) I should get in
touch (.) I should be err (0.2) kept in touch with the (0.2) leaders of Japanese
companies (.) I think it is necessary for me to get in touch with leading
companies (0.4) companies’ managers and I try to do that (.) because *** need
their cooperation (.) because err:: (0.1) the working opportunities for the trainees
of *** (.) err (0.1) should be Japanese companies (.) but the level or the standard
of *** by *** is not (0.1) high enough (.) so (0.2) not many Japanese companies
are interested in err:: (0.2) the:: (0.2) in employing the graduates from *** (.)
that’s main problem.
R: And you have many difficulties in helping people here.
P1: Yeah (.) yeah (.) yeah (.) umm (0.1) the (0.2) institution and centre for *** (.)
They receive many:::y trainees (.) and the graduates are employed by Thai
companies (.) so (.) err::: the institution and centres (.) they are not frustrated
with the results (.) they're::: well satisfied (.) So (.) such actions bring such no
((LG)) change (.) OK? ((LG))

R: OK. And how do you see the importance of developing workplace relationship?
Between yourself and the ministry, is it important?

P1: Yeah (.) most important (.) very (.) very important (.) I think I have err very
good relationship with the staff of ***. I (0.3) yes (.) we have very good (.) well
communicated (.)

R: How to create good relationship?

P1: Ah::: (0.2) it's just a natural:: well behaviour (.) not too much:: eh (0.3) not too
much eh (0.2)... expectation from each other ((LG)).

R: But you have expectation from***.

P1: Yeah (.) expectation from *** is very hard (0.2) so (.) so (0.2) I should feel a lot
of stress (.) between the expectation from *** and the results (.) from the
communication between (.) the *** and myself (0.2) I should feel a lot of stress
(.) but I say to myself “forget it” (.)

R: Have you ever heard that Thai business not rest on know how but know who?

P1: Know how? Know who? (.) sorry (.) I cannot understand very well (.)

R: What they say is that Thai people always emphasise on creating relationship and
not put the emphasis on the real ability of the person.

P1: Oh::: (0.2) is that so? (.) umm::: (0.1) you mean the relationship means ah (0.1) ah
(0.1) some human relationship? umm (.) umm =

R: Yes. Have you ever heard that?

P1: = Yes (.) from my some of my Japanese colleagues (.) yes (.) we hear (.) and (.)
and ::d it might be true but I'm not sure (.) Japanese people who live here for
many years (.) they ::y tell it to me (.) in a sense (.) it's a common practice in all
over the world (.) but it's the degree maybe (.) even in the United States (.) (0.2)
human relationship is very important (.)

R: It helps to get things done easier.

P1: Mmh (.) mhm (.) mhm (.) err::: so::: (.) maybe (.) maybe I should say
that err human relationship seems more important in Thailand (.) maybe than in
Japan or than in the United States (.) maybe (.) maybe (.) and if you have a very
good human relationship with (.) for instance (.) in the case of public err
officials in Thailand (.) if you have a close contact with the political leaders (.)
you might have a very good chance to be promoted (.) very easily (0.1) it also
happened in Japan too but the degree maybe :::: (0.2) maybe (0.3) Japan has
tried to :::::0 avoid that practice and the public organization (.) any public
organization (.) try to introduce so called “merit system”(.) merit system is the
promotion based on the eh:::h results of the individuals (.) results of good
performance (.) not the human relations (.) but it's an ideal thing (.) people are
trying to realise it (.) but still (.) in many cases (.) human relation is working
very well (.) but (0.1) so (.) the public (.) in Thailand (.) may I ask you? (.) in
Thailand (.) do you have to have err (0.2) examination to become public official
in any public organisation? (.)

R: You mean government organisation?

P1: Yeah (.) and that the :::::e examination (.) how many level you have? (.)

R: It depends. In general, if you'll be promoted for the middle level, you have to
pass written examination. But for the higher position, there would be interview.

P1: How did the first at the entrance? (.) For in Japanese case (.) we have 3 grades
(.) the examination for graduates from university (.) and the second one
graduates from colleges level (.) and third level ::::l is for the graduates from high
school (.) so (.) that’s different grades at the entrance stage (.) your system is just
er after you have some experience? (.)

R: Yes (.) We have to pass those examinations as you mentioned (.)
P1: At the entrance?
R: Yes .
P1: Ah yeah (.) yeah (.) yeah (.) yeah (.) at the entrance (.) maybe you have only one
level for ::::r (0.2) for ::::r (0.1) =
R: Different level, for the secondary level, bachelor degree and Masters.
P1: = Oh ::::h I see ::::h Masters? (0.1) Is that so? (0.1) that’s all 3 grades (.) that’s it
(.) so (.) you have to pass through that examination to become public servants (.)
I see. So:::o we have err (0.2) that kind err (0.3) system (.) it’s a::: a effort (.)
method to (0.2) to (0.2) go far away from the human relationship (.) management in our society (.)
everything is (0.1) decided by human relation (.) right? (.) For the modern organisation we should think to use merit system (.) the
results of the performance of individuals (.) one means is to give an examination
(.) if you fail the examination (.) you can’t get the post (.) even (.) even though
you have a very strong contact with the instruction (.) right? (0.3) So (.) I think =
R: [it’s the same]
P1: same (.) same (.) same (.) so ::::o (0.3) SO! SO! Through discussion we can find
many of the individuals (.) right? (.) so (.) if you feel or member of
the organisation feel human relation is important (.) They become quiet (0.2)
R: You’ve said you satisfy 60% (.) For 60% that you satisfy (.) does it come from
the good relationship that you create between yourself and people? (.)
P1: No (.) no no no (.) I feel only 50% (.) it’s ah (0.2) it’s ah::: (0.1) reason from
(0.1) from my job (.) no no no relationship with that type (.) My original mission
is too difficult (.) so I can’t feel :::l (0.2) more than 50% (.) it’s the problem of
***system (.) it’s not the (0.2) not the (0.2) (LG) umm (.) not because I’m
working here (.) but because (.) I’m working according to the mission given by
*** (.) It’s not the problem of *** (.) It’s a problem of *** (.) *** is master (.)
R: And you always get support from ***.
P1: Yes (.) socially(,) financially(,) mainly financially (.) not (0.1) not err (0.2) not
not err ???: function (.) I don’t get financial support from *** (.) and also I
receive financial support from DTEC (Department of technical and economic
cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thailand) (.) yeah (.) I have err (0.1)
secretary (.) and I have driver (.) private driver (.) part of salary (.) it’s paid by
DTEC (0.2) yeah (.) so your country has developed already (.) so (.) so ::::o (0.2)
your ::::r minister of foreign affairs has such a system to support foreign experts
(.) it’s not true that you receive 100% of err assistance (.) your country ::::y is
partnership (.) like Mr. Thaksin (= Current Thai Prime Minister) said (0.3)
R: How do you expect to be treated as an expat professional?
P1: As professional (.) myself? (.) ohh (.) no (.) I don’t feel so ((SL)).
R: Why not?
P1: I don’t know why (.) I’m a *** expert (.) Japanese expert (.) but I haven’t felt (.)
I were treated like I’m a very ::::y good expert (.) I just like an employee ((LG))
of *** ((LG)) yeah (.) in my case is difficult (.) as I said at the first stage (.) I::: I
give just an advisor (.) to advice (.) it’s err (0.2) difficult to show you my job
clearly (.) so (.) nobody thinks (.) thinks me ::::e (0.2) I’m a very good expert (.)
((LG))
R: No, no. That’s not what I’ve heard.
P1: ((LG))
R: Don't you think you are treated appropriately at the moment?

PI: Ah :::h (0.2) ah :::h (0.2) it's quite a difficult question (.) and if I can be a very careless (.) I can say no (.) but ::::t (0.2) ((LG)) I'm very careful ((LG)) I'm a very careful expert (.) so (.) I should say no (.) I should say no (.) I should say yes (.) I receive very good treat here (.) maybe 50-50 (.) because (.) (0.3) you see?? (.) our expectation (.) or our (0.1) requirement (0.1) our desire (0.1) they are all unlimited (.) right? (.) anybody's expectation is not limited (.) so (.) my expectation is also not limited (.) no limited (.) so (0.1) according to my (0.2) limitless expectation ((LG)) yes (.) I expect a lot (0.1) to *** (.) but it's ok (.)

R: Can you give an example of your limitless?

PI: Umm (0.3) umm (.) first thing is err (0.2) first err (0.1) maybe (.) communication (0.1) personality of counterpart (0.1), that’s all (.) these physical things are ok (.) (He points around his office) it's too much to have err toilet for me (.) but this is some symbols of the status in Thailand (.) isn't it? (.) Right? (.)

R: For the higher level=

PI: =Yeah (.) it's quite (.) I haven’t seen this kind of private toilet (.) yeah (.) this is very common in Thailand (.) right? (.) for instance (.) in the United States (.) only the top officials (0.2) err have private washroom (0.1) at least in Japan (.) for instance (.) as the ministers of ministries of Japan (.) of course minister (.) vice minister (0.2) and permanent secretary (.) or even permanent secretary I haven’t seen (0.3) maybe permanent secretary they have private washroom (.) but (0.1) how many washroom do you have in one building? ((LG))

R: I never count.

PI: So (.) your status is very important (.) right? (.) and this is very important to Thai people (.) to express very clearly the different of status (.) right? (.) you have to have a very big car (.) if you have err (0.1) high rank (0.2) it's quite important (.)

R: Does the ministry provide you the driver and the car?

PI: No (.) no (.) I have private driver and my car is my private car (.) I’m not an employee of *** (.) I’m outsider (.) and I err (0.2) I should be supported by *** not by *** (0.2)

R: What is the most challenging for you on this international assignment? The most challenging =

PI: It’s a very good question ((LG)) (0.3) To make *** in Thailand (.) err to make it more higher level (.) and to :::o make it international level (0.1) and to :::o to make *** (.) it’s ok (.) it’s ok (.) but (.) it’s not all (.) it shouldn’t be all (0.2) So *** we have only six months (.) not enough (.) but the staff of *** (.) they are satisfied with the current situation (.) so (.) my challenge is to (0.1) to let them know that this level is not satisfactory (0.1) my challenge is to let them know it (.)

R: Difficult.

PI: It’s very difficult because they are satisfied (.) ((SM))

R: Once you satisfy, you don’t want to change.

PI: Yeah ((LG)) (0.3) it’s hard (.)

R: Come to the last question (P1: OK,) can you please describe factors affecting your success or difficulty in this international assignment?

PI: Umm (.) what factors umm (.) umm (.) umm=

R: Your personality or =

PI: = (0.2) Ehh (0.2) umm (0.2) maybe (0.2) *** and ***(.) if they understand me (0.1) it’s all (.) so (0.1) most important factor for my success is the
understanding of (0.1)Thai officials of ***() if they understand me () (0.1) may be (0.1) *** can change ()

R: Is this a new ***?
P1: Yes () we have a new ***... ***() Yes () he used to be a ***() we had err::: Mr. ***() he is now a *** of *** (0.2) I think both *** are very competent people () but err I'm not sure whether they -- (0.2) the two *** understand me very well enough () I'm not sure ((LG)). anyway, I'm trying to, to :::o be understood () well known by them () I'm trying ()

R: But as far as I concern, people here like you and they say you're very good expert. That's what I've heard.
P1: Oh ()
R: From some of my colleagues and they said you understand Thai culture very well.
P1: So () I hope () I hope it's correct ((LG)) () (He looks very pleased.) I'm trying to () I'm trying to understand people () around me () but not too much () if I try too much () maybe I :::I feel :::stress (0.1) too much stress () so () just mai- 
pen-rai () I will be satisfied by what I could do () what I can do () not too much effort () not too rigid () if I try too much () maybe people will stop to understand me () So () I cannot do that () like that () my character () I cannot try to hard () It's my character ((LG))

R: That' why *** sends you here.
P1: ((LG)) I don't know () I don't know () even I cannot realise the very good result () I'll be :::e satisfied () and () I'll be :::e going back to my country with good memory of Thailand () I'm pretty sure.
R: When will you go back?
P1: In *** months (0.1) ***() very short.
R: So () when I come back I won't see you.
P1: Ahh...(0.1) very () very small possibility of extension of my term here () If *** wants err (0.1) my extension (0.2) *** will consider it () and finally they will say no ((LG)) () but () there is small possibility that they say yes () maybe less than 10% ()

R: Because you have another mission waiting?
P1: No () no no no () it doesn't mean that () just *** has changed the policy () *** used to extend our term () experts' term () once or twice according to the request of the recipient countries () but they changed () we have 2 years term () they think () expert should return to Japan () when the term expires () they changed (0.1) so () must be difficult (0.2) but that's alright ()

R: Enough?
P1: Umm (0.2) I can't say no because () if I show you my results very clearly () I can't feel it's enough () but err I know that my results will not be clear () so () I cannot feel enough () so but () even though () I stay :::y here longer :::r time () I'll never feel enough () because () my mission is not a::: concrete job () it is not easy to be seen () even by myself ()

R: But you can see in next 2 years.
P1: Oh () it's too much () ((LG)) I'm not young () I already **() yes () so (0.1) I can get pension if I go back to Japan ()
R: I thought that you're early 50s.
P1: No () no () no () look at my head () ((LG)) (he points at his head - bald!!) so if I go back to Thailand maybe I will :::I not work as full-time employee () it's too much () I can get the small amount of pension ()
R: You’re very lucky.

P1: But pension is not enough. I would like to have some part-time work and 2 days or 3 days a week and I like to have a good salary but it’s not possible.

R: And it’s not in Thailand too.

P1: So I have pension and if I come back to Thailand as a member of long stay you mean Thailand gives us a long stay visa so I hope I could stay with a long stay visa in BKK.

R: Do you like to stay in BKK?

P1: Oh yes climate is good for my health I feel very much very relax. Ah in cold weather I feel backache but no pain here it’s good for my body but not only physical but also as I said before mentally I can feel very good people’s faces are very good quite different from Japanese society we don’t know why Japanese people intentionally choose the unhappiness they intentionally choose unhappy things even though they can choose many things.

R: Choose to work hard.

P1: Maybe too hard have you heard the accident? the children of elementary school in Japan killed their小伙伴 it’s happening in Japan such a sad thing.

R: It also happened in US.

P1: Too? maybe it can happen in US but in Japan the many young person they use cutter knife so I’m afraid Japan is following the western countries so only one advise that I can give you is never follow Japan very dangerous for Thailand Thailand is just following the leading countries such as Japan Korea but never follow the bad things in those countries. many many bad things in developed countries.

R: Okey....

P1: Ok I express what I can.

R: Thank you very much. Do you want to add anything?

P1: No I said all I can.

R: Thank you very much. Thank you for sharing your opinion and your experience with me.

P1: Yes I’m afraid I was too honest to you I should have been more careful.
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R: How long have you been working here?
P2: =Yes.
R: Have you been working in other countries before?
P2: Before? yes (.) in Indonesia 3 years and Philippines 3 years (.)
R: And then Thailand?
P2: Umm (0.2) umm (0.2) ... for me (.) it's business (0.2), business (0.2) yes (.) I'm (.) now already ** old (.) years old (.) so I (.) ex-officer of the *** (.) Japan (.) so (.) every time I'm always dispatched (.) dispatched (.) I'm dispatched from the *** Japan
R: During your working time with the *** , have you ever posted to any country?
P2: Indonesia and Philippines (.) sometime (.)
R: Have you received any multicultural education or training to help you to adjust to your new environment?
P2: Yes (.) umm (0.1) we (.) *** expert (0.1) dispatched (.) dispatched to country (.) *** has a (0.1) train (.) education (0.2) education (0.2) training for candidates (.)
R: How long does it take for each course?
P2: Err (0.3) usually one month (.)
R: What's all the course about?
P2: ....
R: What do they provide you in the course? Language or...
P2: Yes (.) including (0.2) language (.)
R: Is it general or more specific in each issue?
P2: Err ::r this course is general and specific on (0.2) ah ::h (0.2) Indonesia or (0.2) ah (0.2)Thai (.) (0.3)
R: How about your family and spouse?
P2: Family (.) yes (0.1) ahh (0.2) umm (0.1) ahh (0.2) *** expert (.) err dispatch with the (0.1) with his family will have (0.2) will have (0.3)
R: Orientation?
P2: Orientation (.) orientation (.)
R: Was it the separate programme between expert and spouse?
P2: Yes (.) separate (.) separate (.)
R: Do you find it useful?
P2: Useful (.) yes (.) useful (.) this time (0.3) this time I come here alone but I dispatched with my wife (0.2) to Philippines, to Indonesia (.) in that case (.) you wife (0.1) my wife got (0.2) orientation (.) maybe (.) maybe 3 weeks (.)
R: How does your wife feel about moving or living, as you said you both living in Indonesia and Philippines together...(P2: Yes.) how does she feel?
P2: Yes (.) yes (.) umm (0.2) umm (0.1) she was satisfied with the (0.2) living... in foreign countries.
R: But she doesn’t live with you in Thailand now?
P2: This (.) this time? yes (.)
R: Is she here?
P2: Yes (.) (LG) because err (0.2) ahh (0.4) my wife’s old already (.) so (0.3) in Japan she must take care (0.2) take care (0.3) our (0.3) grand children (.)
R: Do you miss home a lot? Do you always go to Japan to visit your family in Japan?

P2: Uh :h yes (.) yes (.)

R: Did you anticipate any work-related problem before you began to work here?

P2: Work related (0.1) before (0.1)

R: Before you come to work in Thailand (.)

P2: (0.5) Err (0.1) no (.) no because it is not the first time -:e for me (.) to work in foreign country (0.2) and err :r the err (0.3) and dispatching first time I had (0.1) I had orientation (.)*** provided it for *** candidates come to here Thailand (.) in Thailand (.)

R: So, you feel quite comfortable to come, to live and work in Thailand (.)

P2: Err (0.2) yes (.) however (.) in this few years circumstance is changing (0.2)

R: How does it change?

P2: Ahh (0.2) yes (.) I know…. ((LG)) more modernise (.)

R: How adjusted you feel you are to job and responsibility here as a *** expert?

P2: Here? (.)

R: Yes (.)

P2: Umm (.) yes (.) after (.) I'm here for sometimes (.) yes (.) but umm (0.2) anytime ahh (0.2) to job and content of job (.) every country (.) same (.) the difficult might be person (.) my responsibility is here difficult (.) (he shows the information about his job description) especially (0.2) for the public influences (.) and services (.) see? in Indonesia (0.1) sometimes different but the (0.1) I'm a chief of **** for *** huh (.) huh? different (.)

R: Ok (.) And your job responsibility is already stated in *** (.)

P2: Of course (.)

R: Do you have difficulties in doing, according to the expectation of *** ? Because *** suppose to have some expectation to meet with…

P2: Umm (0.2) there are (0.3) yes (.) always there are some problems (.) because the expectation and the achievement (.) here always some gaps (0.2) yeah… (whispers when say the word 'gap')

R: You say problem and gap. What is it? Can you give me some examples of the gap?

P2: ((LG)) how do you feel? (.) the different problem of policy (.) comprehension and implementation (.) hard to see (.) (whispers: how to make it (.)}

R: [It must be concrete]

P2: [Yes (.) yes (.)]

[paused]

P2: That’s right (0.3) expectation of each side *** and ministry and person (.)

R: How have you felt about your experience of living and working internationally? What are the emotions you have gone through?

P2: (0.3) ahh (.) it's... ahh (0.1) generally speaking (.) I'm satisfied with living here in Thailand (.) of course (.) there is some err (0.1) complaints (.) but generally (.) I'm satisfied (.)

R: If you can change things here, what would you like to change?

P2: (0.5) umm (0.3) if I have a power ...

R: Or if you can talk to the minister, to the PM, what would you recommend?

P2: I’ll ask that you (.) you have such a power?

R: I don’t have that power now. But I’m sure that one day when I return from NZ. I would be able to do that.

P2: (0.5) I must say I have (0.1) no such a power (.)
R: What is your most impressive cultural experience while working internationally?
P2: Most impressive (0.2) so (.) I ask you (.) what is culture? (.)
R: Culture?
P2: Yes (.) What's the culture you impress?
R: Okey. For me, when I'm in NZ. I'm impressed with the way people interact with each other. They can talk to each other frankly. The younger can express their views to the older if they feel that they are doing the right thing.
P2: Yeah (0.2) that's a way of living na (0.2) not cerr (0.3) me (.) because usually we think culture are histories like that (.) [R: =OK]. so (.) what's the most impressive cultural experience ...
R: History is also culture as you said because culture covers many things.
P2: So (.) since I came here (0.5) I'm interested in cultures (0.5) history of Thailand (.) so (.) apart from my duty (0.2) my work (.) I'm a member of Siam Society (.) So (.) everyday in Thailand (.) everyday I'm interested (.) err such experience (.) so (.) since I came here (.) I'm very impressed (0.4) Thai culture (0.1) especially art (.) temples (.) wats (.)
R: OK. And how about people? How do you think about young people and older people?
P2: You already see (.) young people respect the older people (.) I think so (.)
R: Is it different from Japan... nowadays?
P2: Umm ((LG)) nowadays (.) how do you know? (.)
R: I've never been to Japan.
P2: That so? in fact (.) I think (0.3) Thai people are more respect older people than Japanese (0.3) generally Thai people (.) I think (0.4) more mind (0.4) more religion (.) I already compare {whisper: more respect than Japanese, confidential?} (.)
R: OK.
P2: {whisper} they are not polite like Thais (.)
R: Really?
P2: They are (.) they are more aggressive ((LG)) (.)
R: Do you think forming relationship with the local culture one of your goals when you come to work here?
P2: {he checks the questions from the list of questions provided} (0.5) what local culture means?
R: Local culture means people, life style and working style. And forming relationship means do you have to try to make friends with people after work or you just =
P2: = Oh (01) yes (.) yes (.) I think (.) I think there are cultural gaps (.)
R: Between Thais and Japanese?
P2: Oh (.) yes (.) I already feel that (.)
R: I think that we're Asian countries, shouldn't be too much gaps.
P2: Umm (0.3) I feel (0.3) similarity between (.) Thai and Japanese (.) I feel also similarity (0.1) and also different in Philippines and Indonesia (.) (0.3)
R: What is the difference?
P2: Err (0.2) yeah (0.1) there are some gaps (.) because as I told you (.) Thai people and religion make them (0.1) respect older people (.) I agree there are some different (0.2) Thai people err way of thinking (0.2) not so flexible (.) rigid (.)
R: Rigid? You mean in the workplace or Thai in general?
P2: In general (.)
R: What do you mean by rigid?
P2: Rigid? (0.2) So (0.2) example (0.1) do you know there is a department store (.) super market (.) department store (.) yeah (0.1) ‘Central’(.) huh? Ploenchit (.)
R: Yes.
P2: So () for Central () here in Thailand (0.2) how do you pronounce? Cen-tan. Thai people rigid (0.1) my driver () he don’t understand () when I asked him () to drive to Central () actually he passed by () how did he can’t understand? (). Thai people is rigid ()
R: That’s different pronunciations.
P2: Y-e-s... (). see?
R: What do you think the most effective way to create good relationship with Thai colleagues and Thai people?
P2: {He looks for the question from the sheet} it’s not in that....
R: It just comes to my mind.
P2: Yes () that’s not matter of fighting ((LG)) so (0.3) I must adjust.
R: And you think you are able to adjust to the people and the way of living well and you feel comfortable to live here, right?
P2: {he nods and smiles}
R: How do you manage when you saw some discrepancies among the colleagues?
P2: Umm (0.1) I think (0.2) think (0.2) umm (0.3) to tell (0.3) and (0.3) communication (.)
R: Communication is important among the parties...
P2: I think so (0.2) not really mean I feel like that () you feel like that () to know each other ()
R: Have you ever found difficulties in dealing with the people who come for your advice?
P2: Excuse me??
R: When people come to you for your advice, do you have difficulties?
P2: Yes () yes () everyday ((LG)) especially English problem () (0.3) I cannot speak Thai () they cannot speak Japanese () of course () they cannot speak English () they cannot speak in general () so (0.2) so I must communicate in English () not Japanese (0.2) Japanese () English () Thai () so (0.1) three (0.1) countries ahh (0.2) three languages () initially English problem (.)
R: So, you are saying that language is the main problem, is that so?
P2: I think so (0.2) Yes () even between us Japanese (0.2) we have problem everyday () but you speak English everyday () you are New Zealander ()
R: No, I’m Thai.
P2: You’re Thai () Thai!! but I understand () understood from my secretary you’re New Zealander ()
R: I think because she told you that I come from NZ.
P2: So () yes I remember err first time she says you come from NZ () so I ask you are New Zealander ()
R: I’m 100% Thai. I see... So, you must feel uncomfortable when you cannot understand our Thai and our English is not very clear. So () how do you manage to get them know... do you think you can deliver what you want to give them as you wish?
P2: Umm (0.4) ((LG)) some (0.2) conflicts (0.1) conflicts ()
R: Do you have the formal counterpart in this department?
P2: Counterpart (.) official counterpart (0.2) I have (.)
R: Do you see him quite often? Do you have chance to discuss with him about the difficulties you find in your job and propose any ideas or any improvement to him?
P2: No (.) not cultural problem (0.2) problem about (0.2) working (.) (seems that he keeps on worrying about cultural issues)
R: Have you met *** quite often?
P2: No (.) never met (.) as you know (.) as you know (0.2) organisation change (.) I mean *** changes (.) (0.3)
R: This change might be more difficult to work.
P2: Yes (.) (0.3)
R: How do you expect to be treated as a *** expert?
P2: (0.3) yes (0.3) we *** expert here (.) not personal (0.2) I think we came here from organisation (.) (0.2)
R: So, you want us to treat you like a representative from your country or ***, is that so?
P2: Umm, yes (.) I think so (.) not a personal standpoint (.)
R: Do you think you are being treated appropriately at the moment?
P2: ((LG)) at least (0.2) they should they should be realised our standpoints (0.1) ahh (0.1) usually I communicate them (0.4) umm (0.2) the relation (0.2) many kind of personals (0.2) many personal matters (.)
R: Do you mean that you want it to be more professional?
P2: (0.1) yes (.) of course (0.2) and they should respect our experts (0.2) in this program (0.3) every country should respect expert (.) expert standpoints (.)
R: As you said the problem is the language, I guess.
P2: I think so (0.2) not so good in general speaking (0.1) Thai people is not good at English (.) huh?
R: Communication is a problem...
P2: (0.3) I know (.) Some persons have different concept for English words (.)
R: Like the word ‘expat’. I have to tell my supervisor.
P2: This is hard (.) Expat ( 0.3) can misunderstand (.) {whisper: it’s bad word} (.)
R: So, if we translate this word into Japanese, what is the word in Japanese?
P2: It’s ‘???’ (.) Do you understand? (.) it means (0.1) criminal (0.2) criminal some person to (0.2) send (0.2) send him to ah ah Island (.)
R: Different perceptions but actually we refer to anybody who in others’ land.
P2: That’s purge (.) P-U-R-G-E (.) very bad (0.2) it’s curse (.) see?
R: So, if I go to interview Japanese experts again, I have to explain this word to them that actually I don’t mean that. I mean experts. I mean specialists.
P2: {laugh and nod}
R: I see. Why I didn’t get any reply from the questionnaires.
P2: Japanese err (0.4) experts think like me (.)
R: Besides language problem, can you please tell me the factors that affecting your success or difficulties in this international assignment?
P2: {reads the question and remain silence} ...
R: It can be the easy factor.
P2: For instance??
R: Yes. For instance, you don’t like the transportation system here (.) The traffic is so bad and you couldn’t come to the meeting in time.
P2: ((LG)) That is a condition (.) huh? (.)
R: It affects your emotion because if you have to go to the meeting and you get stuck in the traffic. You might feel that why you have to come here .

P2: Umm (0.2) I feel generally speaking (.) I'm satisfied (.)

R: So, I'd like to know what makes you satisfy. Maybe this is the factor that helps you to feel comfortable to stay in Thailand.

P2: We have (.) we had orientation (0.2) and I know (0.2) I understand (0.3) I realise (0.3)

R: How about your family? Do they support you to come to work here?

P2: Yes (.) of course (.) ahh (0.2) ahh (0.4) they want me to come here (.) (0.3)

R: Come to the last question, what is the most challenging for you on this assignment?

P2: Challenging? {read question in the sheet} (0.7)

R: Is it difficult for you to do this assignment? What is the most difficult things for you to meet the expectation of **?

P2: Ahh (0.2) (.) yes (.) umm (.) umm (0.3) the meaning of your challenging is like this (.) problem (0.3) top-up (.) not bottom up (0.4)

R: How do you treat your staff or your colleague here? How do you communicate or interact with your staff?

P2: No (0.2) we are not included (.) we are outsider (.) we are outsider (.) we are not included in your (0.3) hierarchy (0.3) outsider (.) (0.2) so (.) we cannot order them (.) we cannot order something (.)

R: So, do you think this is the most challenging for you on this assignment?

P2: Most challenging {nods}. (0.5)

R: OK. I'll close this interview now. Do you have something to add or to suggest me for the next interview?

P2: (0.3) Actually (.) I can't understand your standpoint here (.) I only know here you (0.2) belong to the ministry as officer (.) yeah?? (.)

R: Yes. Do you want to give me any suggestion about the research?

P2: So (.) I can't understand your standpoint (.)

R: In the ministry or this research?

P2: Here (.)

R: OK. My position is .... I don't know if I answer your question??

P2: {nods} In my opinion (0.2) generally speaking (.) Thailand is not err (0.3) under developing country (.) I think Thailand is almost developed country when I ask foreign companies (.) they say (0.3) Thailand is developed (.) so (.) I come here to work (.)

R: OK. Thank you so much.
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R: How long have you been working with MOL?
P3: Four years (.)

R: Have you worked in other countries before you come to Thailand?
P3: Yes (.) what countries? a long term – Philippines (.) India (.) and then short term – China (.) Indonesia (.) Pakistan (.) Bangladesh (.) Sri Lanka (.) Thailand of course (0.2) Namibia (.) Uganda (.) six African countries (.) Ethiopia... [R: More than 10 countries]. yeah (.) and and Syria – it’s very nice as well (.) and then Latvia (.) Estonia (.) eastern countries Sweden (.) Sweden long terms (.)

R: Why are you interested in working internationally?
P3: (.02) Why? It’s an interesting field (.) you can make interesting project (.) that’s err::: I’ve already worked in industry (.) in Germany (.) and I worked as well in foreign countries (.) ***

R: So, the real reason that you come to Thailand is just to experience the difference?
P3: No (.) not my reason (.) because the Thai people want to have one who can assist (.) the system and policy planning and improving err :::r *** (.)

R: You are responsible for the ***?
P3: Yes (.) I have here *** err (0.1) at the beginning (.) at the beginning I have *** tasks (.) first two years (.) and then second two years (.) and that was .... [he read his job description while provided this information] However (.) the last task was something out of my professional experience (.) so (.) I recommend it (.) rather to err I’m not err expert on it (.) so I was mainly focus on the five tasks (.) all over the tasks I was successful so far (.)

R: Great.
P3: As far as I err can see it (.)

R: Before coming here, have you received any multicultural education or training to help you to adjust to the new environment?
P3: Yes (.) yes (.) in general Germany allocates a time between six weeks and three months (.) preparation time whenever you go to a foreign country (.) with err German organisation which is involved in technical assistance programs (.) and this (0.1) organisation was involved (.) if you are from the industry (.) you don’t get it (.) but if you are sent out as an expat to err ::r this organisation from technical assistance program (.) so (.) I was in six week (.) because they said I have so much experience (.) I don’t need so much not 3 months (.) I wanted to say 3 months because it’s nice (.) We have certain training (.) like intercultural management (.) intercultural affairs (.) then you have to (.) know the history of the country you’re going to and language courses (.) and (0.2) lots of things (.) I have to tell you (.) one thing which is lacking is no introduction and there was no introduction at *** (.) no supports (.) you just came here and then you sit here and you don’t know what to do (.)

R: Did you have chance to meet your colleagues before you started your work? Not orientation, I mean.
P3: Not officially (.) I know *** since (0.3) I visited *** (0.2) err 1999 one year before I came (.) almost half a year before (.) but the reason was I wanted to know how the people are here (.) but they didn’t know that I applied for this (.)

R: You didn’t tell them??
P3: No (.) no (.) I didn’t tell them because I want to know (.) I want to make my decision based on my observation (.) and this time I’ve met a lot of people here
whom I have trained in Germany (.) maybe all the management staff here (.) I
was a-jarn (= teacher in Thai) (.) huh?? (LG)
R: You can speak Thai?
P3: No (.) I cannot (.) they came to Germany (.) and I was involved in one program
in Germany and ahh (0.2) so they (0.2) they came from different countries (.) I
taught them project management (.) and taught how to work in industry and all
the things (.)
R: How about your family or your spouse? Have they travelled with you here?
P3: Yes (.) my wife err came with me here (.) German (.)
R: Did she receive any training before she come?
P3: No (0.2)
R: Isn’t there any training course for the spouse of the expat?
P3: Yes (.) also (.) she hasn’t had more time (.) before (.) when we went to the
Philippines (.) she joined 3 months but this time she was one week (.) I think just
one week (.)
R: How does your wife feel about moving and living internationally?
P3: At the beginning (.) it err it’s difficult for her (.) but err I know her (.) so (.) she
adjusted very fast (.) she has no problem because she is artist (.) so (.) she can
err (0.3) she is (0.1) working here (.) whether she’s here or another place she’s
always working (.)
R: She doesn’t work for any company...
P3: No (.) She makes some lectures here for the *** University and exhibition also
(.) Three big exhibitions here (.) she made some posters for the Bangkok opera
(.) yeah (.)
R: How about your children?
P3: Oh (.) grown up already (.) so (.) no problem (.)
R: And, did you anticipate work-related problems before you began to work here?
P3: (0.2) What do you mean anticipated problem? (.) did I know about the
problem??=
R: Yes. About organisation culture or national culture...
P3: I :::I was not aware that was so difficult in Thailand (.) I would consider not
many many countries (.) and err I would consider the Thai (0.1) mentality is one
of the worst (LG) not the worst (.) sorry (.) it’s one of the most difficulties (.)
delete this part... [R: No] (.) it’s very difficult (.)
R: Has this problem come about when you =
P3: = Not (.) I was not encountered (0.2) I did not err when you come here (.) you
think people are open and so (.) the early beginning err err don’t look like that (.)
but when you start to work (0.1) at least I only can talk about this organisation
here (.) not in others (.) maybe in other industry is quite different (.) but here it’s
umm difficult (.) (0.4)
R: How adjusted you feel you are to your job and responsibilities?
P3: Yes (.) at the beginning it was a little bit (.) err (0.2) you have to find out what
they want (.) and that was the first problem (.) already because they cannot tell
you (.)
R: But before you come here, they made a request.
P3: Yes (.) yes (.) and this is a first 5-6 points request (He shows his job description)
(.) and now you have to do something about it (.) and so (0.2) err (0.1) usually if
you receive this type of request (.) and you feel you can do something (.)
activities when they need support (.) and then (.) an organisation will say OK we
set up for we need to improve or system OK (.) so (.) who is in the group (.)
They set up a team (.) OK (.) This is Mr. *** (.) this is your advisor (.) this team
is a team for improving the system (.) you know? (.) but in Thailand it’s not like
this (.) err you just came here (.) get this task and then you go around (.) and
think something and then you write it down in the paper maybe (.) and give it to
them (.) and that might be totally wrong (.) because you don’t know what
they’re doing (.) what’s the system? nobody tells you really (.) and then (.) you
never get the feedback what they are doing (.) this is what I think it is the most
(.) it is really worse (0.2) and b-a-d behaviour (0.1) Not giving any feedback (.)
you have to find out (.) whether you are right or wrong (.) you have to study a
lot of papers (.) then you know that they have been working with many many
many many foreigners but (.) to find out where are the papers of this foreigner
(.) they almost disappeared all (.) so I was happy that I came here when the ***
project was on going (.) so (.) I was able to get some papers (.) about the survey
they did and others (.) to catch up very fast for this on going (.) I tell you (.) I
have a colleague now (.) *** you will also interview (.) (.) it’s very
difficult for *** to get the information (0.1) they don’t trust (.) it’s like (0.1) my
critique is like this they ask for long term expert here and this is like a partner (.)
so (.) if I’m long term here it’s a kind of marriage for time or something like this
(.) it’s two years or three years or four years (.) something like this (.) and this
time (.) you are partner but you are not treated as a partner (.) you are treated (.)
you are treated like you are here (.) please give me something (.) and but I don’t
give you anything (.) you understand (0.2) I mean people are nice (.) to us (.)
and everything is fine (.) OK (.) come to lunch and coffee and yeah (.) and
they’re very nice (.) but if it comes to work they don’t tell you what they are
doing (.)

R: Because they don’t know?
P3: Maybe they don’t know (.) don’t ask me ((LG)) and this is the main problem if
you reflect (.) this makes the work here v-e-r-y very difficult (.) {slap the desk} I
tell you (.) I give you one example (.) err because this is confidential (.) we
asked (.) we (.) that means all the expatriates here now (.) long term advisors (.)
Japanese and Germans (.) and we are I think four five (0.3) five just now (.) we
asked for a meeting in March with the *** (0.2) we wanted to discuss (0.1) this
(.) that we are not informed (.) we don’t know about organisational changes here
(.) they change a lot (.) but we cannot work if we are not informed (.) we want to
know the procedures (.) in order that we can support you and *** more (.) so (.)
what happen was the *** had a meeting with the Thai (.) and they he told me he
solved the problem but until now {pats his desk} noone told me {pat his desk
harder} or *** or *** (.) what are the changes (.) what are the procedures here
and the and this organisation and (.) and (.) and we haven’t known this (0.1)
you understand (.) how can we (.) how can you as an expert support something
which you don’t know? and this (.) they do not understand (.) they think we are
not satisfied for some reasons (.) and then (.) they treat us more nice and give us
some lunch (.) it’s not the case (.) we are used to work together (.) Thai or here
and this organisation at least (.) they are fighting against each other (.) they are
not used to work together (.) this is my impression (.) so everybody is keeping
this information because this is some power (.) I know this (.) The boss long
time in Germany also and other industrialise countries wherever (.) because if
you have some information (.) it means power (.) and the others are out of this
(.) but how can you (.) I mean how can you advice something (.)

R: Did you have chance to talk to the *** about this?
P3: No (.) we have one meeting (.) I think (0.2) just to present what we are doing (.) and also (.) I have a chance I mentioned also and criticised the err communication is not very good (.) but (.) that was (0.1) from the (0.2) from this (.) this side (.) subordinate side (.) what can I do? (.) that’s all (.) so what? (.) it should be a *** sitting (.) you know? (0.2) there was a *** (.) but it’s only for 10 minutes (.) and then *** had a meeting (.) you see? from my point of view (.) this organisation (.) I’m talking now about this department (.) not (.) not it might be different there (.) [he points at another office’s building] they are not interested (.) I don’t know why they have expats (0.1) I really don’t know (.)

R: But there are many expats here in this department.

P3: Yes (.) yes ((LG)) OK (.) so what else you want to know?

[paused to receive call]

R: You come here under government to government contact...

P3: Yes (.) it’s a little bit umm umm (.) in our case (.) the German case is like this (.) the (0.2) our government err wants to have a commitment from the organisation (0.1) the partner organisation (.) *** (.) and said you have to pay them a little salary (.) so (.) we are employees here (.) The Germans are employees at *** but also in Germany (0.1) Because for this salary (.) nobody would work here (.)

R: What is your most impressive cultural experience while working internationally especially in Thailand?

P3: In Thailand (0.5) that’s what I like (0.1) is the way (0.3) the way they treat each other (.) the respect (0.1) I think the kind of respect they’re showing (.) whether to the foreigners or to each other (.) And, yes...

R: Is it too much sometime?

P3: ((SM) ehh... (0.3) don’t ask me ((LG)) err (0.1) this has something to do with hierarchy (.) but this land (.) they have strong umm hierarchic thinking (.) so (.) that makes it (0.1) now I come back to my critique (.) that makes it’s difficult to work:: as a team (.) because maybe the subordinate will not open his mouth in front of his boss (.) I had situations where (.) for example (.) we had a meeting with a company (.) or industry in Thailand (.) there was a boss of Thai *** (.) one boss (.) and then there was one assistant (.) and the company asked how much will this planning cost? (.) and the boss calculates and gives this to subordinate and tell him (.) check it please (.) the subordinate checking (.) doing like this {Open his eyes very wide} and he’s asked (.) everything is OK? yes (.) yes (.) subordinating said (.) give this to the industry person (.) he looked and said one million baht (.) too much (.) you have made a mistake (.) so (.) the subordinate the assistant (.) he knows exactly that there was a mistake but he was not able to tell his boss (.) so (.) that’s the culture (.) this is what I dislike (.) or this is come to err the respect is too much (.) you see? (.) so (.) if you ask me if it’s not too much (.) this (0.1) is what the explanation (.) yeah (0.2) the (.) the (0.2) the way they do certain thing here (0.3) they are not (0.2) just waiting for anything (.) so (.) they just doing and surviving and I mean on the street (0.1) it’s very ordinary also (.) so (.) you can’t organise things in a very short time here in Thailand (.) if I assess this (.) and compare this to this thing to Philippines or err Indonesia (.) they do well (.)

R: Do well?

P3: Yes (.) yes (.)

R: You mean better?
P3: Yeah (.) they do straight away (.) it’s good (.) they should think a little bit more (.) it is an educational system (0.2) it permits that people are asking but not thinking (.)

R: Is it different from the experience in Africa or=

P3: =Yes (.) yes (.) Oh (.) yes (.) quite different (.) quite different from the Philippines quite different from Indonesia (.) also or India (0.2) If they have the feeling (.) you can support them (.) they suck you (0.1) they try to get everything from you (.) you totally exhausted (.) it’s true (.) (LG) here (.) nobody (.) we have to go to the people and say (.) can I help you something or something like this (.) or (0.1) they are too shy to come (.)

R: Because of the language or…

P3: No (.) not the language (.) Nnn (0.2) yeah maybe a little bit a language also (.)

R: Or because they perceive that you're at the high level of the hierarchy? So, they feel uncomfortable to come or you’re foreigner.

P3: That is possible (.) that’s possible (0.2) yes (.) it was at the beginning err that was one of the difficulties (0.2) but I think what you mentioned (.) this is something (.) if you don’t have a high position (.) you cannot do anything here (0.2) you have to have an office here (.) like this (0.1) to show that you’re good advisor (.) at the beginning (.) you have to make everything official (.) after that you can meet personal (.) but once you know that person (.) it was no problem to talk to them and inform of privacy or whatever (.) just went to them and (0.1) talked to them (.)

R: So, do you think forming relationship with the people is important?

P3: This is important (.) I can only advice err for any expat and for MOL (.) if you get people in here (.) give them at least secretary (.) a good secretary who can (.) excellent in English or Japanese or whatever it is (0.1) and the second is language teacher (.) I paid 2 years for my own English courses (.)

R: [Thai language?]

P3: Yes (.) Thai language (.) they need this (.) so (.) make it obligatory (.) you come here (.) OK (.) you get a language course (.) all over the times (.) that makes it easier (0.3)

R: How about your Thai now?

P3: Oh I start to understand a little bit after *** years (.) I’m too old but OK (.) at least, *** and me (.) we (.) we have err a—same language school (.)

R: [Same teacher?]

P3: Not the same teacher (.) they don’t want (.) we wanted (.) because we wanted to learn together (0.2) but OK (0.1) for certain reason (.) they disagree (.) don’t ask me why ((LG))

R: In your opinion, what is the best way to create good relationship between yourself and Thai colleagues and Thai people in general?

P3: (0.15) At least you have to get err trust err trust (.) To build a trust (0.2) I think this is err if you don’t have trust (.) then you can’t do anything (.) So, I think you need to have it here (.) as well as in other countries (.) I think I need (.) one year (.) to (.) to build err trust (.) I call it familiarisation (0.1) familiarisation is err (0.1) to know what is on going (.) to observe things err out there (.) how they work here? (.) and (.) how they behave? (.) how they treat each other (.) and (.) also participate a lot of err cultural events (0.1) things like that (.) it’s all important (.) that needs time (0.2) yeah (.)

R: How different is your life style in this assignment from your home country?
P3: (0.3) err regarding to life style (.) yeah (0.1) I take (0.3) I take more often the taxis (.) ((SSL)) because it's not so expensive (.) no (.) it's not such a big different (.) I think maybe we are living in a small town (.) near Frankfurt (.) here (.) we have more (.) go more concerts (0.2) better here than compare to our small town (.) but compare to Frankfurt... (.) it's err (0.3) it's not such a big different because I don't earn more or less money than Germany office (.) almost the same (.) umm (02) the (0.2) life style(0.4) yes (.) somehow it's easier here (.) the way of life (.) you've got a lot of help here (.) you have somebody to clean err ::::r the house and err ::::r if you need anything you just err call (.) and it's not (.) not expensive (.) this is not expensive (.) this service is not expensive (.) so (.) this is very err comfortable (.) in Germany (.) you have to do everything on your own ((LG)) helping you so much (.) quite different (.) but I think in general life style is the same (.)

R: Why do you come here? Because you said your salary here is not different from Germany.

P3: Yes (.) I want to make some contributions (.) And for *** (.) I knows (.) it's confidential {he points at the tape recorder} *** (his colleague's name) gets less (.) it's err it's err yeah (0.1) I think it's interest (0.1) from my point of view (.) I always wanted to work (.) I mean my first or second country was Philippines (.) and then I thought OK if I had a choice to go to Asia again (.) what country you'd like? (.) and I thought Thailand was one of the most interesting country (.) so (.) I was happy to (.) to get an assignment here (.)

R: Why are you interested in Thailand?

P3: I think because it's a err (0.3) it's a culture (.) type of good culture (.) the Buddhist culture is so interesting for me (0.2) I think it's different from all the countries here around (.)

R: What aspect of Thai culture are you most familiar with? For example, politeness and awareness of social status or importance of developing workplace relationship.

P3: Gosh ((LG)) (0.1) I think the politeness is the sense that I think the way of thinking sometimes (.) not the way of doing (.) I (0.3) suggest that sometimes the way of thinking is not good (.) because you cannot do or develop things if you don't err (0.1)'hurt' sometimes (.) you know? (.) so (.) if you want to change something in the society and the country (.) you have to (0.2) and always want to be hurt (.) huh?? and (.) and (.) and (.) and Thai society tries to (0.1) not to hurt anybody (.) and that's mean you're not moving (.) one or another sense (.) so err I think this is awareness (.) it's err (0.3) how should I say (0.1) so much here (.) but ...((MT))... OK (.) if you ask me what I take home? (.) I think I have err (0.2) I learnt (0.3) the difficulties in communication (.) yeahh?? (.) I learnt to observe more (.) and more :::e sharp (.) and this is something that I already sort out when I was in Germany (.) last time (.) this is a very good asset (.) for me (.)

R: You said more 'sharp'.

P3: Yes (.) sharp means you see (.) here if you ask somebody (0.2) why you are doing things like this (.) and this either they don't understand you or yes (.) because they cannot talk English or your Thai is so bad that they cannot understand your Thai (.) so (.) umm it's very difficult to err to find out things (.) so (.) what I means is you (.) you the only what you can do is (.) me (.) an expatriate (.) I can observe things (.) I see ok (.) how they behave (.) how people behave (.) how things are done here (.) and base on this so (.) was out of
communication (.) you understand (.) only just looking and only I use this in Germany I’m very good ((LG)) that’s very good thing to (.) so (.) I sharp my observation (.) it’s good (.) you can say (.) and err (0.4) politeness is one thing (0.3)

R: How do you expect to be treated as an expat professional?
P3: Yes (.) This is what I told you at the beginning (0.1) I’m expecting if (.) they say OK we want to know what can we improve here (.) For example (.) it’s the system (0.2) that we make group or form a group before (.) make a project group (.) and when I come (.) they can make use of me (.) we analyse and teach them (.) I can teach them how to make a survey how to analyse it (.) analysis is something which is very very weak here (.) I tell you I should do the strategically planning of*** (.) I did it (.) /.../ But it took me 2 years to convince the management that I need some people for that (.) I need the project group that must be run by responsible Thai persons as a counterpart for this task (.)

R: [Success??]
P3: But after 2 years (.) Yes (.) But 2 years wasted (.)
R: No, not wasted. You give them some inputs and something good for them.
P3: I did (.) The beginning I did everything on my own!!! (.) and I’m not (.) how can you do this if you don’t know this culture (.) the people here and all this (.) I only had the idea of the Thai (.) they said OK ****, and this is already decided (.) so (.) but we don’t know what to do and how to do (.) you understand? (.) can you help us? (0.2) what do you think? write down (.) I write down but nobody (0.1) there’s no (0.1) you know? (.) I was going around here (.) then (.) after one and a half year I found one own study (.) summary (.) and so I started with this and then there was ok anyhow (.) you understand the thing is that (0.1) if they find the request is based (.) usually based on the problem (.) I want to solve (.) right? (.) and that would be my logic (.) yeah?? (.) so (.) they say OK I should support strategical planning for *** (.) Fine! (.) so (.) then (.) and then I come (.) they should say OK this and this and this persons are your (0.1) counterparts for this problem (.) they would tell you everything (.) what is intention? (.) what it is if we did not develop any policy or ant strategy for this (.) this group is responsible for developing this (.) and we can develop it (.) then (.) project plan we can proceed (.) Permanent Secretary (.) they can agree (.) they can disagree (.) we can change (.) all this is normal procedures how and when you put any project (.) but you are here alone (.) I can tell you ((laugh)) they just tell you (.) you should help (.)
R: To my understanding I think the factors affecting your success or difficulties in this assignment are like your counterpart’s mentality and also organisation culture.
P3: I had a counterpart and my counterpart was a *** – *** (.) but he hasn’t (.) hardly had time for me (.) so so=
R: = Formally or informally?
P3: = Formally (.) then I had an informal counterpart (.) *** was very nice (.) *** was very thoughtful (.) and resourceful (.) and very (.) very good very helpful (.) until *** was out of power ((SSL)) Then (.) *** could not help anymore (.) So (.) and therefore I can tell you therefore there are some few people who after (0.2) therefore I told you one year familiarisation (.) and then another one year to think upon (.) I think after two years (.) there were already some good results (0.1) very good results (.) and there were some people who found that I’m (0.1) of good use for that (.) let say (.) I think this was the reason why I could be
successful (.) if you ask me (.) if they could have err let say taking more of me (.) then I say yes (.) sure (.) but it was a way of Thai. (0.3)

R: They cannot use your full expertise??
P3: No they did not because they are not so organised (.)

R: How many percent they can use?
P3: Ohh (0.2) in the case (.) maybe 50% (.)

R: If you can make any suggestion to the *** or to the ministry about the expat management, what would you like to suggest?
P3: Yes (.) to think this is pretty clear (.) one thing is a good (.) good secretary (.) Bangkok is congested in the top (.) who keens the language (.) who acts as interpreter (0.1) just maybe don't call her secretary (.) make it as assistant but who has to do everything to help them (the expats) (.) administrative (.) procedures and whatever she should do (.) what else? language course (.) to provide language course for them (0.3) usually they (0.1) as I said (.) they want to solve the problem that's why you're asking the expats to come in (.) then (.) if you want to solve the problem (.) please put some people together – who know the problem and LET THEM WORK TOGETHER with the expats as a permanent (.) it must be a group (.) it's not a rotation of this err (0.2) government civil servant schemes (.) otherwise you have every second or next year (.) every year you have other people and then (.) then it's (.) it's not very helpful (.) so (0.1) that means there must be Thai people where the advisor can get the input (.) there must be interaction (.) I show you one thing which I explain my pictures (he shows the photos took with his colleagues in several meetings/ workshops) (.) This started last year (.) I show you (.) (points at the photos) This is here (.) to work like this (.) here we sit together and we discuss how do we want to do something and after we did that (.) we made a lot of exchange here in seminars (.) international seminars (.) we sit together again (.) and now I show the pictures here (.) situation analysis and said what was good what was wrong and not because (.) to blame one but to make it next time better (.) and this people understood at the end (.) but now you can imagine when you shift the people round and round again (.) then in 2 years this culture is gone (.)

R: You're changing our organisation structure.
P3: (0.3) No (.) I mean it's good (0.2) compare this *** (.) you know this (.) They had a director, Mr. *** (.) He was err I think 6 or 7 years Thai director (.) and he was able to build a good reputation of this *** in the industry and in the Thai society (.) so do you think that the director who knows (.) and only here for maybe one and a half or two years is very motivated to (.) to do all his best to make this known? (.) all the staff known he would change and do not listen to me (.)

Note: P3 got a phone call for urgent meeting because this is the last day of his assignment. So, the interview needed to finish.
21 June, 2004

Italic letters in this transcript are the words the respondent speaks in Thai.

R: OK. You've already told me that you're here only one and a half month.
P4: Yes.
R: And before you come to Thailand, have you ever worked in other countries?
P4: Err yeah (.) yes (.) I worked in ::n foreign countries err (0.2) during my career (0.2) yeah (0.1) first South Africa - Johannesburg (.) second New York - U.S.A. (.) and the third (.) BKK Thailand (.) and err fourth BKK Thailand ((LG)) very short term task in Moscow (.) err :: Soviet Russia (.)
R: You've worked in many countries. Why are you interested in working internationally?
P4: Umm actually (.) err (0.1) my err I started with some err *** company (.) that is the main reason why I work (0.1) Because I was actually assigned to work in those countries (.)
R: Besides the purpose of business, is there any reason to come to Thailand?
P4: (0.1) Oh (0.2) umm (0.2) yeah (.) it's err it's err in Thai ::iland (0.2) for the business (.) it's (0.1) because err (0.3) actually it's very difficult to (.) to refuse (.) the assignment (.) in order that you can continue to work with the company (0.1) of course (.) err so first time I was assigned to this country (.) I didn't say whether I accepted or not but eventually because I'm self-employed (.) so I had no choice but err accept the assignment (.) but err (0.1) when I was (0.2) actually err (0.1) second time (.) second assignment to this country (.) I look different in this case (.) actually err (0.3) I (0.2) I so eager (.) to get the second assignment in this country (.) because err for the first (.) during my first stay in Thailand (.) oh (.) I was so deeply impressed in this country (.) so I love this country (.) so umm (.) I eagerly (.) I wanted to come back again (.) so (.) my second assignment (.) was a ::a (0.2) I also (.) I also made my effort to get the (0.2) this assignment (.)
R: How about your first assignment? You worked with this department or with others?
P4: Oh yeah (.) because I have told you (.) err (0.2) I have been worked for somebody once err ::r (0.2) yeah yah only one Japanese company err ::r (0.1) until (.) until (.) I finished my last assignment in Thailand (.) so (.) actually I worked for *** at that time (.)
R: Before you coming here (.) have you received any multicultural training or multicultural education to help you to adjust with the new environment?
P4: You mean err (0.2) for this assignment? (.) for the second assignment?
R: Yes.
P4: Yes (.) of course (.) ahh (0.3) as you know (.) for this assignment (.) err (0.2) is a different one from the previous one (.) in that err (0.2) I was err (0.1) sent (.) to this country (.) to this government from the *** we call it *** (.) so this time err (0.3) err (0.1) yes (.) I applied to *** (.) *** invited err (0.1) public people to (.) to join this err (0.1) activity (.) we call it volunteer (.) volunteer (.) and I applied (.) and err (0.1) I (0.2) I (0.2) I became a successful candidate (.) and after that I had some err ::r (0.1) orientations (.) I joined about (0.2) 2 weeks orientation course in Japan (.) they taught many things about (0.2) this job (.) a new job (.) I mean err (0.1) I think it’s volunteer (0.1) volunteer job (.) so (0.1) so many things being taught (.) and of course (.) after orientation (.) they gave us err Thai language lessons (.) in Japan (.) it was about 2 or 3 weeks (0.2) and err (0.3)
since I've arrived here (0.2) we have also about err (0.1) less than one month course (.) err orientation including err also (0.1) Thai language (.) so many lessons (.) introduction in Thailand (.)

R: On arrival training is provided by *** or provided by =
P4: = *** (.)

R: How do you find this course? Is it useful?
P4: Oh yes (.) I think (.) Err umm (0.1) err (0.1) yes (.) err (0.2) the (.) the (.) the language course is err (0.1) not so (0.1) effective because err (.) at the moment err (.) I don't speak err Thai very well (.) other course is (.) err very (.) very good (.) err (0.1) I think so (.) yes (.) they introduce how to (0.2) how to (0.2) how to deal with things (.) how to (0.2) how to (0.2) how to (0.1) err (0.1) contact to people (.) how to communicate the people (.) in the different cultures (.) and etc (.) etc (.)

R: You said how to contact people in different cultures. What have you learned or what is the difference between Thai culture and other cultures?
P4: That is a very err very difficult question (.) but fortunately (.) I :::I lived here (.) before I came here (.) it's about 10 years (.) I had 2 assignments (.) one of it in a *** company (.) and 2 assignments in err BKK (.) so (.) fortunately (.) before (.) I accepted this assignment (.) I had about 10 years experience (.) I (0.2) I (0.2) I (0.1) I'm quite (.) err advantageous than other people (.) oh:::h (0.1) but difficult to tell you (.) what is the main different culture (.) between Thailand and Japanese (.) very difficult (.) Rather ::: for me (.) it's err (0.1) the 2 cultures are very closed (.) I think (.) because first of all (.) I know the err (0.3) religious point of views (.) most of the people in Thailand and in Japan are Buddhists (.) this is a very strong base of the culture (.) err (0.2) umm (0.1) of course (.) err we belong to the same monsoon (.) monsoon area (.) monsoon means season wind chai-mai (= is that right)? (.) and yes err (0.2) umm (0.2) err (0.2) so (.) it's very difficult for me to find different (.) different aspect of the culture (0.2) you know we (.) we (.) we look through ::::h similar pictures of cultures (.)

R: Because we are Asian countries.
P4: Yes (.) of course (.) we both from Asian countries (.) yes (.) of course (.) if I (0.1) if I (0.1) mention err (0.3) if I try to raise the difference (0.2) Japan has a very clear 4 seasons (.) we call it summer (.) winter (.) spring (.) autumn (.) but here (.) in Thailand (.) umm (0.2) a little different (.) neh? (.) the (.) the ::: rainy season (.) the dry ::::y and the ::::e wet (.) dry and wet (.) most of the case (0.2) but I love the err (0.1) season in this country (.) I love most season start in ::::n err (0.1) November (.) October (.) maybe you call it err (0.1) =

R: = We call it winter.
P4: Winter (.) Na-nhow chai mai?? (.) but I (.) I (0.1) phom chob tee sud na-nhow (.) (= winter, right? I like winter most)

R: Your Thai is very clear.
P4: Nid noi ( .) Chob na nhow. (= only little. I like winter)

R: How about your family or your wife? Have they travelled with you?
P4: Ahh (0.1) at the moment (.) my wife (.) yes (.) stays with me (.)

R: And you children also?
P4: Children grow up already (.) one in USA (.) and one in Japan (.)

R: Have your wife received any training before she come with you?
P4: Oh (.) training (0.1) no (.) no (.) no this time (.) this time (0.2) she didn't get any training (0.1) err (0.1) because (0.1) yes of course (.) err (0.1) she has err ::: (0.1) she has been given opportunity by *** (.) but of course err (0.1) she also (.)
knew this country (.) because as I told you (.) the past 10 years (.) I was working here (.) and err (0.2) the first 5 years she stayed together with me (.) so (.) she knows about this country (.) this time she err ::r (0.2) didn’t err (0.2) receive any ::y training (.) she also speaks Thai a little (.) (0.1)

R: So, she feels comfortable to live and work internationally.
P4: Oh (.) yes of course (.) my wife (.) my family moves together with me (0.2) until err ::r (0.2) until err to (.) to the second assignment (.) err (0.2) when we err (0.1) we leave U.S.A. (0.2) when I first came here (.) Thailand (.) it was first assignment (.) the t-w-o kids err (0.1) left in Japan (.) and my wife and err ::r (0.2) came with me (.) the children stay Japan (.) (0.1)

R: Did you anticipate any work related problem before you began to work here?

Even though you used to work in Thailand last 10 years.
P4: Did I anticipate any problem? (.)
R: Any work related problem.
P4: Oh (0.1) any problem neh (0.1) oh (0.2) umm (0.3) no (.) no this time (.) no (.) I not (.) umm (0.1) not I didn’t do err (0.2) anticipate any err ::r (0.3) compli ::icate problem neh? (.) which I might encounter (0.2) but the only ::y (.) only find here (.) was that err (.) I (0.1) might have err some kind of problems which I don’t know because (.) this is my first stay (.) first occasion (.) to work (.) for the government organization (0.2) The first occasion for work with the government people (.) government officials (.) in the past (.) I never worked (.)

R: Even contact??
P4: Yeah (.) yeah (.) I had a contact (.) but err (.) err when I worked with private sector ekkachon (= private sector) (.) yeah (.) I (.) I did some contact with government people (.) but err (0.4) but I could not tell particular problem (.) just a base concern (.) not big (0.2) basically I was confident (.) err that I ::I could deal with ::h public officers very well (.) because I had experience Thai for 10 years (.) I knew the people (.) Thai people (.) and as I told you I believe Thai people or Japanese people or me (.) same people not so different (.)

R: And … how adjusted you feel you are to the job and responsibility? I don’t know if you have to follow the ***. You have *** that describes your job and responsibility from***?
P4: Oh (.) yes (.) yes (.) you know (.)
R: Yes. How do you think? How will you adjust to the job and responsibility?
P4: (0.3) Difficult (0.1) *** (0.1) ((LG)) oh (0.2) sorry (.) again (.) you have a question about this *** ?
R: Yes and I asked you how adjusted you feel you are to the job and responsibilities.
P4: How (.) how (.) how can I say I can adjust [Yes] to this responsibilities?
R: [Yes]
P4: Oh (.) OK (.) Umm (0.2) umm (0.3) that is very err (0.1) very interesting (.) and err (0.1) very difficult question (.) because err (0.1) now (.) I’m studying (.) since I came here (.) I’ve been studying (0.2) ahh (0.2) what ahh (0.1) the people of this division (.) doing(,) huh? (.) and how do they (.) how do they plan (.) things in the future and err (0.1) what should be m ::y responsibility (.) my position in those err (0.2) within (.) within this sub-division neh (0.2) now (.) ye ::s (.) I ::I now I now (0.2) err I try to :::o figure out (.) my position (.) err (0.2) so (.) since my assignment err (0.1) cover 2 (.) 2 years period (.) for the moment (.) just start (.) just the starting period of my assignment (0.1) err (0.1) so it is too
early to answer your question how I adjust myself to this new assignment so I've been in the process of adjusting myself to this new assignment or but I'm ahh I'm ahh ahh position myself as follows number one first of all I must understand understand the resource of the of my division and err I must err grasp the err trend or yeah trend or direction of the policy and the focal point. Then number 2 I must position myself err to lead err understand? mainly I guess yeah I think my j-o-b is to lead err and advise on the on the job on the job which my division are will undertake So of course umm sometimes of course there may be additional case or I should initiate I should initiate err the job but err most of the case I give them my advise or lead them lead them towards some directions understand? and not performing the job in the past of course when I was working with private sector I was given my job and I was initiated my job and not perform it anyway but this time very difficult err I think they have already established this division organisation they already established their jobs but the point is they have no experience maybe it's a very new job they not experience but I have experience chak mai (= that is right in Thai) err of course experience means my own experience but that experience may err help me not help other people so yeah I'm not superman so even they ask me my advice if I don't know I say sorry but if I this is my field experience I can give them my experience anyway I admit err first of all I must learn of course I must develop myself err I must utilise my experience that is my point err of course my point yeah of course your job is very important here in this department Have you had a chance to meet with the or the when you first arrived? Oh yes I already I already say hello to Mr. But my counterpart is very important err this ministry develops policy maybe communication oh so many important err I think this is err this is how can I say main policy for Thai government especially after err after so-called Thai crisis in 1997 yes because err at that time err your government look at err globalisation.
P4: Oh (0.2) oh (0.2) because I’m Asian person (.) so (.) when I come (0.2) meet with people from France and Europe (.) I have long journey to Texas (.) when I was very young (.) actually met those people and talked (0.1) and very impressed (0.4) they (.) they think very rationally (.)
R: You mean people in European countries?
P4: Yeah (.) European countries neh (.) especially when I worked in New York (.) it’s a city of metropolitan (.) metropolitan means (.) a lot of people (0.3) I was impressed with the (0.1) so-called the (0.1) ‘western value’ (.) we call it ‘western value’ (.) ‘chai mai?’ (.) which include many:::y free (.) freedom (.) freedom and any kind of freedom (.) freedom free to work (.) free to live (.) free to speak (.) when I come (.) when I come to Thailand (.) I feel very (.) very ease (.) I feel unease because err (0.1) I (.) I (.) I (.) I (.) I can feel oriental ::::l values (0.1) in Thailand (.) err (0.2) oriental values mean err (0.1) people (.) people take care (.) each other (.) err (0.3) although (0.1) basically (.) this people can compete (.) each other (.) still (.) they can take care other people umm (0.2) although they don’t like to compete each other (.) but anyway that is err ::r everyday (.) everyday life (.) there was win (.) Cha-na chai mai win (.) right? (.) competition (.) huh? everyday (.) every field (.) of course in Thailand they must compete (.) otherwise they cannot promote themselves (.) they cannot err (0.3) this means err (0.2) internationalisation (.) globalisation (0.2) but umm (0.2) yeah (0.1) even (.) even (.) having said that (.) you can (0.2) you can (0.3) be blamed (.) but (0.2) it becomes value (.)
R: OK. Is forming relationship with the local people or local culture is one of your goal in working internationally?
P4: Umm (.) yes (.) of course (.) of course (.) that is err (0.1) the (.) the top (.) my (.) my (.) my top objective in this time (.) to have err (0.1) understanding to (0.2) to (.) to (.) to (.) to let them know myself (.) and err (0.2) also to know (.) local people (.) are the most important job (.) I think (.)
R: In your opinion, what is the best way to create good relationship with Thai colleagues and Thai people in general?
P4: Oh (0.1) yes (0.3) umm (0.3) yeah (.) OK (.) I think (0.2) this way (.) this way is (.) to learn from them (.) um (.) to learn from them (0.2) of course (.) my main job is to advise them (.) sometimes I must lead them to (.) to the core of this system in organisation (.) but I think err (0.2) err (0.2) the (.) the purpose of the goal must be obtained (.) based on past experience (0.2) If you don’t have past experience (.) you cannot even set up the core (.) so (.) I must know (.) how they made the past and present (0.2) yeah (.) that is very importance (.) even the purpose of obtaining the goal (.) err (0.2) but yeah (0.1) I think (.) there are so many points (.) so many points which I must respect (.) so many points (.) some points I must advise to change or include (.) but (.) some points I think I must admit (.)
R: Can you give me an example of some points that you likely to admit?
P4: No ::o I’m still learning neh? in this case (.) I’m still learning (.)
R: But compare to your experience last 5 years.
P4: Y-e-s (.) umm (0.3) yes (.) so neh err (0.2) people so (0.2) ‘krengjai’ (= very considerate for others’ feeling) (.) ‘krengjai’ is a very (0.1) is one of the way I think to the point to (.) to win (.) (0.2) I think that is one of the way err (0.2) good ‘krengjai’ (.) ‘krengjai’ err (0.2) err (0.1)
R: But sometimes people are too krengjai.
P4: Too ‘krengjai’ neh too ‘krengjai’ sometimes (.) yes (.)
R: Some said that they are frustrating because =
P4: = yeah (.) yes (.) but krengjai means neh (.) err (0.1) good point is that err (0.2) there is a lot of (0.2) there is a room for them to improve themselves (.) if ::f they are ::: fully confident neh themselves (.) they don’t be krengjai (.) no krengjai (.) in the krengjai means they are not err (0.1) 100% sure (.) neh (.) That’s why they become krengjai (.) so (.) err (0.1) they work so hard (.) normally for me (.) normally they exhausted (.) or even :::n here sometimes (.) or :::r even :::n let say 5 o’clock (0.2) neh (.) some of them still working (.) but if I (0.1) if I (0.1) if I’m in New York (.) or European countries (.) 5 o’clock (.) nobody there (.) yeah (0.1) oh (0.2) no (.) I’m not asking them overtime (.) this is the different (.)

R: How different is your life style here and your life style in your country, in Japan?
P4: Home country (0.2) life style (0.1) err (0.2) life style (.)
R: Yes, different?
P4: Life style (0.1) err (0.2) umm (0.2) life style in Thailand more relax (0.1) OK (.) in Japan (0.1) I’m talking about err (0.1) about the time (.) when I work after I return if I compare err (0.4) Japan (0.1) working with Thailand now (.) first of all (0.2) (.) we err (0.2) commuting hour is very short in Thailand (.) travelling (0.1) travelling from home to office (.) is short (.) here in Thailand than in Japan (.)
R: Really?
P4: Umm (.) in the morning at the moment it’s only 20-30 minutes now (.) but if I’m in Japan (.) it takes about more than 1 hr to 1.30 hr (.) normally in Japan (.) people living far from the big cities (.) they (.) they go to workplace (.) but take them about (0.2) 1 hr – 1.30 (.) one and a half in my case (.) but here (.) maybe 20-30 minutes (.)
R: You live nearby.
P4: I live near (.) near (.) near :::r *** station (.) for life style also at leisure time (.) I can play golf here in Thailand (.) so (0.3) it’s good for me - exercise (.) very easy (0.2)
R: Which aspect of Thai culture are you most familiar with? ....
P4: Familiar ::r? oh (0.2) you (.) you (.) you give me examples (.)
R: Yes, examples of politeness, the importance of developing workplace relationship and awareness of social status of the persons you interact with..
P4: Thai culture (0.3) Politeness (0.2) Thai culture is the culture of smile (0.3) normally it comes from politeness (.) so (.) it’s very impressed (.)
R: What do you miss most from your home country?
P4: Miss? in Japan (.) because I’m here?
R: Yes.
P4: Oh (0.3) umm (0.2) umm (0.4) OH!! Yes! sometimes I miss the err (0.1) Japanese food (.) because err (0.1) yes (.) although (.) I can have Japanese food in Thailand (.) in BKK very (.) very much (.) taste err is different such as sushi (.) even same (0.2) the taste is very different (.) sometimes I want to eat the food err (0.1) which is served (.) in Japan ((LG)) of course (.) maybe of course (.) maybe first of all (.) material (.) different (.) material and the water (0.1) water different (.) maybe (.) so it’s totally different (.) so (.) sometimes I miss Japanese food (.)
R: How do you expect to be treated as an expat professional?
P4: Here? (0.1) how? Ohh (0.2) umm (0.1). I don’t want to be treated (.) especially (.) err (0.2) err (0.1) differently from other Thai people (0.2) I just want to be treated properly like this (.) you (.) you deal with other Thai people (.) any different?
R: Different from??
P4: I want to be treated the same (0.2) same (.)
R: For people who come as experts. They have some expectations that local people should respect or should pay attention.
P4: Oh ::h (.) yes ::s (.) umm (0.2) I see (0.2) that is err ::r that depends (0.1) that depends on how I (0.2) how I do (0.1) how I act (0.1) how I deal (0.1) with the ::e with other people (.) with Thai people (0.4) I can’t expect to them (0.3) it depends on what I can do (.) to help them (.) so (.) I haven’t done yet (.) anything neh (.) maybe it becomes clear when I read {points at all the documents he has been reading since he arrived} (.) after I finish this at that time I know they react (.)
R: So far, do you think you are treated appropriately?
P4: Same as Thai people? (0.3) yeah (.) yes (.) yes (.) like their friends (0.2) like their colleagues (.)
R: Have you talked or have you discussed with the experts here who come before you about the emotion they have gone through?
P4: Yes (.) yes (.) yes (.) as I told you (.) in the orientation course in Japan (.) we had so many (.) orientations (.) and some experts (.) lecturers (.) so many people have some err problems with the multicultural err (0.2) lecture (.) so many things umm (0.3) err (0.1) yes (.) they gave us (.) they gave me err (0.4) what should I call (0.1) they (0.3) communicate us how they act to persons (.) so many cases (0.3) but (0.2) most of people said that (.) as I told you (.) you must enjoy yourself (.) in this assignment neh (.) because you basically volunteer (.) they said (.) we volunteer to do this job (.) Nobody posts you to do this (.) you (.) yourself volunteer to work in mostly (.) they said (.) not advance country (.) not developed country (.) developing country (.) some country is very harsh in weather (.) for certain surrounding area (.) but here you volunteer (.) so you must enjoy (.) first of all (.) you must enjoy your life(,) in those countries err (0.4) you (.) you (.) you mustn’t rush to attend your job (0.3) ihum sum sum chai mai (= do it again and again, right?) (LG) (.) you must make friend with local people (.) local culture (.) and respect local people (.) respect the culture of local people (.) they stress in orientations (.)
R: From those orientations, can you foresee what is the most challenging for you on this assignment?
P4: Yes (.) umm (0.2) yes (.) ahh (0.2) yes (.) for rather I can answer you how I preparing my mind to act in that (0.2) of course I also ahh (0.2) take lessons from those orientation (.) and I decide myself (.) to enjoy myself (.) why? (0.1) spend time (.) spend time (.) doing (.) what I wanted to do in a field of my assignment (.) very difficult (.) very difficult (.) challenging? I think of myself (.) if what I’m doing err (0.2) what I’m working (0.2) normally (.) they say (.) OK (.) it’s OK (.) they don’t give me a very (.) very details of duty (.) OK (.) give us cooperate (.) I must cooperate (.) I must help them to (.) promote *** training (.) huh? so (.) OK (.) I must try (.) to do (.) what I wanted to do (.) of course (.) other big policy of the size and it comes in Thai (.) I must try (.) I must try (.)
R: Come to the last question, can you please describe factors affecting your success or difficulties in this assignment?

P4: Umm (0.2) yes (.) yeah (0.2) first of all (.) I guess (.) err (0.2) the good or bad relationship with ::::h with the people (.) with whom (.) I work (.) good relationship or bad relationship (.) especially my counterpart (0.2) if we have good relationship (.) maybe the end results will be success (.) if I have bad relationship (.) the end results will fail (0.2) number 2 (0.2) number 2 (0.1) =

R: = organisation culture or organisation structure.

P4: OK (.) umm (0.1) yeah (.) at the moment I don’t know (.) I don’t know (.) but err (0.3) maybe neh may affect (.) but I think as long as we can keep good relation (0.2) Good relationship is very wide meaning neh (0.1) we must communicate (.) very well (.) what I’m thinking I must tell them (.) and I want to know what they are thinking (.) communication is also included (.) very important communication (.) and umm (0.4) relationship means (0.2) taking (0.2) caring about other people (0.4) culture (.) I don’t know culture mean (0.2) yeah (0.1) but culture ::::e err (0.4) passion

R: Have you ever heard about weak tie and strong tie? What do you think is more important between creating weak tie and strong tie in the workplace?

P4: Tie means me and other people? Yes (.) it’s relationship neh?? it means work also after work (.) if we can have good relation (.) including private tie (.) then maybe (.) I think (.) this leads to success of my job (.) I guess (.) but of course err (0.2) umm (0.3) so neh (.) but of course (.) we must keep our (0.2) way of work (.) pattern err (0.1) to ::::o (.) to accomplish (.) to accomplish our ::::r our task (.) neh? err (0.3) err (0.3) passion (.) passion (0.1) is important (.) our (0.2) umm (0.2) of course we call it (.) entrepreneur (.) chaı̂ mai? (LG) entrepreneur means (.) also includes many things (.) because change ourselves (.) we must be very flexible to change ourselves (.) if I want to change counterpart (.) I must change (.) I must change (.) myself (.) otherwise they don’t follow me (.) if I want to lead other people (.) I must change (.) otherwise (.) the follower or subordinate cannot follow me (.) they won’t (.) they won’t follow me (.) if I say you must change (.) you must change (.) no (.) they won’t (.) so (.) I must change before other persons (.) change (.) change (.) change (.) change is very important (.)

R: OK. Thank you very much.
R: How long have you been working with the MOL?
P5: I started here in *** last year.
R: Have you visited Thailand before you come?
P5: Is it question in this? {look at the list of questions provided upon request before the interview} umm (0.1) yeah (0.1) briefly (0.1) umm (0.1) on stop over (.) because umm (0.1) but I have not spent much time here (.) the maximum I spent was 3 days (.) just only visited people (.)
R: Before you work in Thailand, have you worked in other countries?
P5: Many (.) I've been working as an international consultant for 11 years (.) and umm (.) I have spent substantial of time in short terms consultancy (.) and working with government (.) non government organisation (.) international organisations in Africa and Southeast Asia (.)
R: And this is the first time you come to Thailand.
P5: It was first time to come to Thailand (.) but I've worked in the area before (.) I worked in Vietnam (.) I worked in Cambodia (.) I worked in Indonesia (.)
R: Why are you interested in working internationally?
P5: This is my profession (.) I'm (0.1) err (0.1) my profession background (.) I'm an economist and I'm a security and development studies (.) to development studies is international work internationally and umm (.) why I like it is umm (0.2) I like it very much to (0.1) umm (0.2) internationally to stick the head together and look for solutions (.) because we have very global problems (.) the (.) the ::e size they are in the countries are different but umm (0.1) each country has umm (.) the problems are there and the same (.) the way that occur in different countries are different (.) but since they are much in the same categories (.) that's what the interest to work with a lot of people (.) in that setting (.)
R: Before you coming here, have you received any multicultural education or training to help you adjust to the new environment?
P5: Yes (.) I got an ::n intercultural orientation (.) I've got 2 weeks of training in umm in Thai language (.) and course within the specific training ::g the special course of Thai language was also on the agenda (.)
R: Is it provided in Germany?
P5: Yes (.) it's provided in Germany (.) because in Germany it's that way that (.) when people go out of the country (.) they get the particular induction period and umm (01.) there is a set of modules (.) and courses which are offered (.) and one of the course is intercultural communication (.) conflict resolution (.) conflict solving (.) umm (0.1) that's one of the other things is planning (0.1) umm (.) planning (.) monitoring (.) evaluation ::n (0.1) then planning procedures that's all (.) my consultancy services are done for that (.) I've been doing consultancy in skill development (.) business development and project management (.)
R: Sounds very useful course.
P5: The courses are very useful (.) yeah (.) and they umm they do in such a way that (.) they separate the groups (.) for example (.) you will find in a setting (.) umm people who go through (.) all the countries all over the world (.) Latin America (.) Africa (.) and Asia and then make special Asian group (.) and then make special Southeast Asian groups (.) so to help participants going to (.) umm (0.1) to Cambodia (.) to Indonesia (.) and (.) to Thailand (.) in one group (.) within a cultural setting (.) which is a little bit similar to Vietnam and the others (.)
R: Do this course provide by the government or have a particular organisation?
P5: Umm (0.2) it's a particular organisation (.) which is assigned by the government and paid by the government (.) so (.) they provide courses and attract people to implement the course (.) but it isn’t an organisation under the government (.) but you know (.) it’s um (01.) it’s run (.) it’s privately run (.) to make it not heavy government like (.) It’s private organisation (.) let put it that way (.)
R: How about your family or your spouse? Have they travelled with you?
P5: No (.) I’m alone in this country (.) my umm my *** he is in *** (.) he is a German (.) and he works in **** (.)
R: Did he also receive training like you had?
P5: No (.) because he doesn’t stay with me here (.) he’s staying umm (0.2) he’s staying separate (.) huh? (.) so (.) it was only me received the training (.)
R: How does your *** feel about moving and living internationally?
P5: He’s used to that (.) because you know (.) I mean I have been in short term international assignment for the past 12 years (.) and before that I’ve spent 2.5 years in East Africa (.) so he’s a bit used to that (.)
R: How many countries you’ve been working altogether? Is it more than 20 countries?
P5: I think it is (.)
R: Is there any difference between these countries in terms of the way of life and the way people think about the work or life style?
P5: Much different (.) much different (.) it’s umm (0.1) Thailand is much (.) much more difficult (.)
R: Than other countries?
P5: Yeah (.) (0.3)
R: Did you anticipate any work-related problem before you began to work here?
P5: (0.2) Umm (0.1) no (.) not really (.) it is umm (0.1) because umm (0.1) you know I’ve been working in international setting before (.) and umm (0.1) even when you do the short term consultancy (.) you come to a place and umm (0.1) you have a problem and you agree with the people about the problem (.) you look at it from the different angles (.) sometimes you sit and say hey (.) let’s solve it and let’s try the way out (.) and umm (.) I expected to be similar in Thailand but umm (0.1) I realise that’s not the case (.)
R: How do you feel with this practice?
P5: Not encouraging (.) very discouraging (.) I’ve the feeling that umm (.) that’s why I find your exercise is very good (.) I’ve the feeling that Thailand does not know what the want to do with the experts (0.3) and I’ve the feeling that the :::e (0.2) the ministry doesn’t make proper use out of it (.) and that creates complete insecure on both sides (.) so (.) the emm (0.1) Thai just observe what the expert is doing and the expert is sitting and waiting for the Thai people to say something (.) and they become more ::e unsure from day to day (.) and it’s umm (0.2) not good for both sides (.)
R: So, how adjusted you feel you are to your job and responsibilities?
P5: From the description I think I fit in to it (.) but there might also be some problems on how to do (.) it doesn’t clear what it is because expert is not expert (.) you might have expert (.) you know I’m within an expert program from Germany where the people are sent by only the expertise (.) and it’s very encouraging program so far that German government sends people in third world (.) we really send you our expertise and you take away our expertise (.) but the budget for doing something must come from you (.) to make it attractive
that the people come from Germany (.) we give them topping up otherwise would be difficult for you to finance it (.) but to make it sustainable (.) there must be a normal payment in the country (.) so (.) there are the terms we are coming (.) that means we don’t come with the projects (.) we come only with our expertise (.) so that means Thai people have to say well (.) we are doing something (.) we want that expertise and it seems that absolutely not in their thinking (.) experts are expected to do projects because that’s what they are used to (.) but not to ::o (0.2) the project are developed by them (.) that is perhaps the special condition under which I’m (.) this thinking is a little bit with other projects (.) might be a little bit similar to volunteers (.) and (.) you know they are also (.) they don’t have their own project (.) because if you have your own project (.) you have your own money (.) I don’t have project money (.)

R: And they expect money, don’t they?
P5: No (.) they understand there is no money here (.) umm (.) but the logic is that (.) you do project but you can’t do project on these days because umm (0.2) it’s very difficult (.) you know (.) as an expert (.) it’s a very complex issue (.) as an expert (.) you don’t have authority (.) no responsibility (.) and umm (0.2) and if you don’t have authority (.) no responsibility that means you work through the people (.) get the people work with expected results from you (.) but they would not find a result (.) it’s a very (.) very complex issue (0.2) I didn’t expect it to be so complicated (.)

R: So, when you first arrived, did you have chance to talk to some people that going to be your counterpart or your colleagues or you co-workers in the ministry?
P5: Yes (.) I have an immediate boss (.) an immediate person I report to (.) and I get counterpart due to the purpose of document work (.)

R: Does it work?
P5: In one case it does not work at all (.) the other case it works OK (0.1) well (.) umm (0.1) they’re also (0.2) in that respect it’s not very clear (.) umm (0.1) what the roles of the counterpart and how you define them? (.) is a counterpart a mentor? (.) is a counterpart a person who sits with you and helps you? (.) or is a counterpart a ‘I’ to ‘I’ level” (.) if it’s ‘I’ to ‘I’ level (.) then it is a professional question (.) then you have professional exchange that means the person must at least have a professional umm background like you (.) to make it comparable (.) not to make it problematic (.) so (.) I have one capable counterpart (.) I have a problem (.) an interest problem (.) apparently (.) the person did not know on which I realise they are (.) (0.2)

R: Do you have chance to talk frankly on what you want? Or you do not?
P5: Umm (0.4) of course you have a chance (0.1) but umm (0.2) if you do that (.) you do that on :::: very precise aspect (.) the more concrete and practical you do (.) the better it is (.) umm (0.1) the most practical aspect where you can do is that to develop in cooperation for the ministry (.) a project (.) where it’s very clear that you can say OK (.) we have this as a common though (.) and that’s your responsibility (.) that’s your responsibility (.) This is not the case (.) It’s an (0.1) you know (.) the case is more to say (.) you do something and then you tell us later on what it is and we take it (.) It fits in us (.) yes or no (.) and umm (0.2) I for example (.) I’ve made suggestion where I could give*** (.) At the same time (.) when they do that you know (.) I could learn while the people are doing. (0.2) It was rejected (.) (:::;) (.) I came fresh here and it was set well OK (0.1) you know Thailand is not the same do (.) do (.) do that (.) that one would be
Africa (.) but here you said (.) fine (.) you put aside huh? (.) but then you put aside you don’t think (.) well (.) there are a lot of what I do that (.) yeah... (.)

R: How have you felt about your experience of living and working in Thailand? What are the real emotion you have gone through?

P5: A living I feel very positive (.) and umm (0.2) it’s easy living (.) huh? and umm (0.1) the people are very kind and very open nah and they try you know umm (0.3) to communicate (.) I’m not (.) I don’t speak Thai (.) so (.) it makes a difficult by the language (.) but the work (.) I not very satisfy (.)

R: Because of what?

P5: Because of the points stated before (.) umm because of a lack of communication (.) a lack of team spirit (.) a lack of togetherness (.) a lack of respect (0.1) umm (0.3) I think it’s a lack of communication (.)

R: Communication between both sides?

P5: No (.) also from the other side (.) I mean the umm (0.1) you have umm (0.1) communication (0.1) I mean (.) where are we for instance (.) we are running behind information (.) to find out what’s actually going on (.) there are strategic planning in the department (.) we are not informed about it {slap the desk} (0.3) and (0.1) there are *** (.) we are not informed about that either (0.1) so (.) it’s very difficult to be useful if you are now to do 70% of guess work (.;_;_;;) (0.4)

R: Let’s talk about the positive things. What is your most impressive cultural experience while working internationally?

P5: ... (;_;_;;) ... (0.4) the most impressive experience (.) with regards of what?

R: Cultural experience.

P5: That’s very wide (0.2) very wide (0.1) huh? (0.3)

R: The way people think or some aspects of organisation culture...

P5: Umm ^^^^^^ (0.2) I’ve done some works for example in :**:n Vietnam (.) several different works (.) I umm (0.2) worked in organisation and training them in planning and then monitoring (.) at the same time marketing activities and marketing products (.) umm (0.2) in Vietnam I’ve found it’s fascinating that we worked in a particular methodology (.) and within the discussion and umm (.) you know and atmosphere was created that (.) people started to (.) to discuss about things very critical (.) very openly and very critically (.) that was a very positive experience (.) huh? (.) that’s umm (0.1) then (.) umm (0.1) another positive experience was err (0.2) also I have the seminar here umm (0.2) I did *** (.) that was a *** for 3 days in *** (.) That was also a very positive experience (.) we work with a people there (.) serious work (.) umm so you know that (.) we had different perspectives for the international approaches from neighbouring countries (.) and international groups with different problems (.) in their respective countries (.) but you’ve seen that (.) the people are on various levels when they look at (.) you know (.) a number of issues and they’ve taken to learn from each other (.) they said that (.) I try this one (.) perhaps you can try (.) and to facilitate this exchange also (.) a big merited international work and simply setting (0.1) and (0.4) I facilitated a work problem in Indonesia (.) but the people are very (.) very critical (.) the national consultant (.) and that there was the European funding agencies and umm (0.3) they buried since the beginning (.) so when we said something they buried (.) but in the course (.) umm (0.2) the process of the training umm (0.2) they realise (.) and then the training was methodologically also was set in that way that they can discuss with each other quite a lot (.) so that the input of the westerners are as minimal as possible (.) and the cause of the training (.) an openness (.) developed (.) and was realised (.)
it seems to work apart (.) umm (0.1) the pattern was on ::::n the question was on the evaluation (.) which is a critical discussion point anyway (.) so (.) we are on different sides (.) but yet (.) if we are very clear what we want (.) we can make it easier (.) so (.) a merit is contributing to understanding (.) umm (0.1) where they seem (.) a bit of misunderstanding at the beginning (.) a wrong understanding (.) so (.) this is a merit of international work (.)

R: Do you think it's a long way for Thailand to go to that international level?
P5: (0.3) I don't know where you go (.) umm (0.1) I think Thailand has a lot of hindrances to make it difficult (.) umm (0.1) and makes it also whether they cooperate with umm (0.1) with international experts or not (.) they will have difficulties in the long run to compete with the neighbouring countries (.) I think one of the ::e problem was hierarchy which hindrance a lot of development internally to adjust (.) or to let something you come up is the extraordinary and strict Thai hierarchy you have (.) err which hindrance (.) any kind of innovations (.) hindrance any kind of communication (.) passing around (.) and umm (0.1) and umm (.) hindrance any kind of development to the ::e to set up the team (.) and umm hindrance also the governmental institution (.) to adjust their own roles to the changing environment (.) so it's umm (0.1) the expert communication (.) the communication with the experts is one thing (.) that I feel very strong for the development of Thailand is facing in itself (pats the desk with both hands) and how they do that (.) because umm (0.1) you know (.) the department like this (0.2) as umm (0.2) to understand its new roles (.) it's not any longer administering (.) but it plays professional role to advice them (.) but they will not be able the way they do it (.)

R: The same people, the same ideas even you give them the new roles and new responsibilities, ...
P5: Yes (.) that's very difficult and this is one of the experience that I had that when coming here (.) umm (0.1) I thought doing the work would mean also (.) he has implementing organisations and implementing bodies (.) so (.) that means I go to implementing bodies (.) and to discuss and see what they need in the system (0.2) this was not the case (0.3) it was not foreseen in the budget (0.2) and you seem to have a separation (.) that the (.) umm (0.2) the *** ask less from the *** (.) but I'm here to understand the problem (.) but that just my interpretation (.) the *** asked not enough from the *** to do (.) and I know that they ask for professional expertise (.) advise because they have been administered (.) and the shifting role that we are not professional body and set up for example a group of people who are working in a particular area and we instruct you and develop the sentences because you work on the ground and we can't facilitate here in BKK the whole thing (.) would (.) require a new approach (.) which this (pats the desk) department has not done (.) if they do it (.) then (.) an expert can make a lot of sense (.) because he can bring in the role (.) facilitate the process (.) to link it to other institutions (.) but at the moment (.) I think it's a waste of time and energy (.)

R: But you have been here for *** months, suppose to have some review of your work right? Every 6 months or whatever, do you have that?
P5: {shaking her face}

R: You don't do that (.) Do you think it's worthwhile?
P5: Umm (0.2) I think it's something that I've made and some aspects I've helped also (.) huh? (.) and (.) and (0.2) I (0.1) umm (0.1) some other things have taken a lot of energy unnecessarily (0.2) umm (0.2) something could have been better
(.) where I have done umm (0.1) not enough (.) I haven’t pushed enough energy into it (.) umm (0.4) something umm (0.2) where delayed (0.1) simply by the way that (.) we perhaps did not know how to address approach (.)

R: How long will you be here?
P5: My contract is 2 years (.)
R: Two years. So far, were there any cultural area of concern that you had when you decide to work =
P5: = here in Thailand?
R: =Yes
P5: = No (.). no (.). I’ve found it actually very interesting to and I find it very challenging to work in a country where umm (0.1) where the country is not developing country (.) huh? (0.2) umm (0.1) you know where the country is immediately income country and where you develop instrument (.) in cooperation to get that (.) with the self confidence (.) on both sides (.) that’s I see what we can do together and umm (0.2) and simply using the expertise on both sides (.) In my umm consultancy works before (.) I never have the feeling or my understanding of my consultancy was never that I go to a country and work with international consultants and teach them something they know their stuff very well and some areas more than they do (.) but it’s matter of exchange idea (.) what to do (.) and I’ve found it’s very exciting to have that in Thailand here (.) umm (0.2) perhaps (.) it’s government situation that (.) government is umm (0.2) you know the whole setting ( .) the whole ideas re ::e redefining its roles and (0.1) has to face a lot of difficulties (.) face a lot of competition and offside (0.1) and things have to change (.) to adjust and I understand that (.) that’s err that’s an issue the country has to do (.) very strong (.) and umm (.) perhaps (.) I interpret the way that you don’t want (.) the time that you don’t want so much to share (0.1) The insecurity and the (0.1) umm (0.1) situation that they are working question marks with outsider (.).

R: So (.). you would feel better if they feel that you’re part of them?
P5: (0.3) yes (.). we are the team (.)
R: And so far (.). do you have that feeling?
P5: No (.). (she looks very discouraged)
R: If you have a good time to talk to the Permanent Secretary, what would you like to suggest him to do with this situation?
P5: (0.1) umm (.). well (.). when we had a meeting in March this year (.). We suggested some points already (0.2) we said umm (0.3) be clear what you want (.). of international experts include them in your planning (0.2)

R: Was it heard?
P5: Yes (.). they wrote it down (.)
R: What do you mean by that?
P5: Maybe unfortunate thing is (0.1) at that very time (0.2) no high responsible persons of this department participated (0.2)
R: Do you mean every expert in this ministry or only *** expert?
P5: Every expert in this ministry (.). The Permanent Secretary organised the meeting in March this year (.). 6th of March (.). this year (.). have you heard about it?
R: I’ve sent the questionnaire before the 1st of March and my colleague said it would be distributed in the meeting.
P5: Yeah (.). and on the 6th of March (.). there was a meeting (.). where they invited all the experts (0.2) that might have been motivated for study also (.). huh? so (.).

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agenda that they say well (.) OK the first time that we are here and we’re
discussing now (.) just to see what we are doing and any suggestions you’ve to
us (.) and umm (.) how I (0.1) what’s work? (.) and how do you see couldn’t
work? (.) and what are you doing? and in general it came out (.) by most of the
experts wherever department of they’re working (.) that would like to have umm
(0.2) yeah (.) make more proper use out of them (.) huh? (0.1) and this is my
interpretation but please ask your Thai colleagues how they perceive the
meeting? because that’s all information for you and they have written down (.)

R: I did but I didn’t get anything.
P5: Oh (.) you didn’t get anything from the meeting?
R: No (.)
P5: You know (.) umm (.) the ::e the umm (0.1) you know you can take (.) the way
your thesis adapts with as an indicator (.) the topic is for the people but they take
the way that it’s not very serious for them (0.2) that what the people tell you
here (.) there might be a point of totally … [paused] from the meeting on the 6th
of March (.) they heard very critical (.) very (.) very critical (.) but in general (.)
it was (.) an issue to say (.) please keep us informed (.) that seems to be a
problem in Thailand for providing information (.) I don’t know why (.) the
people are shy (.) or if they think the information might be bad (.) or umm (0.1)
or whether they say umm (0.2) we look like stress (.) they should find it out (.)
but there is something ::d to ::o (.) why people are so hesitate in making (0.1)
providing information (.)
R: Because information is power for some people, I think.
P5: You know (.) [looks at researcher seriously] let me give you an example (.) the
particular point becomes very unfavourable (.) it happened (.) you get the
information when you come across (.) *** if you are not ‘asked’ for it (.) if you
are not even informed what’s going on (.) how can you act? … if you have a
feeling (0.1) I’m sorry when I’m in a complaining side (.) but you have a feeling
that you work as a spy (.) as an agent (.)
R: Who, who has that feeling?
P5: You (.) as an expert (.) you get the feeling you’re working as a spy ((LG)) and
that you try to find something out (.) yeah (.)
R: No, I know you come to help.
P5: No (.) not to help (.) to work on equal level (.)
R: But at this stage, you have to help them to get some idea what you’re doing now
first.
P5: Yeah (.) look (.) work on equal level (.) work (.) respect on equal level (.) no
help (.) you can easily help yourself (0.1) but work on equal level because (.) the
particular expertise (.) particular expertise (.) are not available at the particular
time (.) for that particular prize in Thailand (.) as you see (.) only reason why we
are here (0.1) and it’s easier for people who might have other networks (.) to use
other networks because we are out of a particular hierarchy (.) that is making
proper out of it (.) so on the equal level (0.2)
R: And it doesn’t work.
P5: No (.) apparently doesn’t work (.) I’m surprised (.) I would not have expected (.)
at all.
R: You talked about relationship. Do you think that forming relationship with the
local people one of your goal that you come to work here?
P5: I think so (.) yes (0.1) forming relationship and setting up work relationship (.)
yes (0.1)
R: In your opinion, what is the most effective way to create good relationship with Thai colleagues and Thai people in general?

P5: To include the international expert in communication (.) very clear (0.2) because they are (. ) you know (.) the typical (0.1) and that’s why also I strongly say it’s not helping (.) the typical way of development work has been that umm (0.3) you have an international organisation coming with money and with project (.) they make the start (.) look at the *** (.) how can they get works done (.) huh? use huge of money lots and lots of money lots of lots of concepts (.) so (.) they developed it (.) they shelved it later on put it in the library (.) the equipment sent out to the *** but not use (0.2) so (.) they were eagerly there (0.2) so this is umm (0.1) this is one way (.) huh? in 2 years time (.) all the equipments will be old (.) not use (.) need to be replaced (.) OK this is one way of the ways of doing thing (.) they have been working (. ) but they were not within the team (.) and did not trickle down (0.1) it’s many (.) many of reasons link to it (.) either there are a lot of hidden agendas in the *** team (.) or ::::r it was umm (0.1) the people could not (.) communicate properly (.) there was this interest (.) they were pushing (.) different goals for the projects whatever (.) a lots of reasons (.) might have led to the point (.) that it fails (.) because apparently it fails (0.1) everything is developed but not use (0.3) So (.) but this is expert (.) huh? Look (.) many of them (.) huh? another thing would be (.) smaller (.) to say well (.) this is what we want and only that part would like to discuss (.) and you can develop that with another person (.) but it’s taken serious in part of the problem (.) you know (.) in development (.) cooperation or international cooperation one of the biggest problem is (.) that sustainability (0.2) that something is developed (0.1) which is not taken out by the others (0.1) and why it’s not taken out? because it’s not part of them (.) So (.) the more you leave the people outside (.) and don’t work with them as a team (.) the higher is the danger (0.1) as you create wild elephant (.) the umm (0.1) you know unsustainable approaches and concepts (.)

R: Is it partly because they change the staff quite often? Or they don’t have a team at all?

P5: Umm (0.2) I think one of the reasons is that (.) it’s a matter of language problem (.) yeah (.) so (.) umm (0.1) not many people speak language (.) and speak English (.) Only takes them a along time to ::::o lose their shyness (.) to speak English (.) when they do that it’s OK (.) huh? then (.) they come (.) then (.) that seems to me from my observation umm (0.1) even you know (.) if you have time of development of team development that umm (0.3) that the person who gets in contact to you (0.1) has to follow the hierarchical line (.) so (.) you might come across pretty well (.) as a messenger (.) and you can get a lot of information from the messenger (.) but the person might be forbidden to contact you (.) because he is not in line (.) to communicate with you (.) you’re out again (.) coincidently that person knew a language (.) and you could share with the language (.) huh? (.) so (.) this is one thing (.) the other thing is umm (0.2) yeah (0.1) it’s (0.1) the language barrier (.) the hierarchy (0.1) it’s (.) the perceptions (.) and very different perceptions within the Thai’s team (.) and Thai people what they expect from the expert (0.2) there’s no clear policy (.) that’s why it’s very interesting what your umm (.) your work is concerned (.) Umm (0.2). because there should be clarification (0.2) it just taken ::::n umm (0.1) come across my mind again and again (.) it’s umm (0.1) do you also have interview with the Thai people?
R: I do only the expat, experts' side, not Thai side. Later on maybe, but not in this research (P5: OK) But I've got some input from them when they knew that I'm going to interview the expert as well.

P5: OK because it would be interesting to design to connect that umm (.) who decided to have an expert? (.) this question is very much link to the ::e to the Thai side (.)

R: They made a request.

P5: Who made the request? And who gets it?

R: For you, the *** made a request, that's what I understand. For example, I made a request. I wanted the expert on *** and it takes time to wait for the expert. So, I was shift to the other department. When you come you have to work with a new one. This person may not see that she wants an expert. Maybe, one of the reasons. When I worked with the***, I did proposal myself with some assistance from the *** experts.

P5: But *** is completely different (.) you can't compare the *** experts with the experts you interview here (.) apparently different (0.1) the *** because you know (.) it's umm (0.3) the big different is really (.) you're here (.) even when they talk {draw the triangle of cooperation} (.) you have the expert here (.) you have the *** here (.) and you have the *** here (.) OK (.) if they (.) are attached (.) to an organisation and work with the organisation (.) then (.) the organisation work to each other (.) that's completely different than individuals (0.2) a big huge different (.) because you know (.) here you have much (.) much heavy a role and heavy a voice if you said *** is talking (.) so (.) who are you talking? (0.1) It's *** talking (.) but who is ***? (.) who's ***? (.) who's ***? (0.3) he's an expert (.) from *** (.) but *** wasn't expert from *** (.) I'm an expert from *** (.) but we are only here for ourselves (.) not as a project and not as *** (.) this is very (.) very different (0.2) because (0.1) when *** operated with *** (.) they operate first (.) they are partner organisation of partner agreement and when we do something the projects (.) it's not ratified (0.2) and they work on that project level that's different (.) very different from all people working here (0.2) the setting is completely different (0.1) and they are not working (.) in the building here (.) they are working at the *** (0.2) and when they talk about it (.) huh (.) they talked (0.1) err they are outsider (.) we are integrated (0.3) so (.) umm (0.1) even when they talked about it (.) I realise again and again when I link to those huh (.) to the people (.) they say (.) first they don't have the language problem (0.1) at their offices all the people speak English (.) but here you have one person and he might be in a different department (.) so they have a link (0.1) already (.) which is not here (0.2) which is a big different (.) then (.) their position is very (.) very clear (.) because they work inside (.) and make something trickled down (.) they might even talk about it and say (.) with Thai people's presence say yeah ::h we know the ::e um yes (.) they have that problem and writing that proposal (.) you know (.) they are the helpers (.) they are in donor position (.) we are not in the donor position (0.3) it's v-e-r-y different and they behave like donors (.)

R: The request or =

P5: = I've done I've done some assignment for the *** (.) and didn't know ((SL)) they went to (.) to Vietnam and told the people (.) you set up so and so many consultancy services all over the town (.) I went again for another assignment and people told me (.) there was someone here told us to set up 200 of those offices (.) how many you would like to set up? (0.1) why people in the first
place say it should be 200 () he said he comes from Paris () they also have 200 () then () you can say it’s bullshit what the person said ((SL)) (0.2) but that’s not the *** () so () the setting is different the relationship is very different () {show the diagram again} this is the relationship we have here () this is the relationship you look at () huh? () this is the experts () and this is the Thai organisation () huh? () and this is the multilateral organisation (0.1) and this is another kind of relationship () huh? all these very different () because here organisation works () and here you have individuals (0.1) from might be seconded by the organisation *** () *** () whatever huh? () umm (0.1) they are contact persons but they are outsider () here individual organisation (0.1) and then () of course () you have all the aspects of team spirit () team development participating in the discussion () they’re becoming an importance (0.2) and this is the difference than the *** (0.1) The *** (0.1) here they have a team () *** () still () they are not there any longer () but it’s still the *** floor here () so () the *** cooperating where umm (0.2) that was the *** (0.3) and that was different () there is unity and universe in itself (0.3) and as a recipient (0.1) country (0.1) this is a typical issue (0.1) as a developing country this one (0.1) is one for the future of Thailand (0.1) because you work not any longer within government you work internationals () and that’s why () this one is important to develop ()

R: Ideal you know.
P5: This is future because you’re () Thailand is not any longer developing country () This is developing country {point at the diagram} projects () organisation works () But this is a person () individual’s work ()

R: Do you think Thai people are ready for that? For that type of relationship.
P5: (0.5) I don’t know (0.4) I’ve never done consultancy in this country () it would be interesting to see (0.1) how the people experience that (0.1) umm because then you’re individuals () those are organisations (0.2) I think they have a lot of () obstacles (0.1) they confront with () umm (0.3). as an organisation () they might feel superior () to this person () here on top of it {show the diagram again} (0.2) you have a key in the ministry but it might be in private sector completely different () the private sector said I buy you the expertise () you know () I’m not interested in kind of great officer () public officer you are () whether you are 5 () 6 () 7 () I don’t bother about it (0.3) but that’s bother here () and here you have to praise that person (0.1) temporary () I was told that (0.4) so () that is umm (0.2) it’s the grading system (0.1) it links to performance () but I think they are breaking up here in this country () huh? as far as I get the small () small words I can catch on the corridor () so () you seem to have () much more a system on the performance of the people?=

R: =Yeah.
P5: =To develop that one?
R: =Yeah, developing what they call=
P5: =Performance indicators ()
R: =Yes, key performance indicators.
P5: Yes (0.1) and that is linked to the performance () it must be :::e linked (0.1) to the overall planning of the organisation but also to the :::e individuals (0.2) and to labours and to the :::e err (0.1) let say to the () whole workforce you have () so () it’s not necessary () not any longer the automatic promotion of the civil servants (0.2) and it’s great talking to each other () but responsibility and
expertise (.) because one of the problem is certainly (.) that (0.1) here due to the 
typical hierarchy (.) that here authority and responsibility are not in line (.)

R: What do you mean not in line?

P5: Here (.) authority is umm (0.1) the professional authority (.) that you know 
something and the responsibility is that umm (0.1) is something which has to 
deal with hierarchy (.) and this one is not in line then you have difficulty in any 
kind of organisation to perform proper (0.2) I want to complain about the matter 
(.) but I have to write the letter to my counterpart (.) she gives to her boss (.) and 
the boss gives to the international department (.) the international department 
translates into Thai (.) and from Thai (.) it’s again translated into English (.) and 
then to send to people (.) meanwhile (.) you will not recognise any longer (.) the 
letter (.) but anyway (.) you shouldn’t bother about it (.) you don’t get the final 
copy (.) anyway (.) so (.) what is sent out (.) you as the author was not get it 
(0.1) and you never know whether they translate it right (.) and the responses (.) 
you’re denied to get (.)

R: It’s the system.

P5: Yes (.) that hindrances works (.) because umm (0.2) it can’t be initiative (.) huh? 
because it’s umm (0.1) you just wait for someone to suggest next things (0.3) 
but it this one is (.) you know (.) umm (0.2) solve a bit (.) it developed (.) umm 
(0.2) some ???. are developed (.) then nothing would be easier for the Thai 
people (.) at the moment I think it’s quite difficult (.) it’s very difficult because 
of the people (.)

R: Because people here resist change?

P5: Any organisation (0.2) any organisation resists change (.) only for future 
generation (.) the change just goes for future but not for the past (0.1) they will 
go (.) that’s why it’s necessary also to develop for future generation (.) any 
organisation (.)

R: Can you see the light at the end of the tunnel?

P5: You need to visionary (.) and umm (0.1) a person with a vision on top of it (.) to 
make it very clear and to communicate the vision to all (0.3) what is necessary 
also in the :::e in the respect (.) in the cooperation with the expert and that vision 
I don’t see (.)

R: From the ministry?

P5: From the ministry (.) yes (.) so (.) in actual fact (.) the minister (.) or the 
permanent secretary (.) they should have a vision (.) what they expect (.) of 
experts (.) and how they want to work with experts in 5-10 years (.) why? (0.1) 
for what? (0.1) how long? (0.1) at which level? (0.2) and how? (0.1) and then (.) 
they communicate that vision (0.1) that’s the reason why I work for them (0.1) 
that one I don’t see (0.1) or it’s not (.) it’s not clear for me (.) It might be there 
(.) but it’s not clear for me (.)

R: How do you expect to be treated as an expat professional?

P5: (0.7) yes (.) at a professional level (.) yes (.)

R: How do you expect to be treated? More respect or sharing more information.

P5: I think that I mentioned already (.) huh? umm (0.1) I want to be respected as 
umm (0.1) as a professional level (.) as a colleague (0.2) and they would be 
respected in return (.)

R: Do you think you’re treated appropriately at the moment?

P5: No (0.2) I’m feeling (0.2) umm (0.1) as I mentioned before (0.1) I’ve a feeling 
that (.) the international experts are talked about but not talked with (0.2) and 
when we asked for the meeting (.) the meeting never takes place (0.2) and we
don't even get confirmation of reception of the letter (.) though there might be
language problem in it (.) but (.) every problem can be solved (.) if you (.) unless
you want to see their need (0.3) umm (0.1) I don't feel treated equally (.) and I
don't feel treated in the respected way (0.3) (emotional and depressed)

R: Do you need more time to adjust or you need more time to talk to people or how
to solve the problem?

P5: I don't know (0.1) I must say I'm very umm (0.1) I'm very unclear about it
(.,.,.)

R: I know ....

P5: There are some ambitious in this term (.) for example (.) kind of you do
something (.) or that someone does something (.) the person needs to have an
expertise (.) knowledge to do something (.) she or he needs a particular
orientation (.) what is needed (.) and of course he needs means (.) he needs a
budget to do something (.) one of the problem (.) we face also (.) is umm (.) I'm
sent by my organisation *** so (.) I could ask for the equipments from the
German (.) for what?? for the printer (.) for another computer which is
disappeared in one of the office (.) for what? I mean it should be central (.) be
linked to particular projects (0.1) I give you an example (.) my job is to do
something for the *** (.) OK (.) in that respect (.) I haven't done much (.) it's
part of the *** program (.) and a part of the responsibility to look at the umm
(0.1) do *** analysis (.) so (.) how do you do the *** analysis?

R: Get people to come together and brainstorming...

P5: Yes (.) but then you need money (.) you would need to get people together (.)
the same time it's umm (0.1) umm I also should look at networking (.) get
people together (.) and say well (.) what I need (0.1) this is what I'm doing (.)
I'm doing *** (.) can we do something together? what kind of roles we play?
what we can assist you or let you do it (0.3) but you need money to invite the
people (.) or you would even need money to go and see one or two *** (0.1)
what they do (.)

R: But it's not a big deal.

P5: (0.2) No (.) it's not a big deal (0.1) but it's not in the budget (.) as an expert (.)
we don't write the budget (0.2)

R: No, the people here can write the budget.

P5: =but they should have done it before that (.) It hasn't been done (.) I have to wait
for a long time for people to come (.) and then they have to prioritise (.) huh?
***

P5: And you know (.) these people are not on your payroll (.) I'm on the payroll (.)

R: Only small I know.

P5: I know (.) I know (.) it's very little (.) huh? but that is umm yah!! (0.2) I give
you an example *** so (.) that's why I'm a little bit (0.2) let's put it that way (.)
er I'm not so positive at the moment (0.4) but this is a professional issue (.) we
have to look at it professionally (.) I think professional is a little bit problem (.)
because a way to draw a program for particular time (.) then you could do it (.) I
draw (.) It's also of course a problem on German side (.) The German might not
have communicated very clear what they really wanted (.) and umm (0.1) so that
we both down to the points that are not quite sure that (.) both side really know
what they want from each other (.) and how they can use the system to its
optimal (.) because any kind of new persons coming in (.) break (.) break
through the :e hierarchy you have (.) which is also annoyed (.) but umm (0.1)
it's the question whether it's possibly yes or no (.) I think (.) (0.2) well (.) I
believe that *** supports her specific situation (0.2) which is certainly not very easy (0.2) and it makes difficult to have react and renown to get in everyday (.). It makes more difficult to to define a proper role of the international experts whatever to do (. then I think they are (0.1) one thing (0.1) in specific (. the diplomatic (. the experts have their senses (. ahh for organisation development (. or the processes (. but umm (0.3) in that respect (. Thailand does not have any experience how to deal with that (0.3) and partially (. I’m quite experience in general (. all the processes (. so (. that would (. not like us to ask all organisation issues (. huh? I find it’s critical that someone comes here to do something (. want to do something (. huh? so why? (. how dare you are to ask? the other thing is umm(0.2) (. I think Thailand does not (0.1) the whole programme planning (. organisation development issues (. change processes in general from the negative (0.2) starts from the problems (. which have to be solved (. and I have a feeling people don’t like that problem (. they would not like to define problems /.../ but that is very difficult because I mean it’s all over the world (. very difficult (. You know the development engineer comes and then tells ((SL)) people are disappearing bored of the research (. so (. of course they start to deliver the positives to make the negatives (. a little bit sweeter but still there are the negatives (. umm… (. but interference in Thai culture (. that makes a big problem (0.3) and (. whether they solve it with they are currently adjusting performance indicators (. I’m not quite sure because performance indicators umm(0.2) are a part of over all planning process (. and overall planning process starts from improvement of the situation (. and so (. what’s needed to be improved is that (. it’s beyond farther points (. so (. I’m (0.1) I’m not quite sure how it’s succeeded (. but I think (. that is the precondition for the whole thing [paused] yeah it could be very interesting huh to see even the indicators they have (0.2) you know it’s the only quantitative indicators (. and it just target it and (. only in Thai so I can’t really tell it huh? (. umm (0.1) so I think (. it’s mainly quantitative indicators (. though the whole process is not coming (. you don’t do the quality management [paused] … don’t even set in the whole framework but that’s the overall challenges (. just put it very nicely (. challenge for Thailand in general because umm you know there seems to be ::: such a high target settles (. want to get a high target settle in these days (. huh? umm (0.2) you know people are (0.1) they probably would like to have a goal of 7.1 (. 7.2% and they took the issue of umm (0.1) of inflation of 2.3 then 2.4% (. and it’s all figures (. coming to the point in that you have figures that (. the *** agreed (. to train (. in this year 30,000 entrepreneurs (. Ministry of Industry agreed (. in addition (. to train 50,000 entrepreneurs (. Now the indicators not directly similar (. but they are different (. here the *** would say (. we want to have self-employed people (. we want to start up (. to create self-employed people is one activity that what you do (. It can be start up but it can be additional (. and let say (. at the end of the day we want to see (0.1) what did they say (0.1) 30-40% and after one year 40% have set up (. The Ministry of Industry said they want to have technical development (0.1) all starts up (0.1) 

R: [All starts up?]
P5: The same training all starts up (. only 10% survival rate after one year (. which is far below international standard (. far far below (. so (. even inside (. very close ministry doing the similar form (0.1) first (. it is funny that they do it (. two ministries do it (. why do they have been forced to do? but then you have
umm (0.2) indicators which are in a chain (0.1) in such a small setting (0.1) not a goal (0.3) and it makes it’s difficult to assure the quality because (0.1) it’s a different quality (.) I work for 10% survival and they 40% (0.4) So (.) the people are (.) and they think (.) so much to follow the number [paused] the targets are also big problems (.) targets need to be settled (.) targets need to be followed but umm (0.1) I well aware that they are so strong (.)

R: The last question. What is the most challenging for you on this international assignment?

P5: (0.4) Well (.) the most is just to survive in this setting (0.1) and umm f-i-n-d the way out (.) for all the people concerned (0.3) very simple (0.2) umm (0.1) to (0.1) to surviving (.) survive in such a setting and not to :::o to fall into despair and ohh… everything is despair and resistant (.) and enjoy the time (.) and say it will ok (.) everything is ok (.) and try to do something (0.2) That’s (.) at the moment a bit challenge (.)

R: I’m sure you can do it.

P5: I’m not quite sure (0.2) I’m not quite sure though (0.3) at the moment I’m very demotivated (0.2) and I feel very sorry about that (.) it’s difficult to get motivation (.) well (.) the question is where do you get motivation? And to be frank (.) I’ve worked in quite a number of countries I n-e-v-e-r faced t-h-a-t (.) I’ve faced the people were very critical (.) that they were even rejected the inequity you know if you do work together (.) we did the study in Vietnam where the people to change figures and you know the way normally brought to the table the donors don’t do that (.) because this would commit yourself (.) this one I never (.) I never face here (.)

R: That’s national culture.

P5: Unfortunately (.) yeah because I mean (.) Thai people are very (.) very nice and such people (.) they are bright people (.) Unfortunately seems the country has the reputation that is one of the (0.2) let say it’s the (0.3) the most difficult country to work with (.)

R: Because the way of seniority or what?

P5: No (0.2) no (.) I do respect seniority a lot (0.1) and it is very important to figure out where seniority is (0.1) I don’t know whether it is that you have such a close system (.) in itself (.) where the :e the system so much close that from outside there is no place (0.1) because you know everything is in order (.) and there is no way of doing intemperately so that things get not in order (0.2) that (.) I think that the :e umm (0.1) the Thai’s culture society is very locked up and close society (.) a lot of regulations (.) a lot of controls also (.) so that (.) does not allow outsiders to come in (.) because it’s controlled internally (.) and in that respect (.) you respect hierarchy (.) because they keep it controlled (0.4) then (.) I think my *** brought me the idea ((SM)) he said well (.) if you look at the history of umm of Thailand (.) and renown again that the surrounding countries they were colonised (.) but here the permanent experts were sent to (.) and I found that aspect is very interesting (.) because you know this was the kind of silent colonisation of the country (0.1) the experts (0.1) and it would be interesting in your work to look at the historic perception of experts for Thailand (.)

R: Do you have anything to add?

P5: No (.) it’s very (0.2) very comprehensive issue (.) I found it very interesting (.) found it very positive (.) and very initiative to write a study about that (.) but I know it’s difficult I could imagine that’s difficult (.) and I could understand also
that the people are ohh to see what comes out of it (.) huh? I find it’s very surprising that you did not any results of the meeting of the 6th of March (.) because at least you know there should have been some (0.2) umm some minutes (.)

R: Have you got it?
P5: No (.) they haven’t sent the minute but I can give you what the agenda is (.) Do you wanna see that?

R: [Yeah.]
P5: OK (.) I can give you also photocopy of details of all the experts working here (.) that’s OK I can give that because the umm (0.1) I think because they kept on writing (.)

R: Did you get the questionnaire in the meeting or later on?
P5: I think it just came (0.1) after the meeting that’s what they did actually (.) I don’t know how it is (.) there is a problem in this division (.) in this department because (.) the person you know apparently I don’t even know *** is responsible for international cooperation does not speak English (0.1) so (.) the cooperation between that *** should coordinate with the err (0.1) with the other people but *** doesn’t speak the other language so otherwise would be easier to speak with *** in French or German but none of that (.) so (.) the communication is therefore a little bit limited and umm (0.1) the problems (.) those not the problems but it’s umm.. indicator for that one (.) we’ve got an invitation in Thai (.) and umm many of us don’t have secretary (.) so we need umm (.) that’s typical sense (.) we needed our counterpart to translate it ** we got it for a small summary what the whole function is all about (.) and got then the questionnaire (.) but as I mentioned already before (.) only the hard copy (0.1) and later on we’re asked to hand-in our hard copy (.) so that they can fwd to you (.) and umm (.) I said that was not confidential (.) some people don’t understand it and want us to hand-in (0.2) I think it’s a fear also (0.2) but I interpreted that way (.) I think it’s the same all over the world, whatever nationality we have (.) The people are so afraid (.) it’s the sign of insecurity (.) they are not very certain (.) they are not very sure of what they are doing (.) so that’s why they are a little bit timid (.) and little bit afraid (.) that they do it wrong (.) so (.) that might be a feeling that they do it wrong (.) but that’s the only goal to make it clear (.) what they should do (.) because they would not say (.) that’s part of the culture (.) that they don’t see (.) but they will keep on asking the people (.) what is right (.) and what is wrong (.) but they (.) they have the feeling that perhaps things are not so (.) like they should be (.) but they don’t know how they should be (.) perhaps they need restructure in this country (.) very clear instructions (0.1) this is a little bit how I expect it to be (.)

R: It’s very good to have you here today.
P5: Thank you very much (.) it’s very good to talk to you (.)
This interview was conducted in Thai language. The contact person (C) from the Labour Provincial Office also observed and asked some questions.

R: How long have you been working here?
P6: Two years .
R: Have you visited Thailand before you come?
P6: No . never .
R: How about other countries?
P6: I've been to Indonesia , Malaysia and Sipan Island .
R: For business or just visits.
P6: Visits .
R: Why are you interested in working internationally?
P6: Umm . I'm interested in the language and Thai flowers because Thailand has a lot of orchids .
R: Before coming to Thailand, have you received any multicultural education or training to help you to adjust to new environment?
P6: Yes . there was 2 months training course . I was prepared what would happen when I come to live here .
R: Was it provided by ***?
P6: Yes . it's *** .
R: Besides language course, what else did *** provide?
P6: Err . about volunteer . not language . they tell us what is *** and (0.2) what we would encounter while performing international assignment .
R: Did it take 2 weeks?
P6: Two months and a half .
R: How do you get this job?
P6: I applied at *** .
C: Did you see from the advertisement?
P6: Yes .
R: Did you anticipate any work-related problem before you began to work here?
P6: Err . kind of «LG) I thought that Thai people may enjoy comfortable life more than the Japanese .
R: Is this concern materialized now you're in Thailand?
P6: Umm . I stay in this center . it not really relax (0.3) if there are many works . they can work till very late and wake up very early .
R: Do you work with them?
P6: Sometimes I also help .
R: How adjusted you feel you are to your job and responsibility?
P6: I couldn't do what I want . anytime when I feel that things are going on well . the responsible persons on Thai side have to leave for other jobs .
R: Before coming here, did *** tell you what you have to do?
P6: Yes .
R: What is your job?
P6: My job is to teach *** when I came . they said they want to learn *** . I've never done that .
C: Could you do that?
P6: No . then I contacted other volunteer who knows about *** and asked how to do ((LG)) because I have no idea about that.
In your CV., it states ‘***’. Is it only about ***?

Yes (.) *** (.)

And you didn’t do anything about *** here?

Not really (.) *** too but my students said they are more interested in *** (.) then (.) I need to adjust to *** (.)

You come here to develop *** or teach them how to do (.)

I come to teach (.)

Where are you students from?

From *** (.) They are villagers (.)

How long does the course take?

Four months (.) and another two months of on the job training outside this centre (.) I don’t follow them to see (.) them while they are on OJT (.) I’m only teach in this centre (.)

It’s safe for foreign girl who comes to work here (.) How is your accommodation here?

It’s OK (.)

What is your most impressive cultural experience while working here?

Umm (0.2) Thai people are always willing to help (.) very thoughtful (.)

You’ve mentioned at the beginning that Thai people enjoy relaxation, not like Japanese people. What else do you see?

They love fun (.) and hardly to be on time (.)

How do you feel with this habit?

What I’ve found is (.) they didn’t come on time (.) I kept on waiting for half an hour and couldn’t do any work (.) they didn’t even say sorry when they arrived (.)

Did you tell them they shouldn’t do that?

No, I didn’t (.)

Why?

I feel krengjai (very considerate) (.)

Now you become Thai.

How much do you satisfy with your work so far? Do you meet expectation of your job?

No (0.2)

What do you expect?

Besides experiment (.) I also expect to sell the products but not success yet (.) we did not have the equipments at the beginning (.) No budget too (.)

Is it because *** provides only your expertise?

*** would help if I asked but (0.1) I want them to do themselves and now they got it (.)

Good. Means that you are able to encourage them. In our opinion, what helps you to get this success?

Umm (0.2) because everybody helps me and I work with them (.)

You spent time to learn Thai. I think this is a great effort.

I must (.) because there is no *** instructor here till I come (.)

You’ve mentioned that you learn Thai language in Japan. Did you have additional courses in Thailand?

One month at Burapha University (.) Chonburi (.) it’s good (.) I studied only the language (.)

Where do you live while taking language course, BKK or Chonburi?
P6: At Chonburi (.) I’ve visited many places (.) I like Pattaya and also the South of Thailand (.) I love the beach (.) Thailand has many beautiful beaches beautiful colour (.) different from Japan (.)

R: Is forming relationship with the local culture one of your goal here?
P6: Yes (.) it’s very important (.) I try to teach them but don’t think that I’m a teacher (.) I cannot be with them all the time (.) one day I have to go back and they have to do themselves (.)

R: How do you create good environment in your class?
P6: We learn together (.) not only teach but learn from them (.) I’ve never left my students (.)

R: How many students in each class?
P6: *** students for each *** months course (.) I expected to have 20 students (.)

R: Is it effective?
P6: Not many people because it’s hard to find jobs and the equipments are very expensive (.)

R: Are there many people study in this course in Japan?
P6: A lot (.) but the same (.) hard to get a job (.) I also don’t know what to do when I go back to Japan (.) a high school teacher (.) maybe (.)

R: How different is your life style on this assignment from your home country?
P6: Myself?? umm (0.4) a little bit different (.) here in Thailand (.) everybody has meals together (.) in Japan (.) even you stay with your family (.) you eat alone (.) Japanese people enjoy their own privacy a lot (.) living here in the centre is not convenient to travel (.) Japan is more convenient (.) this makes me feel that I want to live in city (.) easy to go out (.) easy to travel (.)

R: Which aspect of Thai cultures are you most familiar with?
P6: Umm (0.2) umm (0.2) it’s working time but they have their breakfast (.) I mean Thai people (.) the time to sign in to work as well (.) you know (.) working hour start at 8.30 am (.) but they don’t sign in the time they arrive (.) in Japan (.) we don’t have to sign in to work but we are on time (.) here too (.) they have TV in office (.) some of them take their children along (.) cannot work (.) people love watching football (.) so (.) I can’t teach because the other instructor also watches (.)

C: Has the director advised them they shouldn’t do that?
P6: He’s not aware (.) he is in office (.) never come to see what’s going on in here (.)

R: Do you have to write him progress reports?
P6: Yes (.) I have done but never get feedback (.) I want him to come and see what I’m doing (.) but never (.)

R: Was it suggested by *** that you should present him a progress report?
P6: No (.) *** wants my progress report every 6 months (.)

R: How does this centre evaluate your performance?
P6: They have monthly plan (.) what to be done in each month (.) I write a report in Thai and *** types for me (.)

R: Did you feel difficult to live here at the beginning?
P6: It’s difficult but the center is very helpful (.)

R: Do you have friends in town?
P6: No (.) I’ve heard that there is a Japanese at Rajapat but we never meet (.) I think here is better than *** and BKK (.) There is very few Japanese here (.) I can integrate to Thai people better (.)

R: Do you want to come back to work in Thailand again?
I will come and stay in rural area (.) not in BKK (.) BKK is a good place to visit (.) not to live (.) it's more convenient to live there but Thai people in BKK are different from Thai people here (.) Bangkokens are not interested in others (.) north-eastern people are very closed (.) They always care for others (.) though sometimes it's too much (.) have to escape (.) at first (.) it's annoying but now I really like it (.)

R: Which city are you from?

P6: *** (.)

R: Is it far from Tokyo?

P6: {shows Japan map} it's Island (.) 1 (.) *** hr from Tokyo by plane (.) from here (.) you need to transit at Narita and then fly to ** (.)

R: The weather there must be cooler. How do you feel living in hot weather? Bored?

P6: No (.) *** province is not hot (.) but the weather in Japan is better (.) There are 4 seasons (.)

R: How adjusted are you to interacting with Thai people in general?

P6: It's not difficult to be friend with Thai people (.) but my friend cannot adjust (.) she is in *** (.) we come here together (.) her chief doesn't accept her work (.) but I don't have problem because my chief went to Japan and understand what I'm doing (.) *** I'm very happy (.) my friend in *** comes here to propose Youth plan (.) has to find activities that youth are interested in (.) so (.) she decides to teach Japanese language and Aerobic (.) she has to initiate the activities herself but I have fix plan (.)

R: How adjusted are you to working with Thai colleagues?

P6: Because they are my colleagues (.) I cannot say when they don't work (.)

R: Why?

P6: Because I'm their friend and younger than them (.) I'm not a staff (.) in fact (.) I want to be part of this centre but I'm not (.)

R: How do your colleagues see you? Outsider?

P6: Outsider (.) I think (.)

R: Why do you think so?

P6: Because of the special privilege I've got (.) It's different from other staff (.) too much concern (.) I don't like it much (.) I want to be treated like other staff (.)

R: What is the most challenging for you on this assignment?

P6: As I said (.) there was no instructor in this field until I came (.) I have to teach alone for *** year before I get Thai assistance to help me teach (.) I requested since I arrived but didn't get (.) then (.) *** came to discuss with the director (.) how he thinks? why the centre let me teach alone because there wouldn't be anybody to teach when I go back (.) *** will not send again (.) will not help forever (.) so (.) the director assigned *** to work with me (.) he has background in *** (.) never study *** (.) I have to teach him from zero (.)

R: Apart from this, is there any difficulty?

P6: Umm... I think there's no other problems (.) there is another instructor but he hardly comes to teach (.) even he comes (.) he teach only little and back to his desk (.) doesn't stay with the students all the time (.) my students always ask who's going to teach when I leaves (.)

R: Why don't you inform the director?

P6: No (.) he's not government official (.) he is an employee (.)

R: Last question, what factors affecting your success and difficulties in this assignment?
Because the students need my help (.) *** also helps me a lot (.) for example (.) I want to visit one centre in *** (.) the director didn’t approve travel allowance (.) I informed *** and *** gave me (.) I went there for working purpose (.)

Have you been to *** in BKK and met the ***?
Yes (.) I met the *** when I first arrived (.)
Do you find that meeting useful?
Not at all (.) the general inspector came to *** (.) I’ve told the problem of lacking of instructor but he said I should extend my stay for 1 year (.) they think like this (.) being recipients and never help themselves (.)

Let’s conclude. Your students make you feel that your work success. The difficulty is your colleagues. If you have a chance to talk to MOL executive (.) what strategy will you suggest for receiving the volunteer who come to work here?

Don’t leave them (.) in fact (.) we have to work side by side (.) we have to work with Thai people (.) *** centre is very good (.) they work together (.)

How many % are you satisfied?
90%
For what?
My students (.)
R: How long have you been working with the MOL?
P7: (0.3) I just arrived in *** (.)
R: Have you ever visited Thailand before you come?
P7: Yes (.)
R: How many times?
P7: Umm (0.2) How many times? (0.6) first (0.2) I (0.3) my first trip to Thailand is 1994 (.) but it’s a :::a (0.3) only (0.2) 2 days visit (.) not so long time (.) after that I (0.4) work in the *** (.) for 3 years from 1996 to 1999 (.)
R: Many years. It’s more than other experts I’ve interviewed. Besides Thailand, have you ever worked in other countries?
P7: Yes (0.2) no (.) no I err (0.3) I live a very short time in other countries (.)
R: What countries?
P7: (0.3) United Stated (.) Vietnam (.) Malaysia (.) India (0.3) Brunei (0.2) Czech (.) Spain just a short week (.) for (0.2) my visit home.
R: Why are you interested in working internationally?
P7: No (.) I (0.3) I (0.1) I’m not interested in international (0.1) affairs (.) because I’m (0.2) an *** (.) in Japan (.) so just *** ordered me (.) to come here (.)
R: So, the reason that you come to Thailand is because the *** assigned you.
P7: Yes (.)
R: And before you coming here, have you received any multicultural education or training to help you to adjust to the new environment?
P7: (0.2) of course (.) *** (0.1) usually (0.1) gives us (0.1) such a kind of multicultural err (0.2) lecture (.) in a :::a training center in *** (0.3) I {look uncomfortable while reading the questions} (0.4) I would like to know that err (0.4) your project is (0.2) your project (.) you would like to know the ::e culture (.) multicultural issues?
R: Yes. Part of it is cultural issue and also communication competence and training have been provided to you as an expat before you come and upon arrival.
P7: Mmh you know cultural issue is a very wake err (02) concept (.) so (0.1) the lectures in (.) *** (.) err (0.3) sharing in the session of multicultural sessions (.) normally I think multicultural issues err (0.2) different way (.)
R: What do you mean by different way?
P7: Some err (0.1) some err countries (.) even in Japan (0.1) even err Japanese (.) Japanese (.) there are some cultures (.) cultural issues (.) but some people don’t think so (0.3) so (.) I think culture is very questioning. ((LG))
R: So, have they provided the course that gave you the ideas of culture?
P7: Err just err (0.2) *** like to err (0.2) suggest err (0.1) you should (0.2) think like they think (0.3) this is just a trickle (.) the lecture is for me (.) trickle to *** expert (.)
R: Do you find it useful?
P7: I’m not sure because err (0.2) I have experience here (0.1) in :::n Thailand before (.) so (0.1) my assignment in Thailand again (.) so ((LG)) it’s not so useful for me ((LG))
R: How long does it take?
P7: (0.3) half (.) day (.)
R: Different from others because some took 2-3 months.
P7: No (.) no (.) no (.) no (.) just err (0.1) lecture (.) and err (0.2) some err (0.2) workshops (0.2)
R: Do you come here with your family?
P7: Yes (.)
R: Have they received training like you got?
P7: No (.)
R: How does your wife feel about moving and living in other countries?
P7: (0.4) what do you mean how? ((LG))
R: How does she feel? She feels happy or doesn't like the way of doing things.
P7: (0.3) just for emotional :::1 (0.2) aspect?
R: Or any aspect, not only emotion. Maybe the traffic, way of life here, social condition and economic condition.
P7: Of course (,) my wife also (0.2) has experience in Thailand (,) already (0.2) so (0.2) not so different (.)
R: Does she work?
P7: Mhm (.)
R: Is she working here?
P7: No (0.2)
R: And how about your children?
P7: Children? (0.5)
R: Where do they study?
P7: (0.5) that is err (0.4) my daughter is in Japanese school (0.3) and err (0.3) my son err (0.3) is in the (0.1) kindergarten of the (0.2) how to say (0.1) Thai-Japanese kindergarten (,) not the Japanese kindergarten (,) not Thai kindergarten (,) but err (0.3) err (0.2) err (0.3) I'm not sure how to say in English (,) rongrien yee-pun thai (he uses Thai words = bilingual school) ((LG))
R: I should interview you in Thai.
P7: ((LG)) no (,) no (,) no (,)
R: Though you have been working in Thailand before you come to work with the ministry. But it's in different organisation. Did you anticipate any work related problem before you began to work with the MOL?
P7: (0.2) Work related problem? (0.7) umm (0.10) in reality I expect nothing (,) but MOL is rather newly (,) ministry (,) and the department is the most (0.1) the newest department (,) so (,) I know that (,) this department don’t have enough err (0.1) budget (,) don’t have enough (,) personal (,) so (0.2) just like that.
R: When you come to work here, did you see the problems you already mentioned about the budget and also personal?
P7: (0.21) ((MT))
R: What do you mean by personal problem?
P7: Personal? (,) because err (0.2) you know (,) MOL is err preliminary Department of Labour (,) in the Ministry of Interior (0.2) and the personal of the MOL (0.2) most of the personal of Department of Labour (0.2) move to the Department of Labour Protection (0.1) so (,) one department become one ministry (,) it means the ministry don’t have enough human resources (0.1) of course (,) Office of Social Security is err (0.1) from the (,) another department (,) but the (0.2) I can say that one department can’t become one ministry (,) this is the situation (,) of the MOL (,)
R: Actually it's integrated. The staff also came from other departments of other ministries.
P7: Yes (,) I know but ahh ((SSL)) sometimes it's problem (,) right? ((SSL))
R: How do you deal with that problem?
P7: I don’t have to deal because our cooperation is technical cooperation so (0.1) we just (0.2) counterpart so (0.3) technical cooperation is something like a signal of Japanese indication.

R: OK... signal?

P7: Yes.

R: What does signal mean?

P7: (0.1) Japanese government or think you should ah in this case.

R: What do you do here? I mean, what is your area of expertise?

P7: My area I’m an official so I know different policy.

R: So, you’re policy advisor here?

P7: Yes maybe I’m a policy advisor.

R: How adjusted do you feel to your job and responsibilities?

P7: Adjust? what do you mean adjust?

R: I mean how do you feel, can get along well with your job and responsibilities? Compare to the way of working here, perhaps it’s different from you’ve worked in Japan. Does it affect your job and your responsibility? Does it help you to work easier or more difficult?

P7: ... (0.6) ...

R: In Thai, is it difficult to work here? (I asked this question in Thai language)

P7: Umm I don’t understand your question obviously, he understands but doesn’t want to answer (LG) Ngong (=confused)

R: Okey, let me give you an example, gives you that describes your job and responsibilities and expectation. And so far, do you think you can meet the expectation or requirement that has raised?

P7: Mmh you mean like that but because I’m in Japan I don’t care what thinks just do what I like to do what the MOL like to do.

R: OK, so you come here through different channel. You didn’t come through ***. The in Japan assigned you to work here not ***.

P7: Because I’m in Japan so I received order from the *** direct to work in the Thailand and of course I have a contract with *** and of course I have to work with this department so I have 3 aspects.

R: Is it difficult?

P7: ... (nod) ...

R: How do you feel about your experience of living and working in Thailand?

P7: (0.5) experience of living and working in Thailand (MT) I’m not sure ah I’m not clear so this time? R: Mmh I don’t have special experience of course last time I have a lot of experience by the Thai but this time I know something about Thai people especially in Thailand so it wasn’t special for me.

R: You said you know something about Thai people and Thailand. What is something that you know? Can you give me some examples of what you know about Thailand that make you feel familiar with?
P7: (0.3) I mean (0.13) umm (0.1) for example (0.6) when I was at *** (.) I :::I used to go to the (0.3) err (0.3) special (0.1) special place (.) where (0.1) Thai people go (.) err (0.5) err (0.1) there are a lot of (0.4) err (0.3) impress (.) but this time (.) I don’t care (.) I understand what is err (0.5) dangerous err (0.2) food (.) dangerous means err it’s err (0.2) caused me tong-sier (=diarrhoea) ((LG)) (0.2) you see English is difficult ((SL)) (.)

R: Yes, I know. What is your most impressive experience in Thailand?

P7: Mmh (0.3) pardon?

R: What do you impress most? What do you like most?

P7: Ahh (0.19) very difficult to say (0.2) umm (0.3) I’m not so impressed about Thailand (.) it’s almost same as Japan (0.3)

R: In your opinion, do the Japanese and Thai have the same working habit?

P7: Working habit? (0.3) I don’t think so (.) but err (0.3) usually Japanese (0.5) work too much hours (.) in a usual case (.) but err (0.1) Japanese in Thailand (.) don’t work so ::::0 much longer (.) in Japan may be long hours (.)

R: How about you? How many hours do you work a day?

P7: For me from 8 to 5 not so long (.)

R: Do you have a place to go after work? To meet people either Japanese or Thai or other countries as social function or some association that you belong to.

P7: No (0.3) because last time (.) I (0.1) I went (0.1) to the (0.2) restaurant everyday in career everyday (.) I have to go to the restaurant with the (0.3) guests from Japan (0.3) it’s social situation from the *** (.) so almost everyday (0.2) even the Saturday (.) Sunday (.) so (LG) because usually Japanese guests err come to Thailand on Sunday (0.2) and then start working (.) on Monday (.)

R: Very tiring. Do you think that forming relationship with the local people is part of your assignment here?

P7: Mmh (0.7) local people?

R: Or local staff. Do you think that create relationship with local staff or Thai people in general is part of your assignment?

P7: Mmh (0.3) not to say yes (.) I don’t know because (.) I’m from the *** of Japan (.) so err (0.3) part of my err (0.3) responsibility (.) is err (0.6) to make relationship between the *** in Japan and MOL in Thailand (.) so (.) in this case (.) err as I see it not err (0.5) not deal with local people (0.2) it’s not err (0.4) my responsibility (.) just err (0.3) extra ((SL)) in aspect of job (0.2) but err (0.6) I don’t (0.3) err (0.1) I don’t say that I (0.3) I don’t like to contact local people (0.1) but err (0.3) I suppose to work (.)

R: What is the most effective way to create good relationship between the 2 offices? (have to repeat the question)

P7: Mmh (0.1) Roo suk wa ja... (=I feel that) to understand (0.1) what is the Thai part and what is my part (.)

R: How to create that understanding? How to make both sides understand each other?

P7: They are almost have err (0.1) almost the same (0.2) err same system and of the :::e (paused ...the tape finish)

R: The same system??

P7: Yes (.) Japanese government before WW II (0.2) because Japanese system is err (0.1) emperor and the ::e government official directly responsible for the system not the people (.) this is the style (.) but in reality (.) of course in Japan (.) after the WW II (.) the legal system is err (0.2) control by the people (.) but the ::e official system is directly responsible for the emperor (0.2) many seniors in
Thailand, because the director general in this department assigns people to a team officially and the government is something rather strong but there is some control on power. Are you saying that it’s hierarchical system?

R: Are you saying that it’s hierarchical system?

P7: Mmh (nod)

R: There is hierarchy system in Japan too, is that correct?

P7: Umm, umm yes. The Japanese system is something like a ministry in Japan it’s diverse but in Thailand I think it’s department responsible for the team work.

R: So, it’s not really the same but similar. Do you think which form is easier or better to work?

P7: Of course after WWII Japanese system should be changed but in reality it’s very similar before WWII so the emperor in Japan is something like symbol parliament is most important but still Japanese government is rather strong compare to other countries.

R: How different is your lifestyle on this assignment from your home country?

P7: Of course because in Japan I can decide how long I work and I would like to work until 6 but here she has to stay there so it’s better to go back and of course I miss walking in Japan. It’s very different.

R: How about food, is it difficult too?

P7: No not difficult.

R: Do you enjoy Thai food?

P7: Yes.

R: What do you miss most from your home country?

P7: I have nothing but the internet is much better in Japan so (laughs and points at his notebook) too bad for me.

R: It’s very slow here.

P7: Yes.

R: How do you expect to be treated as an expert?

P7: In reality, I’m a so-called generalist in Japan and it’s so difficult to answer you.

R: OK. How do you expect to be treated by the people here or your colleagues here?

P7: don’t understand give me examples.

R: For example, do you think they treat you well? Do they organise the office well? Or how do you want to be contacted? How do you expect to be treated?

P7: (0.15) treat is a strange word right? How to say in Thai?

From here, the interview is conducted in Thai language

R: Treat. How do you want to be treated?
P7: Treat ....
R: The way you want the people at MOL treat you or take care of you.
P7: Take care ((LG» umm (0.3) don’t have to take care ()
R: Or how often the meeting should be held in order to discuss about the work progress. What is the means of communication you prefer?
P7: Umm (0.3) for me it’s good I think () because I can speak Thai a little () and be able to read Thai document () but my reading skill is better () not very good at speaking () my reading and writing is better () I like reading () my Thai colleagues don’t have to prepare English document () so it’s very easy to contact me () I think it’s better for me ()
R: How long have you studied Thai language?
P7: 3 years ()
R: Your Thai is very good.
P7: Not much (0.3) I can speak Thai so it’s very useful for my work () very convenient () it’s normal () if ones stay here for 3 years, it should be expected to have this level of fluency, right?
R: But you can read Thai too. That’s why you don’t feel special to live here.
P7: Not really ()
R: What is the most challenging for you on this assignment? Same as you encounter in Japan.
P7: Not the same () Umm (0.10) in fact (0.2) it’s hard to see ()
R: When you attend the meeting, you can understand and make comment, is that so?
P7: I can () I understand but not all () I can understand all if the document is provided () sometime () I don’t understand if only listen ()
R: Very good. Could you please tell me the factor affecting the success of international experts in Thailand?
P7: Good language skill () writing is helpful for me () if I don’t write I don’t understand because my accent is not clear (0.5) both Thai and Japanese’s accents are different from English (0.4) if they want to work in Thailand () they have to learn the language because Thai people’s English is not good ()
R: Every department has difficulty with English...
P7: But not for the Ministry of Environment () when I worked at the *** responsible for social security and environment () I visited Ministry of Environment quite often and found that their English is better ()
R: Thank you very much for your cooperation.
P7: You’re welcome ()
30 June, 2004

R: How long have you been working with the MOL?
P8: Nearly five and a half years.
R: Quite a long time. Have you visited Thailand before you come?
P8: Yes several times and I know the Southeast Asian area in many parts and countries (Philippines and so on) and I've been several times to China and Thailand.
R: Have you been working in many countries?
P8: Yes I've worked in China some projects and here in Thailand.
R: Why are you interested in working internationally?
P8: It's intention to support err countries which I think Thailand or China for me are very interesting for the culture, the life, countryside so I'd like to come to here to support and develop.
R: Before you coming here, have you received any multicultural education or training to help you to adjust to your new environment?
P8: To this employment here well I'm an official of the in Germany so the subjects of and are very familiar. I was prepared by some courses of the German technical cooperation Ministry of Technical Cooperation and its focus is to ensure cultural issues of Thailand and prepare language understanding difficulties.
R: How long does it take for the course?
P8: The course I think it was about two months.
R: Two months, and it covers many issues.
P8: Yes it covers culture history and literatures.
R: How about your family? Have they travelled with you here?
P8: No I come alone.
R: Did you anticipate any work related problem before you began to work here?
P8: No.
R: Not at all? But when you arrived have you got any work related problem?
P8: Umm well it's difficult to speak in the sense of problem but sure I'm here to develop the system which is not implemented until that time when I come so it's natural that there has been done steps to influence the readiness change thinking or change the attitudes service attitudes this may be if you want to think about as a problem but I think it's not a problem it's natural it's not a problem.
R: Any difficulties when you try to change their ideas or attitude?
P8: Well like other countries you have difficulties nobody wants to change so err we are readiness to change but in practical let me say a force to change.
R: Who is your counterpart?
P8: Is it official counterpart?
P8: Yes
R: How adjusted you feel you are to your job and responsibilities?
P8: Adjusted? (3) umm overall it's OK (.) it's err (0.1) agreement (.) which has been done err (0.1) to *** and German side (.) Implement (.) the projects here in the division of *** and the organisational structure is concerned (.) it's OK (.)

R: So, you come here under G to G contact.

P8: Yes (.) it's bilateral contract (.) *** I'm here work in this frame of contract (.) between Thailand and Germany (.)

R: How have you felt about your experience of living and working in Thailand?

P8: Well (.) umm (0.2) life has been umm (0.2) if you have sympathy for the country you like (0.2) people (0.3) cultures so it's positive (.) again (.) err development depends on persons to persons (.) some persons have been more willing to cooperate (.) some are (0.2) very positive (.) it depends on individual situation (.) I had a lot of quotations (.) I mean (.) many persons have been responsible (.) for development projects (0.1) but it's a question of personal policy (.) to rotate of the job (.) but this was among difficulties for the project (.) you have project time to err (0.2) win for the project's goals... (.)

R: So far, do you think you can meet the expectation of your goal?

P8: I think yes (0.1) generally yes (.) but for the umm (0.1) necessarily stabilising activities (.) this depends to :: personal policy (.) budgetary situation (.) but such a project err (.) is even in the fifth year of development policy influence (.) stage (.) you have to stabilise (.) and you have to try to constituent (.) if you don't umm have the right organisation structure (.) you don't have staff which is continuously work in this field (.) then it is difficult to stabilise the success of development (.) but we have had a progress review err (.) one month ago (.) they give the (0.1) project very good chance (.)

R: Do you travel a lot?

P8: We have * provincial offices (.) so we have to go to discuss (.) all the time progress or problems (.) in providing services activities (.)

R: Do you see any difference of working habits of the people in the ministry and people in the provinces?

P8: (0.3) For me (.) let me say (.) policy here on the concrete work vision to object (.) they have a lot of changing (.) I have the experience that the moment a lot of projects which are err (0.2) on the tables' division (.) so (.) it's err difficult to say (.) to compare because the nature of work in provincial is very different to work here (.) but I think in general (.) err we have good officers (.) err very (.) very committed people (.) and I think more encouraging (.) here (.) I can only say more administrative to recognise (0.1) but again (.) the provincial officers are very committed to promote the err (0.1) projects to the international standard (.)

R: These provinces are =

P8: =we have *** provincial offices – *** (.) Then err this year err (0.1) project officers (.) have been extended (.) now we have about *** offices (.) and err it's err to hope that the ministry will extend the provincial officers to all offices (.)

R: It's good sign.

P8: Yes (.)

R: What is your most impressive cultural experience while working internationally, in Thailand?

P8: I think the umm (0.3) the (0.1) what to say the (0.2) for me it's religion (0.2) the way people are (0.2) expressing (0.1) their religious attitudes (.) I think it's very impressing (.) I think as well the :::e err way to err (0.2) show traditions (.) and handicraft (.) and architecture or (0.2) well (.) show just friendship (.) That's fine (.)
R: Is forming relationship with local culture one of your goals in working here?
P8: Umm no (.) that’s not task goal (.) task goal is to err (0.2) let me say (.) to (0.2) to contribute *** (.) it means more economical goals (0.1) to (0.1) to develop human resources in Thailand (.)
R: Your background is economic?
P8: Yes (.) yes (0.1) because advisory service for ***
R: How do you see the importance of developing workplace relationship?
P8: (0.2) workplace relationship (.) in which way?
R: Between you and your Thai colleagues and between the subordinate or the people you have to report to.
P8: Yes (.) well (.) I think again it’s the question of persons (.) err (0.2) it’s difficult to say in general (.) we have to look at the issues (0.1) and how to develop a good relationship with him (.) I think culture cautions are in this sense are obscure (.) for me (.) the questions which I had (.) I looked to the persons (.) and asked myself why he’s maybe difficult or provoking (.) depend to his or her situation (.) err I think that’s the difficult of the culture (.)
R: Have you ever heard that Thai business rests not on know how but know who?
P8: Well (.) this is err (0.1) maybe umm (0.3) umm (0.2). one of the development of the sense of administration too (0.1) but here (.) only more umm (.) aspect which is in public services (.) not so much in company (0.1) but I got to know that it’s very important to err (0.2) have good contact to (0.2) representative here (.) or the ministry (.) but (0.3) that’s the question of history too (.) and Thai culture to take care for each other in this sense (.)
R: Do you always have chance to talk to the *** or the *** about your work?
P8: For to the new team (.) it comes two months for this err (0.1) umm (0.3) umm (0.2), one of the development of the sense of administration too (0.1) but here (.) only more umm (.) aspect which is in public services (.) not so much in company (0.1) but I got to know that it’s very important to err (0.2) have good contact to (0.2) representative here (.) or the ministry (.) but (0.3) that’s the question of history too (.) and Thai culture to take care for each other in this sense (.)
R: Do they provide you the feedback? Or do they provide you the information what they have done regarding this project?
P8: Well about this information (.) well (.) I get to know err (.) via our discussions with the (.) Permanent Secretary that he’s interested in this project and this job (.) that’s I get to know (.)
R: How different is your life style on this assignment from the work in your home country?
P8: (0.3) yeah (.) it’s (.) you know (0.1) depending to my (0.1) to the character (.) of my work here (.) I’m advisor (.) so (0.1) I’m rather (.) let me say (0.1) besides the *** (.) prepare papers (.) and try to influence (.) decision in the sense of the contract (0.3) we have expected desires (0.1) to achieve (.) so I try according to this expected desire to make contribution and to give recommendations (.) in Germany (.) I’m ??? hundred of the position like a general expert (.) so (.) for me umm (0.3) it’s different way to (.) to work (0.2) information is err (0.1) provided according to the focus activities (0.2) here I have to guess a lot (.) I have to get involved many relationships (0.1) contacts (.) all the politics (.) sometimes it’s easy (.) sometimes it’s not (.) especially difficult if you want to (.) cross the departments (.) it’s very difficult (.) politics is very difficult because
err (0.2) you need to go to contact the director general (.) if you don’t have contact (.) it’s difficult (.)

R: Do you think language is also another problem?
P8: Yes (.) a big problem (0.1) because of the ::::: (.) let me say (0.1) competence (.) to speak different languages (.) and as well the Thai let me say (.) officials are very umm (0.2) want to speak English but they are (.) not so happy to express themselves (0.2) This is my experience here (.)

R: Maybe they are too shy.
P8: Yeah (0.2) seems to (.)

R: Which aspect of Thai culture are you most familiar with?
P8: (0.7) your music (0.2) and the food (.)

R: Do you enjoy Thai food?
P8: Yes (.) umm (0.1) but umm (0.2) if I had a chance (.) I had no time to study (.) but err (0.3) I’m interested in architecture (.) temples (0.3) I’m interested as well (0.2) in (0.1) in certain degree (.) to religious sites (.)

R: Have you visited many temples here?
P8: Yes (.) I think (0.1) err I know here many temples (.) if I go to countries (.) I look to structure of religious err (0.1) buildings (.) and I (0.1) visit them (.)

R: What do you miss most from your country?
P8: Thailand?
R: No.
P8: From my country?
R: Yes.
P8: ‘???’ is a kind of bread I like to eat in the morning (.) It’s crisp (.) you can buy bread here too (.) but it’s not so (0.2) let me say (0.1) so attractive for me like in German (.)

R: Is it German word?
P8: ‘???’ it means err (0.1) small (0.1) white bread (.) this size (.) very crisp and when you eat it (0.2) as a German (.) you enjoy (.) it’s very good (.) but I miss sometimes umm (0.1) I have not so many concerts here to see and visit (0.2) but not so much (.)

R: Do you belong to any association here?
P8: No (0.1) I belong to house community (0.2) I’m vice chairman of this community (0.1) at condo (.) which has about 400 units to (.) let me say (.) to solve the problem of the house (.) about technical questions (.)

R: And most of the residents are foreigners?
P8: No (.) most are Thais (0.1) I think about 90% are Thais (.)
R: Interesting.
P8: Yes (0.1) it’s interesting and difficult too (.)

R: How adjusted are you to interact with Thai people in general?
P8: Quite well (0.2) I have some Thai friends (.) so (.) I meet them (.) and discuss some questions of development or (0.1) action questions day by day (.)

R: So, you can speak a little Thai?
P8: A little (.) not little (.) but I cannot express any difficult sentences (.)
R: Ok. But you can understand when we are talking.
P8: For me a little bit (.) I can guess (0.2) for some word I can understand (.) some contents I can guess (.) but it’s not err (0.3) I cannot speak Thai fluently (.)

R: How do you expect to be treated as an expat professional?
P8: (0.2) well (0.2) in general err (0.1) very positive (.) on the other hand again it
depends on persons (.) to the expectation of person err (0.2) of each person (0.1) to have clear duties (.) they have to (0.3) to change (0.1) and to develop new model (.) it's sometimes more difficult (0.1) but it depends to single person and depends if they are already used to work together with foreign expats (.) if they are not used (.) maybe sometimes it's err (0.2) have more heavy load and err (0.2) but well you can bring to the relationship of Thailand and Germany for instance (.) depends to the normal situation that anyone can vote (.) it's a chance to develop own ideas (0.2) but it's the questions between persons (.)

R: Do you have your own teamwork to responsible for this project?
P8: Yes (.) but most are the foreign experts (.)
R: Not the people here?
P8: For discussing (0.1) sure (0.1) the regulations are proposed here (.) but complete work is to be developed (0.1) we have practical works (.) according to this we have several concepts (.) after we discussed these concepts (.) at workshops (.)

*** This is the means **** determine by day by day (.)

R: It's not easy.
P8: No (.) but you know? this is the question as well (.) for the :::: the Thai cannot communicate in English (.) because they have their own national language to speak together (.) but my cooperation partners are err (0.1) here at the department (0.2) but as well (.) he invites the experts to come from all over the world (0.2)

R: Is it invited by you or by the ministry?
P8: For the initiate by me (.) and it is invited by me because (.) we have to pay for the project contribution (.) but it's always agreed to the Thai part (.) we're discussing very intensively (0.1) goals (.) in terms of references (0.2) and which persons should be international persons (.) or (.) national ones (.) so that what we discussed (.)

R: Is *** a team?
P8: No (.) not (.) not (.) we have good contacts to *** (.) but we don't have (.) let me say (.) relationship of experts or specialist (.)

R: What is the most challenging for you on this international assignment?
P8: (0.5) the challenging err (0.2) again to err (0.1) to overcome obstacles on the rotation policy (0.3) and to err (0.3) the most important to ensure err (0.2) the question how (0.1) how the budget on staffing of the ministry (.) do they have enough money for this or not? we need money otherwise they cannot serve err (0.1) service (.) but not only for me (.) challenging for the system (.) if they want to develop (.) they have to change (.)

R: But the administration policy or the budget do not come from the tops of the ministry. It comes from the government.
P8: Yes (.) depends at least to the budget of the government (.) for the public servants (.)
R: How do you think about the policy to cut 5% off? Have you heard about that?
P8: Yes (.) you know it is for me (.) I think it's not astonishing (.) because I know such thing since I was in Germany (.) they always try (0.1) to :::o reduce the budget for public servants (.) because it's huge amount has to pay (.)
R: Do you think this policy is effective?
P8: It's difficult to say because umm (.) we have to look to the single organisation (.) I think some need to be extended (0.2) for instance (0.1) such areas which I work (.) **** are very important (0.2) umm. (0.1) this is (.) cannot generally say (.) we have to look to single organisation (.) if the organisation think more deep from here (.) to the office or reduce here let me say the err (0.1) day by day work (.)

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concentrate motivate quarter functions (. ) that means (. ) here from the headquarter
more directed (. ) would be directed (. ) and motivated and the work performances
are structured (. )
R: They can take away the deadlock...
P8: It's difficult to say (. ) you know in general it's always very difficult to say
because (. ) you have to look to single persuasion (. ) and to spec form of the
administrative works (. ) as I said attention to all the regulations up to now (. )
so you have to analyse this as well before you can conclude (. ) but in general (. )
the public services are caused of many err (0.1) laws (. ) and err (. ) regulations and
always danger to extend (. ) so (. ) it's policy in many countries to reduce (0.1) and
to make it simpler administration (. )
R: Ok.. Come to the last question.
P8: Yes (. )
R: Can you please describe factors affecting your success in this international
assignment?
P8: We have provided many regulations (. ) we have services err (0.2) cultures err
(0.2) influence to err (0.2) service cultures in the sense of the international
standard and the err (0.2) kind of negotiation used by provincial *** offices
especially (. ) so (. ) that is very positive development of the last project progress
reviewed (. ) umm (0.2) this is to be very emphasised (. ) underlined (. ) I think at
the end project helps to err (0.1) *** this seems to be very important (. ) for all
concerned decision (0.2) it's about promoting human resource (0.2) in Thailand (. )
R: What makes this work success?
P8: I can offer my experience in Germany as err (0.1) *** (. ) and many functions (. )
and so I transport technical knowledge (. ) and err (. ) can let me say err (0.1)
present technical knowledge in umm (0.3) promoting understanding of
international contexts (. ) this crisis is not only in Germany but as well in Canada
or other countries (. ) so (. ) it's err (0.1) err (. ) good (0.2) chance (0.1) on my
person because I know a lot of questions emerge (. )
R: Really, this is the last question. Do you come here again if they request for your
expertise?
P8: Yes (. ) sure (. ) Thailand is very (. ) very attractive country (0.1) having a lot of
problems too (. ) sure (. ) but (. ) if you look to this country (0.2) very sympathy like
me and you err (. ) feel (. ) committed to participate (. ) so (. ) I would like to enjoy
(. ) come again (. )
R: Thank you very much.
P8: Yes (. ) my pleasure (. )
R: Your contribution is very valuable.
P8: Yes (. ) thank you very much
P8: Yes (. ) if you have other questions (0.2) I'll answer to the questions (. )
R: Thank you very much.
1 July (.) 2004

R: How long have you been working in Thailand?

P9: Err in fact you know (.) I join the *** 4 years ago (.) so since then (.) I've been continuing staying in Thailand and working (.) but even before that (.) I worked with many Thai colleagues in a short term project and *** project and etc (.) since (0.2) I understand my first research experience was during my PHD (.) study days (.) so that was err survey in 19:::80 (.) anyway (.) my working experience with Thailand is nearly 20 years or even more (.)

R: 20 years.

P9: Yeah (.)

R: How about the MOL?

P9: Oh (.) I've started working in 1992 (.) maybe (0.1) if my memory is correct (.) maybe around 10 years ago (.) before I join the *** (.) I used to work in Japan (.) in the research institute (.) The name is the *** (.) Then there was international cooperation division (.) so (.) I was the deputy director in that division (.) and the (0.1) I participate in many collaborative research and training projects with my university and the :::e *** and some (.) with ministry of *** (.)

R: So, before coming to Thailand, you also worked in other countries.

P9: Yes (.) yes (.) yes (.) so currently as an *** (.) I've responsible for technical cooperation activities in Mongolia (.) China (.) Vietnam (.) Laos (.) Cambodia (.) Thailand (.) and Malaysia (.) but before I join the *** (.) when I worked in Japan (.) also (.) I was involved in several research and training projects (.) again (.) Mongolia (.) China (.) I remember also Thailand of course (.) and Vietnam a lot (.) some in the Philippines (.) and also in Pakistan (.) Bangladesh (0.1) I think that's all (.) Right (.)

R: A lot. Why are you interested in working internationally?

P9: You know the (.) the initial (.) how do you call it (.) trigger (.) is very personal (.) because when I entered my *** university (.) *** I had err (.) a classmate from Malaysia (.) so (.) he became very good friend of mine and I visited his house in Malaysia during summer vacation days (.) and ::d I'm so impressed with the people (.) the kindness and the warm culture and open culture (.) so (.) I like Asian countries (.) and I travel a lot in many Asian countries (.) including Thailand during my university student days (.) I was in backpacker (.) travelled as a tourist you know (.) and after that (:t (.) I had many :::y *** student friends (.) in Thailand (.) Malaysia and another countries (.) and we form one *** student organisation (.) we call *** Association (.) and we conducted *** Conference regularly every year in Thailand and many countries (.) I joined some of them (.) and then (.) so (.) this was my interest (.) I was be able to explore more filed activity like *** then (.) gradually (.) I convince myself (.) I should work in the field of *** (.) and help promotion *** in Asia (.) and after that very fortunately (.) I met err nice professors and supervisors (.) who have err (0.1) major in *** and they strongly advise me I should become *** specialist because it is the really growing and emerging area in Asia (.) so (.) I was really convinced and (0.1) decided to be the specialist in *** (.) and I can say one of the most :::t for me (0.1) how to call it (.) respectful professor ***, *** was the first professor of department (.) the head of the department *** so I (.) I (.) I was very fortunate to work with *** very often (.) and in depth (.) and I
learned a lot from *** about motivation (.) devotion (.) *** this is my brief background (.)

R: Before you come to Thailand, let say last 10 years (.) Have you received any multicultural education or training to help you to adjust to the new environment?
P9: No (.) no (.) not formal (.) not formal (.) I’ve never attended (.) I’ve never studied abroad (0.1) so (.) I’ve never attended any formal class about the cross cultural things (.) etc (.) etc (.) but anyway (.) I also fortunate you know? as I said I was involved in many research and training projects with err my advisors and supervisors (.) that are professors in Thailand (.) Japan and many countries (.) so (.) I could gradually get how to call it (.) cross-cultural sense (.) how to work with the people from other cultures (.) other background (.)

R: Can we say that it’s the way to prepare for working internationally?
P9: Yes (.) I can say so (.) I can say so (.) Right (.)

R: How about your family? Do they travel with you here?
P9: Yes (.) yes (.) they stay in BKK together with me (.) yes (.) My wife and 2 sons.

R: How does your wife feel about moving and living internationally?
P9: She likes (.) she likes my work and how to call it (0.1) condition now very much (.) actually she is comfortable (.) I see from the Philippines (.) and she is quite comfortable stay in BKK because she has many friends (.) Thais (.) Japanese (.) Filipinos (.) and err (0.2) Malaysians and Singaporeans (.) Americans and Europeans (.) she really enjoys the life here (.) and you may know (.) I have to travel a lot on missions (.) I have to leave my family (.) from time to time (.) seems this is acceptable for them (.) though I have to pay special attention whenever I’m in BKK I try to go home as early as possible (.) and spend weekends as much as possible (.) sometimes (.) I can take them to my mission if it’s not complicate you know (.)

R: Have you got any course or training about Thailand?
P9: Thai language (.) ahh (0.2) very little (.) I’ve never attended any formal Thai language class (.) but I study from books (laugh and point at all the books he has) and experience from taxi driver (laugh) (.) anyway (.) when we live in BKK we need to learn language (.) so (.) I cannot speak Thai fluently (.) but I can manage daily conversation and if I prepare I can make some technical presentation (.) but I have to prepare a lot with the support of my secretary (.) I have to ask her to translate and I have to repeat (.) practice many times (.) whenever I have time I try to do that but I cannot do every time (laugh).

R: Did you anticipate any work-related problem before you began to work here?
P9: Anticipation of the work problem? because you know (.) I mean (0.2) how to call it (.) I had some background experience in research and training before joining the *** (.) in that sense (.) I can say I knew Thailand (.) at least in terms of my work area (.) so I did not have any fear or any difficulty (.)

R: How adjusted you feel you are to your job and your responsibilities?
P9: What do you mean adjust?

R: I mean are you happy or can you meet expectation of your work?
P9: Yes (.) yes (.) in general I can say I’m very happy to be here (.) and my work is very challenging and rewarding (.) I understand there are tremendous need (.) you know about the people to improve *** in this country and also surrounding countries (.) I can say I’m very quite satisfied my circumstances like my secretary and my colleagues in this office (.) and also (.) I have many nice colleagues in Thailand at MOL (.) other ministries (.) NGOs and workers (.)
employers organizations (0.1) so (. I can say in general (. I'm quite satisfied with my work environment and err (0.1) yes (. I think yes (.)

R: How about your colleagues in the MOL? Do you find any difficulties dealing with them?

P9: You know (. personally of course not (. because I think in general I can say that Thailand's culture (. Japanese's culture (. we have a lot of similarities (. for example (. negotiation way as you know (. some in western way maybe you have to (. be straightforward (. I like this (. I don't like this (. yes or no (. but in the Thai culture (. Japanese culture we tend to say more indirectly (. right? and (. it's quite easy for me to understand how Thai people think (. are they happy or they are not happy? though they don't mention they are not happy (. I can understand (. I can sense (0.1) so (. in this way (. it's easy to understand how to call it (0.1) each other (. but of course perhaps our problem may be more structural not personal (. not cultural (. for example (. I understand the MOL's (. decision making process is very complicated (. I know (. I have err (0.1) many excellent friends (. and he or she are very excellent (. so we are working together and he or she make some (. make some (. very good work-plans but they need approval from the top level (. the supervisors (. I understand (. very often (. it takes long time (. this is not their failures but kind of structure problem at the ministry (. you know (. so (. I have to understand them and I have to help them to clear the procedures and ((LG)).

R: That's why they say they're happy to work with you. How have you felt about our experience of living and working in Thailand? In general.

P9: In general (. as I said (. I'm quite happy (. working (. yes (0.1) I can say I'm quite happy and perhaps there are some minor problems (. sometimes you have to be a bit careful about the time or appointment (. in general very OK but some colleagues they may come a bit late and (laugh) err (0.1) you know? when organise the training and err some people come a bit late (. I can understand (. even we work in a team with many other colleagues from different countries (. this point should be very careful for this and err (0.2) living condition (. I can say quite OK (. but maybe personal point (. because I have 3 small kids (. so (. the like in BKK is quite (0.1) quite nice (. but maybe we should be very careful for the traffic accidents and jams and a big pollution (. and err (0.1)we'd better bring kids outside BKK in weekends to (. to (. because they need some space to play around and run around (. you know this kind of slight problems and ((LG)).

R: Your place is not very far from their school?

P9: My home?

R: Yes.

P9: Not far (. not far (.)

R: Good for them.

P9: Right (.)

R: What is your most impressive cultural experience while working internationally?

P9: Ohh (. this is a bit general question (. but you know err=

R: = in Thailand.

P9: = in Thailand? of course (0.1) how to call it (0.1) most impressive (. you know (. it should be nice (. if we share one project completely with some Thai colleagues from the beginning until the end (. for example (. now we have a project to help homeworkers in Thailand because now many homeworkers
working at home and they haven’t known about chemical and etc. so we work together with the MOL and NGO and we collaborate and develop joint survey team and we visited several homeworkers’ places and discuss together and after that develop the very practical training program and pilot study related homeworker and after that err (0.2) we conducted TOT courses and expanded training (0.1) people also received very good support from policy level and come up with some kind of training material and manual this small how to call it initiative role is growing really in good collaboration with the MOL*** and NGO this is one of my most impressive experience to develop very good team we have a very good target I mean the needy people who need our support and we develop very concrete and practical approach and method I can say this is one of the most impressive you know activities here in Thailand

R: Is forming relationship with local people or local culture one of your goal?
P9: Yes of course you know because I understand without this we cannot work you see without understanding local culture without the keeping good relationship with local people our work cannot be successful so we should pay the most attention to keeping and developing good relationship

R: Let me go back to the training course again. I understand that for the *** staff they suppose to get on arrival training before they start their work in any country. Is that correct?
P9: You mean cultural training?
R: Yes.
P9: Umm (0.2) I don’t know at least I didn’t receive any I believe I did not receive any four years ago when I join the *** I did not receive any cultural training any language training is voluntary if you’d like to have it maybe you can apply for that but cultural training at least in this office in my case I did not receive any.

R: I misunderstand.
P9: ((LG)) but I understand that what I had was from *** project when they deliver *** experts they have some kind of classes to learn culture in Thailand or other countries where they should work.

R: Did you find it useful? I mean the course that *** provided for the people who are travelling.
P9: It seems yes it seems yes yes yes I think so I think so. It’s very useful especially for the persons who who have no experience in working in Thailand I think they should have some kind of orientation and introduction of Thai culture and also basic Thai language I think so.

R: How long does it take for that course?
P9: I don’t know maybe one or 2 weeks I think so before coming to Thailand they can finish the course in Japan.

R: How different is your life style on this assignment from your home country? Have you ever work in Japan?
P9: Yes of course.
R: Is your life style different?
P9: Life style in Japan life style in Thailand? umm (0.1) yes and no yes mean (0.1) how can I say because the Japanese community in BKK is quite strong so how can I say we can get many Japanese materials I mean books and food and etc in BKK very easily though it’s quite more expensive than we buy them in Japan but err we have no difficulties to have Japanese I mean
(0.1) information (. ) food and cultural contact and etc (. ) etc (. ) we enjoy a lot Thai cultures and national culture here (. ) for example (. ) concerning food my family enjoy (. ) maybe Monday Japanese food and Tuesday Thai food and Wednesday I don’t know may be Filipinos food (. ) we really enjoy the mix cultures (. ) and also my kids nowadays (0.1) study in international kindergarten (. ) they can speak Japanese at home (. ) they can speak some Thai and some English (0.1) outside (. ) in this meaning (. ) the life in Japan (. ) life in Thailand here would be defined (. ) you know (. )

R: It’s useful for your kids because now they can speak 3 languages.
P9: Not completely (. ) but at least they have been exposed to 3 languages in the different cultural situations (. ) so though they are very small (. ) they understand there are many kind of people in this world (. ) many languages in this world (LG)

R: Which aspect of Thai culture are you most familiar with?
P9: Of course (. ) food (. ) I like Thai food very much and err (0.2) not only the formal Thai food in high class restaurant but also I often eat at the street vendor (. ) Because I like Phad-thai (. ) kuay-tiew (=noodles) you know (0.1) it’s very (. ) delicious and err I can say (. ) hygienic and err (0.1) the cost is very reasonable and when I eat on the street I can feel really I stay in Thailand (. ) I really like them (. ) and of course I invite my family together (. ) maybe my answer is too materialistic (0.2) but as a Thai culture you know maybe I can say the human relationship (. ) because I’m quite comfortable working and staying here (. ) communication with my secretary and other Thai colleagues (. ) as I said err (0.1) how can I say (. ) of course (. ) we have some cultural differences (. ) but err (0.1) anyway (. ) it’s easy for me to understand as a way of communication (. ) so (. ) I can say in general I have been keeping very good and very productive relationship with many Thai (0.1) colleagues in this office (. )

R: How do you create or keep this good relationship?
P9: Of course (. ) we have to ::::o you know (. ) we (. ) we have to pay attention to some particular points (. ) first (0.2) perhaps (. ) my principle (. ) we should not shout (. ) we should not be too straightforward (. ) we should not get angry in public (. ) something like that (. ) if you have some problems and different opinion (. ) we should talk to them indirectly (. ) personally indirect way (. ) let them understand my point (. ) and err so (. ) this is very important I think (. ) this is true also in Japan (. ) we should not err (0.1) blame or criticise anybody in public (. ) we should be very careful about this point (. ) otherwise they feel very much insulted then (. ) our work relationship will be very much damaged (. ) so (. ) if we have some different opinion (. ) something to clarify (. ) we have to speak to that person directly (. ) first (. ) I think this is a very important point (. ) and another very important point is relating to this (. ) we should be always very positive (. ) for others’ thinking (. ) if we have any problem here (0.1) if we only talk about this problem (. ) we will easily go to the dead end (. ) and everybody will be frustrated (. ) so (. ) we should always look at the future (. ) for example (. ) now I have many elaborative activities with the MOL (. ) As I said (. ) one project (. ) is now still pending because they are waiting for approval from top level (. ) I understand everybody concerns and frustrated (. ) me too (. ) but I’ve never mentioned this to them (. ) you know? directly because I know they are frustrated too (. ) it’s not their failures you know? because of the structure problem (. ) but very important I should keep them (. ) good contact and have to remind them what happen about the status (. ) and do they need input or assistance form me (. )
to speed up the procedure (. ) just keep up good contact (. ) and never blame and never criticise (. ) I think this point is quite important (. ) right (. ) right (. )

R: It's very good and valuable.

P9: yeah (. ) yeah (. )

R: What do you miss most from your home country?

P9: For me no problem (. ) for my wife no problem (. ) but I have some worries about the education of my kids (. ) what should happen for the future? anyway (. ) we have to first select (. ) they would become Japanese or they would be international persons (. ) you know (. ) still they are very small (. ) no need to decide now (. ) but when they enter elementary school or junior high school they have to really decide what they become (. ) their nationality are Japanese but how (. ) how they feel themselves (. ) I'm a Japanese or I'm a kind of international person (. ) I have no experience about that with myself (. ) so (0.1) I have to carefully educate them (. ) you know (. ) in the future (. ) they may go back to Japan (. ) or they may work internationally and also (. ) I don't know my future (. ) though I'm a *** official of course (. ) I'll work as long as possible maybe after Thailand maybe I'll move to other station in other countries (. ) and maybe I have to bring my kids together (. ) then (. ) they become more international (. ) but I have no idea how (. ) what would happen to their future (. ) if they are educated internationally (. ) I mean they will enter which university (. ) in which country (. ) and after that what kind of job they will do (. ) because I'm purely Japanese (. ) and I was educated only in Japan (. ) I know Japanese education system so (. ) how to get to university and how to get a job (. ) so (. ) this is my (0.1) I have to study about this point (. ) that's worry about education of kids (. )

R: How long will you be in Thailand?

P9: No definite answer (. ) but I'm planning to stay here at least for another 2-3 years (. ) Initially the *** official (. ) they will spend around 5-6 years in one duty station (. ) as I said (. ) I finish 4 years already (. ) maybe another 2 years I still continue to work here as long as possible but the (0.1) the (0.1) *** will not allow me to stay only in one duty station (. ) it means we have to move to some other (. ) duty station and the (0.1) so you know the headquarter (. ) the *** headquarter in *** (. ) so that's is one possibility (. ) but I also want to work for developing countries (. ) so (. ) I'm also thinking maybe for example India or African countries but also my wife is not very (0.1) not deny ((LG)) but she's a bit worry about this (. ) so (. ) we have to discuss with my family together ((LG))

R: Is that a rotation policy of the ***?

P9: Yes (. ) yes (. ) as I said (. ) every 5 or 6 or 7 years (. )

R: Every staff?

P9: Yes (. ) yes (. ) of course some locally hired staff like my secretary (. ) they just stay in Thailand but international specialist like me (. ) we have to of course (. ) change our duty station (. ) maybe we are allowed to stay in one duty station for 10 years (. ) maybe not (. )

R: How do you expect to be treated as an expat professional?

P9: Be treated (0.1) I just say I'm treated quite well (. ) I'm treated (0.1) quite well (. ) how can I say (. ) you know there are several aspects (. ) I mean (. ) the professional viewpoint or how to call it (. ) salary or working environment and etc (. ) so (. ) the first maybe professional viewpoint I mean about the work (. ) I think I'm quite satisfied you know (. ) the (. ) the way of being treated you know (. ) and how can I say (0.2) I understand in general I can say many people respect the *** (. ) and very much rely on the *** and they keep asking the (. ) advise and
technical support from us (.) so (.) I feel (.) very how to call it (.) responsible (.) for (.) providing very good technical input for them (.) in this case (.) that’s true (0.1) and err (0.2) and very important point (.) we have to regard ourselves as the international servant (0.1) not supervisor (.) you know (.) sometimes people may misunderstand the *** is a kind of supervision supervising people (.) no (.) no totally untrue (.) we are serving the people because I always already remind myself (.) my salary (.) comes from the tax from many countries (.) even including poor countries (.) they collect the tax (.) and err you know? and maybe donate some money (.) maybe small money but anyway to *** and my salary comes from them (0.1) so (.) we have the responsibility to reward (.) for work hard for the people (.) at a grass-root level or global level and we should not be **** (.) we have to be very very (0.2) how to say (.) human (.) not human (.) we have to be very much you know modest (.) and sincere to the need of the local people and should be very careful listener (.) and we are not supervising people (.) we are serving the people (.) I think this attitude is very very very important (.)

R: If you compare to the time when you came here – when you’re *** expert. The way that you’re treated is different from now that you’re treated by people at the ***?

P9: Generally the same (.) also *** is expert very much (.) you know respected (.) and also (.) they very much rely on technical input and we work together of course as again not supervisor (.) we work together as a colleague (.) you know (.) I think this kind if attitude is quite important (.) because in Thailand (.) I think there are a lot of technical activities (.) I can learn a lot from Thai specialists and also employers (.) they conduct a lot of very active activity in the factory (.) in the enterprise (.) I’m always learning from their experiences and my important role is now facilitator role (.) so (.) I can learn from good example in Thailand (.) and I can introduce Thai good examples to other countries like Vietnam (.) Cambodia (.) also (.) I can learn good example from Vietnam and I can introduce how to call (.) good effort in Vietnam to Thai people and exchange good experience (.) I’m sure this is one of my important role (.)

R: What is the most challenging for you on this international assignment?

P9: Yeah (.) it’s clear (.) to help workers at a grass root level (.) in improving *** (.) because you know (.) there are many workplaces which out of *** program (0.1) as I can say (.) multinational enterprise (.) large scale of enterprise (.) still they have problems (.) but they are improving much because they have their own specialists on *** (.) and many highly educated people pay attention to *** (.) they’re improving rapidly (.) but when we visit small enterprises (0.1) they have some difficulties to receive good *** services and information (.) so we should focus on small enterprises (.) and then we look at farmers (.) homeworkers they seldom receive any *** information (.) though (.) I’m sure when you look at farmers (.) agriculture (.) they have a lot of problems (.) *** so my most challenging job or my duty is to reach more and more grass root workplaces (.) and help them to improve *** (.) but again (.) I have to of course very much you know (.) collaborative with local government and deal with local people and let them do it (.) my role is again (.) serving to the people and facilitating the people to work on this (.) yeah (.)

R: Come to the last question, can you please describe factors affecting your success and also difficulties in this assignment?
P9: Yes (.) of course you know (.) in principle you should be very much you know (.) diligent and hard working (.) and the same time (.) very important (.) we should be very organise (.) we should be a very good planner and organise means you know (.) because we have so many requests (.) so many things to do (.) but we have to realise (.) we have only limited time (.) you know (.) how to invest our limited time to which (.) demand or request (.) we have to be very careful otherwise our work will be overflow (.) and we cannot meet the requirement by local people (.) so we have to be carefully set the priority (.) and once we set the priority we have to anyway complete it (.) the very important point is to show the very good achievement and output (.) I think this is (0.1) very important (.) how to organise and plan our activities (.) you think our own limited time (.) this is very important (.) the second point of course as I mentioned we should be always very positive and forward looking (.) even if we have some problems (.) internal problems (.) we always think (.) instead of blaming somebody (.) we have to think how to call it (.) make it positive and find very practical solutions (.) we should be always action oriented work (.) or output oriented (.) not problem oriented (.)

R: Very clear. Do you have anything you would like to add? Or more idea about the experts who want to work internationally.

P9: Umm (0.1) you know (.) also (.) I have some (.) some visitors from Thailand who want to work in the *** internationally (.) so (.) I can say to them (.) they should be cultural sensitive (.) how can I say (.) because I join the *** only 4 years ago (.) that time I was nearly ** years old (.) it means I’m now ** (0.1) of course my age is ** (.) right (SL)) (.) before that I’ve never studied abroad (.) I never worked abroad (.) so (.) I was involved in several short term research and training projects (.) in times (.) become very good *** specialist (.) maybe specialist in *** (.) they should have a very good grass root experience (.) before coming to *** (.) then they can bring such substance experiences to *** (.) then (.) you’ll be benefit from very much experiences (.) because some people (.) not only in Thailand (.) in Japan (.) in every country (.) just look at the *** ahh (.) they are very good (.) I want to join (0.1) for the good career we should always remember we are working for the people (.) entering the ** is not a purpose (.) you know (.) that’s only the method (.) what we can bring to the *** to meet the needs (.) the requirement by the local people (.) so (.) I think this kind of idea is very (.) very useful (.) working in the real field (.) working in the real workplace (.) and grass root level (.) I think this is very important (.) and again (.) I’m sorry if I mention big sensitive issue but as you may know nowadays Thailand is really developing in this region (.) but you know some conflicts with surrounding countries like Cambodia (.) sometimes Laos (.) I think Thai people (.) it means a very good sign of Thai culture (.) I mean the sign of the (.) development of Thailand (.) now Thailand is much richer than other surrounding countries (.) so (.) Thailand has potential to play more leadership in this sub-region (.) but it seems also Thailand people should be more (.) even more sensitive to the culture of surrounding countries (.) and understand the feeling of the people of Laos (.) people of Myanmar (.) people of Cambodia (.) people of Vietnam (.) then Thailand can play very good leadership role in this sub-region (.) without understanding the conflicts arise you know (.) I should not mention it too much but (0.1) yeah... yeah ...

R: OK. Thank you for sharing your opinion and experience with me today.

P9: My pleasure (.)
5 July, 2004

R: You’ve been working in Thailand for 2 years.
P10: Yes (.) almost 2 years (.) yeah (.)
R: Have you visited Thailand before you come?
P10: Very briefly as a tourist (.)
R: Before you work in Thailand, have you worked in other country?
P10: I worked in (0.1) Germany before (.) and in Philippines – in Manila (.)
R: Why are you interested in working internationally?
P10: I think (0.1) it’s very useful opportunity to learn about other cultures (.) and the only way I think properly learn about other culture is (.) we have to live and (0.1) conduct practical work within another society (.) other histories (.) other languages (.) the way other people think (.) are always interested me (.)
R: And your Thai is very good.
P10: Thank you very much (.) ((LG»
R: Before you come here, have you received any multicultural education or training to help to adjust to new environment?
P10: Ahh (0.1) no (.) no (.) I didn’t but I think (.) I worked 2 years in *** in *** (.) so (.) I was used to the way that Australian *** thinks (.) and (.) I worked a little bit a couple of month on Thailand relationship back in Australia (.) so (.) I was used to the issues that were involved (.)
R: How about your Thai? Have you studied here?
P10: I’ve studied 5 months in Australia before I came (.) and then 4 months in *** and 4 months in *** (.) ((SL» And then (.) I start to work here (.) *** (.)
R: OK. How do you get to work with the MOL?
P10: I work with the MOL because (0.1) in Australia we have *** (.) and that has a relationship with the MOL (.) *** we had 2 official visits umm (.) Australia and I went along with them to their meeting to the MOL (.) there was another element of work we had with the MOL that I was involved with (.) which is *** That’s also about my work (.)
R: Do you come here alone or with your family?
P10: I come here alone.
R: Did you anticipate any work-related problem before you began to work here?
P10: Err (0.1) I was a little bit worried about Thai people who work for me (.) The element of ‘keng-jai’ (.) in that (.) I want to make sure the Thai people who work for me feel comfortable to come to me if they had any problem (.) and not to let the problem (.) ignore it (.) and don’t come to me (.) and so that I can solve and by which time it just get worse (.) worse (.) worse (0.2) so (.) I think now that I’ve started work (.) it hasn’t been a problem and Thai staff always tell you if they are not able to do something and so (.) that’s what my concerns with the ‘keng-jai’ factor (.)
R: But when you come there was no problem.
P10: No (.) it wasn’t a problem (.) no (.)
R: How adjusted you feel you are to your job and your responsibilities?
P10: Err (0.2) to be honest (.) I say it wasn’t easy to adjust to those responsibilities here (.) but that wasn’t because err so much (0.1) because of Thailand (.) it was because ahh… *** resources very limited and last year was a peak year (.) so (.) we had a lot of work (.) and also start to work during the peak was quite difficult (.) but now (.) so far (.) I feel that (0.1) I’m having had that experience (.) I’m comfortable and very well adjusted to the work now (.)
According to the position, are you the second from the ***?

R: No (.) no (.) umm the second is more senior position (.) there's a *** and after that it's *** level (.) which is the head of the section (.) and then the *** and *** (.)

R: How have you felt about your experience of living and working in Thailand?

P10: I've enjoyed it very much (.) yeah (.) I think Thailand is very living place to live (.) and Thai people are very umm pleasant (.) polite (.) and enjoyable people to work with (.)

R: Living and working is the same?

P10: Err (0.2) living in Thailand is very easy (.) it's convenient (.) and I like to live in big city so BKK is very good for me (.) I think (.) if I point to my frustration in (.) in living in Thailand is my work has a lot to do with the legal system in Thailand and err (0.1) in Australia we ah (.) very much live by the letter of the law in the sense that we look at the law (.) this the law and follows (.) in Thailand a lot of laws that are always enforced (.) and err (0.1) that every legal system changed depending on who is involved and the circumstances (.) so (.) I find that it's a big confusing to get used to working with the legal system in Thailand (.) and so (.) if I had frustration (.) it's to do with that (.)

R: Australia and NZ use the similar law I think.

P10: Ahh (.) it's not so much the law that's the difference (.) I think (.) in Australia when you go and look up legislation (.) and you read the law (.) you know that what the police will enforce and that's what happen (.) in Thailand (.) when you get the penal code (.) and you read that has a law document (.) even though that's what the law said (.) that doesn't mean the person who's found in breaching that law will be arrested and prosecuted (.) and so (.) it's understanding the way the system works (.) It's different to Australia (.)

R: What is your most impressive cultural experience while working internationally?

P10: Err (.) impressive (.) I think one of the most interesting cultural experience was studying in Khonkaen (.) just because (0.1) that was an area that didn't have many foreigners and so (.) people of Khonkaen are very strong in their own culture (.) in BKK people make allowance that for the fact that you're westerners (.) if you make a mistake or you're doing something impolite in the Thai society (.) they don't worry about that because they think she's foreigner (.) she doesn't understand ( .) in Khonkaen (0.1) they don't make allowance because they don't understand the westerners have the different cultures (.) and so (.) if you make a mistake in Khonkaen people will tell you ((LG)) and so (.) I think it was err a very useful cultural experience because people would say no (.) no (.) you shouldn't have done this (.) I think that helps me a lot coming after that to BKK (.)

R: You had to live with Khonkaen people?

P10: Yes (.) I live in mooban (=village) and live in a university (.) with a number of people (.) yeah (.)

R: So, you can speak the dialect.

P10: E-san (.) not very well (.) I can understand it (.) and umm it took me a long time to get used to that (.) E-san dialect ((LG))

R: Were there any cultural areas of concern that you had when you decide to work internationally?

P10: Umm (0.2) I think working in Asia (.) even though Australia (.) it was also a colony (.) I always very concern that umm European people and white people come across as arrogant (.) and so my concern was not so much umm (0.1) the
direction that Thai side the way that I would perceived (.) and I was concern that people come across and not understanding the culture and just being arrogant (.) umm I’ve found that in Thailand this hasn’t been as much as a problem because Thailand was never a colony and so (.) people are much more open and accepting and don’t (.) if I make a mistake about Thai culture (.) they don’t think (.) that an arrogance of me (.) they (.) I forgive you (.) I’m always forgiven (.)

R: In your opinion, what strengths that the expat should have in order to adapt successfully?
P10: Strength? umm (0.2) I think (0.1) interested in other cultures (.) it’s the first thing (.) so (.) not being scared (.) umm because something different (.) willingness to try different food (.) very important (0.1) and also (0.1) an appreciation that not everything about your own culture is right (.) you can learn something from other culture as well (.) and (0.2) I think patience is very important too (.)

R: Is forming relationship with local culture one of your goal?
P10: Yes (.) it is (.) err (0.2) I also have to be honest too that sometimes it’s good to have friends of your own culture as well (.) because it can be quite tiring umm having (0.1) only Thai friends because there is noone who understand your background the way you understand and so (.) it’s good to have Australian friends while you are in Thailand and it’s helpful to have people who know your background and your history (.)

R: Do you always go back to Australia during the holidays?
P10: No (.) no (.) I don’t (.) but err I do have Australian friends in BKK (.) I have Thai friends and Australian friends in BKK (.) umm I think that’s why (.) Khonkaen was a little bit different for me (.) was because I only had Thai friends and (0.1) that was wonderful and I have very good friends from Khonkaen (.) I’ve still met them (.) but I think (0.1) adapting to Khonkaen was difficult because I didn’t have Australian friends who could laugh the same thing that I laugh at (.) and understand my background (.)

R: How about your colleagues at the MOL? Do you see any difference between your Thai colleagues here and at the MOL?
P10: I don’t know my colleagues at the MOL that well (.) err but I think (.) the people I work with and come across tend to be Thai people who have education overseas (0.1) and so they understand Australian and western cultures (.) and they quite open (.) to other cultures (.) and I think that something that if you find in people in BKK generally you don’t find that in tang-jung-wat (= upcountry) in the same way (.) and so (.) people in BKK (.) err I have a lot more in common with them (0.1) because we’ve been to similar universities (0.1) and the same with anyone you come across in government in the *** (.) or at the *** (.) it tends to be the people who had education overseas (.)

R: How different is your life style on this assignment from your home country?
P10: Err (0.2) I work a lot harder here (.) so (.) err my life style is definitely go home a lot later (.) I don’t cook as much in Thailand (.) I eat out a lot more (.) I would say ::y I tend to go out a lot more (.) back in Australia (.) a lot more to do with your home (.) I think that’s also different in the Thai (.) Thai way of life (.) people don’t invite people to their home as often (.) we go out (.) and we meet outside which I really quite enjoy (.)

R: Is your place very far from here?
P10: No (.) not at all (.)
R: So, you don’t have any problem with traffic.
P10: I do a little bit on *** (.) but it doesn’t worry me (.)
R: OK. Which aspect of Thai culture are you most familiar with?
P10: Most familiar with (0.3) difficult question (.) err I would say that food (.) an eating out and culture of food (.) I think (0.1) err I had a good friend in Khonkaen and we drove for 2 hours to restaurant that has good fish (0.1) and I think in that respect the good food err (0.2) and I really enjoy that Thai people that they always talk about food (.) they always know where good food is (.) they discuss the differences between food and it’s such a large part of Thai culture (.) and I think that (.) the way that the Thais enjoy (.)
R: Let me go back and talk about working relationship. What is the best way to create good relationship in the workplace?
P10: (0.2) I think (0.1) as a supervisor and a person working for other supervisors (.) it’s important to be approachable (.) so that (.) as a supervisor if someone (.) your employee feels comfortable coming to you (0.1) if I can’t do a bit of work (.) this is stumbling block (.) so if you can sort that out before it becomes a large problem and (0.1) as someone who is being supervised (.) you need to be approachable (.) so your supervisor can ask you for advice (.) because often you’re the person who is working with the concrete fact (.) you are the person who’s (0.1) putting forward and straightforward tremendous of arrangement (.) so you have the best understanding of what’s really going on (.) and so supervisors need to feel comfortable to come to you for their advice as well (.) I think (0.1) and also (.) a willingness to take on works (.) and a willingness to help (.) when you see other people on duty (.)
R: Have you ever heard what they say Thai business not rests on know how but know who?
P10: Yes I have heard that (.) err (0.1) would you like me to response to that? ((SL)) yes (.) I think that’s something that’s most part of Thai culture then Australian culture (.) but I think it’s also important in all working life that’s (.) who you know is always important and to get ahead is always (.) very important to form good relationship with the people you work with (.) the difference I think (.) in Thai culture is that (.) you also gain some status from who you know (.) err (0.1) so (.) in conversation people try to impress you (0.1) in Thailand they impress you by explaining who they know (.) where in Australia they try to impress you with fact and figures (0.1) and how much we know (.) I don’t like being so general about culture (.) because the difference and similarity (.) and umm different people and different circumstances (.) but still in both culture it’s important to know about the right people (.) however (.) it’s more open in Thailand (.) and people are more readily explain to you the way they got ahead was because they know a particular person or because they came from this particular family (.) and (.) in Australia we try to cover that up a little bit (.)
R: What do you miss most from your home country?
P10: Err (0.3) I think I miss (0.1) err (0.1) the intellectual life that I had back in Australia (.) by that I mean err (0.2) there are a lot of people in Australia (0.1) who are my friends which have had a philosophical view about life (.) and err (0.2) I’m talking about intellectual life (.) a lot of bookshops (.) theatres (.) art galleries (.) that’s what a circle that I created in Australia (.) and I think (.) in Thailand people have less philosophical view about life (.) they have a more business oriented view about life (.) and that may be a function of the fact of the people I’ve met (.) around me (.) that’s different to the circle I’ve met in Australia (.) so (.) I think I miss (0.2) that attitude towards life (.) and I’ve found
in the university in Thailand people focus (.) so much on (.) asking important question about who they are (.) more :::e which is the best degree (.) to get the best career (0.1) which is a very sensible approach (.) and I think Australia is moving towards that (.) however (.) not as quickly as Thailand has moved in that direction (.)

R: How adjusted are you to interact with Thai people in general?
P10: (0.2) err (0.1) I think my language is good (.) but it’s not good enough to get every joke and things like that (.) so (.) I can follow a conversation (.) but I can’t take part in a conversation the same as I would in English (.) err so (.) I’m adjusted to interact with Thai people have a little bit of English (.) so that I’m in confident now to speak Thai (.) and I can throw a few English words (.) when I can’t find the Thai words (.) and I think also (0.2) I enjoy interacting with Thai people who (0.1) who have a little bit of experience overseas (.) so they understand (.) the perspective that I’m coming from a little bit (.) So (.) I can ask them a question along the lines (.) or when Thai people do this or (.) what’s the Thai view on this particular point in history (.) and they can explain that to a foreigner because they understand what’s foreigners don’t understand about Thailand (.)

R: Thus, you also feel the same with your co-workers or your colleagues.
P10: With my co-workers (.) they (0.2) umm (0.1) the Thai co-workers (.) they are all similarly educated overseas (.) and all the same the large number of Australian in the *** because they come and go (.) so (.) they’re used to work with Australians (.) and they’re used to the type of things the Australians don’t understand about Thai cultures (.) So (.) they are very good in explaining things to you (.)

R: When you work with Thai government officers, do you find any difficulties?
P10: Err (0.3) I think (0.1) our job is going between (0.1) between Australia and the Thai side and so I understand the Thai system now that I’ve worked here (.) The people back in Australia don’t understand the Thai system and so (.) my difficulties is explaining to the Thai government people I work with (.) why the Australian find what they’re doing perhaps a little strange or umm (0.1) perhaps they don’t understand why the system is working that way (.) so (.) I think that’s my difficulties explaining any misunderstanding between the two sides (.) what I enjoy (.) I enjoy think that I think Thai people are quite understanding and I realise (.) different perspective in the most part and so (.) they don’t (.) they don’t (.) nothing ever becomes a big problem (.)

R: Do you think they really feel so or they just want to compromise?
P10: Err (0.3) I think (0.1) Thai people are very happy to help (0.1) and if you explain to them (.) and I realise I was making a lot of generalisation (.) if you explain to the particular government this is our point of view (.) this is why we need this (.) or this is why we need to come to this (0.2) we’re asking for your assistances in this area (0.1) then (.) they’re very abasing (.) I think the problems (0.1) or the frustrations that we had not do with the actual substances (0.1) it’s to do with (0.1) the fact that a lot of Thai agencies and the government don’t have many resources (.) they have a lot of people err very few people working on a lot of issues and so Australian side said this is urgent (.) this is urgent (.) It has to be done (.) it has to be done (.) and the Thai agencies simply cannot umm giving you your request (.) or sign the document or issue the document within a week (.) so I think it’s a miss (.) for Australia this issue is very important (.) very urgent (.) for the Thai side they understand it’s very urgent (.) it’s important but
they simply can’t and it’s umm (.) that’s also to do with the Thai procedures that one request needs to go to the Thai *** (.) to the *** (.) to the Thai *** (.) and then to the *** (.) it has to pass through 4 agencies (.) and the Australian side want it’s done in a day and so (.) so it’s dealing with that (.) and the Thai side is always quite accommodating and always do it as quickly as they can (.) and so explaining to the Australian side (.) look (.) it cannot be done is a time period (.) and explaining to that Thai side (.) it’s very urgent we would appreciate if you could do it as quickly as possible (.)

R: Do you have to do this very often?
P10: Quite often (.) yes ((SM))
R: That’s why you said at the beginning that you have to be patience (.)
P10: Yes (.)
R: How do you expect to be treated as an expat professional?
P10: (0.3) How do I expect to be treated (.) err (0.3) I don’t think I came in with any preconception as such (.) err (0.1) my concern in my job is always in the *** and so (.) some people have difficulties dealing with women (0.1) and I’m not talking about Thailand (.) I’m talking internationally and in Australia particularly a young single woman (.) and I’m very lucky that I do some high level work (.) and so I was worried that people in my career might not take a young woman seriously when she’s doing high level work (.) and might not think that’s the most appropriate to do the work (.) however (.) I knew in Thailand (.) that there are many senior women in government in the bureaucracy and there are many senior ambassadors in Thai embassies that are women (.) so (.) I knew before I came here that wouldn’t be a problem in Thailand and it hasn’t been (.)

R: How about other countries that you worked before?
P10: Germany (.) it’s a problem (.) I would say (0.2) and Australia in a certain sector (.) it’s a problem (0.2) Philippines also no problem (.)
R: Surprised me because you’re talking about developed countries.
P10: Yeah (.) I think there are different (0.2) attitudes towards working women in developing and developed countries (.) I think perhaps (.) in Thailand and in the Philippines because there is a culture of having maids (.) having nannies (.) having helps at home (.) that makes a lot more women can go into the workforce and become senior people (.) Where is Germany (.) schools are only half a day (.) and so 1 pm someone needs to be at home to look after the kids (.) and not very many people have people at home to look after the kids when they come home from school (.) so there aren’t as many senior women in Germany as there are in Thailand and in Philippines (.) and also the second thing is (0.1) as you say (.) the quote you gave me (.) it’s who you know and it’s your family (.) and so it doesn’t matter as much if you are a woman in Thailand or the Philippines (.) matters more what family you come from (.) and what your connections are (.) and if you’re a good woman from a good family with a good education with a good connection you can become a senior person (.) very senior person in Thailand (.) I don’t think that (.) it’s necessary the same in Australia in Germany when you’re saying woman first (.)
R: Very interesting.
P10: Yes (.)
R: What is the most challenging for you on this assignment?
I think err dealing the situation I explain where Australian side is very urgent and the issue is very important and urgent for the and for the Thai side they understand urgency but they simply can’t do it in a time.

Let’s come to the last question.

Can you please describe factors affecting your success or difficulties in this international assignment?

Err the most important factor is for the Australian side to put it bluntly they just want to get the outcome they want to get what they want however for me it’s not only important to get the outcome it’s also important that you do so in a way that build the relationship and doesn’t damage the relationship so there are certain times you need to know we can’t push anymore the Thai side has said this is as much as we could give you and we can’t help it anymore you call a person once today already calling them again won’t help they know it’s important to you and so I think the important to my success is first to getting me the outcome that Australia wants but also secondly making sure the relationship is strengthen and so in Thailand relationships are so important that even if for one time you push very hard and get the result you want next time the person you deal with will remember that the first time with difficult and so they won’t be helpful the second time and so I think building the relationship to the point where you can say I’m sorry we’ve got a request for your assistance it’s very urgent and if you have a good relationship with that person with that agency they will do it for you umm and you don’t need to push where I think the Australia side sometimes get very stress the urgency of the matter.

You’re saying about good relationship, what sort of relationship? Have you heard about weak tie and strong tie?

No.

Weak tie is acquaintance. Strong tie is friendship.

Do you think what kind of tie that you like when you deal with Thai people?

I think it’s important to have a relationship that not so much as friendship outside work although I have many Thai friends umm with the people I work within Thai government I like to build the relationship that you talk about thing rather than work to this we go to karaoke sometimes with Thai people we work within the Thai government and you chat about food chat about what you did on the weekends and the things like that whenever you deal with them you talk about this sort of thing so that even if at one point they say no to something that you ask or you say no to something that they ask you’ve got other thing in the relationship that outside work that you know that doesn’t damage anything in the long term.

Thank you. Do you like to add anything? Like giving an idea for the foreigners who want to come to work with the Thai government organisation. How should they prepare themselves or whatever?

Umm I think recognising that hierarchy is very important in Thailand and also recognising it’s that your work is not just about getting the outcome that you want it also about how you do it so being polite being saying things quietly also help you get what you want it’s not just the outcome and getting what you want it’s also getting what you want in a nice way and polite.
way is very important in Thailand. In Western cultures, we have a little bit of a cowboy attitude in business, and that doesn’t work. It’s not appreciated in Thailand.

R: Thank you very much. Your contribution is very valuable. Thanks for sharing your opinion and experience with me today.

P10: Quite alright.
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R: How long have you been working with the MOL?

P11: Umm (0.2) well (.) I've been working with the *** (0.1) since *** (0.1) and we work with the ministry (.) The *** (0.1) works with the MOL a lot (.)

R: Have you visited Thailand before you come?

P11: Yes (.) twice (0.1) twice (.) in 98 and in 99 (.)

R: For business or tourist?

P11: No (.) I have Thai friends (.) err (.) to visit friends (.) yeah (.)

R: How do you get this job?

P11: I applied and umm (0.1) the contact was made through (0.1) an *** (0.1) person who told me that the office was looking for (0.2) somebody to fill this position (.) so (.) he put me in touch of the office (.) and I had a telephone interview and I got the job (.)

R: What is your position here?

P11: Umm I have 2 positions (.) I'm a bit of err (0.1) I'm a bit of hybrid position (.) technically speaking (.) I work they call an ex-call – an external collaborator (.) umm (0.1) external collaborators are (0.1) not means to be on the premises though (.) so for me to be able to enter the premises and have an (.) office here (.) I also have the status of an intern (.) umm (0.1) yeah (.) I'm a paid intern you could say (.)

R: Why are you interested in working internationally?

P11: Err (0.1) well (.) I (0.1) live internationally ever since I was err (.) ever since I was a high school (.) I went to Switzerland when I was 17 (.) to finish my high school (.) I did military service in Germany after that (.) and I went to study in England after that (.) so (.) I'm from a mix background myself (.) I grasp up many languages umm (0.1) I've always been travelling between many countries quite a lot (.)

R: Working and living.

P11: Well (.) let say living (.) I've lived in (0.1) I have lived let say in *** (.) when I was a kid and after that in Germany (.) most of my life in Germany (.) in Switzerland (.) in London (0.1) now in Thailand (.) although (.) that's only for 6 months (0.1) and now I'll be moving to Scotland (.)

R: What is your nationality?

P11: I have a German passport (.)

R: OK. Before coming here, have you received any multicultural education or training to help you adjust to Thai environment?

P11: Not (.) particularly Thai training (.) or Thai (0.1) I (.) I haven't received any training which was particular focus on Thailand (.) but as I said I've been to international high school umm (0.1) I went to (0.1) my university was very international (.) I went to study at the School of Oriental and African Studies (.) in London (.) err which is a very international school (.) and so (.) being in an international setting such as the *** is nothing new for me (0.1) I'm very used to it (.)

R: So, you don't have to prepare yourself before coming here.

P11: No (.) I've been to Thailand before (.) err so (.) I kind of knew what's awaiting me and yeah (.) anyway Thailand is such an easy place to get along with and to integrate into (.) It's not a difficult place to move to (.) I think ((LG))

R: Did you anticipate any work-related problem before you began to work with the ***?
P11: No (.) no (.) Not at all (.)
R: How about Thailand?
P11: That's I don't know (.) I find it very easy here to (.) to (.) to meet people (.) to find the way through society and (.) and of course there are few things that difficult and some that are not difficult (.) but overall I think it's quite easy (.)
R: What to you say by difficult?
P11: Umm (0.2) OK (.) there is a few err (0.2) cultural differences (.) which coming from Europe (.) I have difficulties to (0.1) to (0.1) adjust to umm (0.1) mainly the fact that Thailand is a very hierarchical society (.) umm (0.1) when it come to age differences (.) and the status and the society (.) who you are in society? very hierarchical (/) which it's not so much like this in Europe (.) and this is something which (.) sometimes can be a little bit difficult (.) for example (.) in the work environment when you (0.1) when somebody tells you that the meeting is tomorrow (.) but in reality the meeting is today (.) but you cannot say because the person is older than you (.) so (.) you have to find a way (.) diplomatic way of correcting the other person (.) umm (0.1) this is the thing that I'm not used to it (.) but I mean. you know (.) these are not the main difficulties (.) you just have to know different cultures and try to respect them (.) to adjust it (.)
R: How adjusted you feel you are to your job and your responsibilities?
P11: How adjusted? umm (0.1) well (.) I don't think err there was much adjustment needed (.) the job I have to do is predictably defined (.) it was a learning process at the beginning (.) because I wasn't familiar with the field (.) with the subject err (0.1) of my job (.) So (.) there was a lot of learning involved (.) but now that I know the whereabouts of the job I umm (.) adjustment (.) let say 2 months adjustment time (.)
R: What is your background?
P11: I studied international relations (.)
R: And you come here to work with the *** project.
P11: With the *** (.) yes (.) I don't have *** background (.) or let say I don't have particularly development background (.) development *** (.) It would have helped to have that background (.) but well (.) I had to read myself until I got here (.)
R: What is your most impressive cultural experience while working internationally?
P11: Err (0.3) my most impressive cultural experience (.) umm (0.2) it's (.) working internationally it's got to be Thailand (.) because the other places I've been to aren't umm (0.1) quite different from my own country as Thailand (.) I mean I live in Switzerland (.) I live in England (.) and so on (.) these are quite similar to Germany (.) Thailand is of course quite different and the (0.1) the way of life here (.) the cultural differences are (.) are (.) are so striking (.) they have left a last impression on me (.) I can say (.) I think (.)
R: Not any particular...
P11: I guess it is the umm (0.1) I guess what I find most striking about Thailand is the (0.1) the (0.2) sort of naïve :::::e (.) not childishness (.) but childlikeness (.) which is a positive thing (0.1) of (0.1) the Thai people in general (.) I found that coming from the country where people are serious all the time (.) and (.) and you know noone has time to smile at you (.) this is a huge difference which I find the people are (.) they much more relax about things (.) and much more playful about details in life (.)
R: OK. In you opinion, what strength the expat should have in order to adjust successfully?
P11: What strength? err (0.2) I think (0.1) you need to (.) to err (.) you need to be (.)
to be open-minded (.) but (0.1) more than open-minded you need to be (.) you
need to err (0.2) to be outgoing (.) err (0.1) if you are err (0.1) outgoing and
willing to err (0.1) embrace wherever the places that you’re coming to (0.1) then
I think you have good chances of finding the way (.) if you are (.) if you keep to
your self and umm (0.1) and expect things to be the way they are at home (.)
then (.) it would be difficult to (.) to (.) to adapt (.) because things are not the
way they are at home (.) I think that’s the point of going abroad to encounter the
things that are different (0.1) and to embrace them (.)

R: Is forming relationship with the local cultures one of your goal?

P11: Yes (.) totally (.) and I find it very easy ((SM)) because the Thai culture is very
willing to embrace err (0.1) foreigners (.) people are very (.) very willing to talk
to you (.) and to engage with you (0.1) and to enter to dialogue with you (.) if (.)
if you show some interests (.) umm (0.1) so I’ve found it very easy to (.) to (.)
err (0.1) you know (.) from some sort of err (0.1) relationship with the local way
of life (.) although (.) as I said might be superficial one because I hardly speak
the language (.) and I don’t know much about Thai culture or Thai err way of
life in general at all (.) you know more than just the sort of basic things that
every foreigner learn when he comes here (.) but anyway (.) initially (.) I think
it’s quite easy to engage with the local culture (.)

R: How about the Thai colleagues?

P11: Thai colleagues umm (0.1) are (0.1) are very err (0.1) are very (.) everything that
I said for the Thai cultures goes for the Thai colleagues (.) I’ve met Thai
colleagues here and I’ve spent a lot of time with Thai colleagues and umm (0.1)
they have been very helpful (.) and err integrating (.) me (.) into their lives (.)
you know (.) they would take me out to places and introduce me to places and (.)
and the Thai colleagues that work at the *** (.) they speak you know (.) well
English all of them obviously (.) so (.) it hasn’t been difficult at all (.) umm (0.1)
so yeah (.) I’ve made Thai friends very fast (.)

R: How about Thai colleagues in the government organisation? I’m sure not only
MOL.

P11: Err (0.1) well (.) my relationship with (.) umm (.) my professional relationship
with people from the ministry umm (0.1) is (0.1) rather informal (.) I would say
(.) friendly err (0.1) I didn’t find it’s difficult (0.1) or complicated (.) as I said (.)
there are some cultural err (0.1) particularities that (.) we have to take into
account (.) that you have to be aware but others than that it’s quite friendly and
quite uncomplicated relationship (.) I would say (.) professional relationship (.)

R: Even you have some difficulties about language.

P11: Yes (.) even though (.) you know the one that I’m in touch with speak English of
course I’m always (.) I’ve also been in touch with people who don’t speak that
well English but then :n you know (.) we are not in England (.) we are in
Thailand (.) if I went to Spain or you know (.) say France (.) I don’t think the
people in government will necessarily speak English there either (.) so (.) I don’t
think you can or should expect people to speak English (.) if you want to
communicate to the people (.) you should learn their languages (.) I’m only here
for 6 months so (.) so it’s a bit too short for that (.) but umm (0.2) even though
we might not have always some languages (.) we’ve always managed to
communicate through third party who will translate (.) and it always went very
well I think (.) I have to say in general I’m very impressed at how well English
Thai people speak (0.1) even simple people you know (.) taxi drivers (.) they
speak (.) the very basic they will understand right (.) left (.) straight (.) here (.) there (.) umm (0.1) and then other Thai colleagues of mine (.) they all speak well English (.) I think it's quite impressive (.) You know if you go Spain (.) I lived in Spain (.) nobody speaks English (.) you go to Italy (.) nobody speaks English (.) if you take a taxi in Madrid (.) the taxi driver won't speak a word of English (.) and you're here in Thailand (.) 1000 miles away and people speak English (.) I think it's quite impressive (.) It's great (.)

R: I think you're lucky.

P11: ((LG)) With the people I've met? ((SL))
R: How do you see the importance of developing workplace relationship?

P11: Workplace relationship with the colleagues? (R: yes) umm ... well (.) you know this workplace is not a typical workplace (.) just the *** (.) and err we are mostly expats working here (.) it's not the typical Thai environment (.) we are :::: an international crowd living (.) in a culture which is different to the one that we used to mostly (.) so (.) the expats community is quite tightness (.) everyone knows everybody (0.1) and you tend to spend a lot of time with the people you meet at work (.) outside work as well (.) even if you don't want to (.) you'll end up the same party (.) so you know you end up the same events (.) concerts and so on (.) so (0.1) some might like it (.) some might not (LG) it depends (.)

R: How do think what they say that Thai business rests not on know how but know who?

P11: Yes (.) that's very true (.) that's not only Thai (.) that is internationally true (.) some places more (.) some places less but umm (0.2) knowing networking and connection is still err (0.2) one of the most important factors in anything that happens in the workplace (.) it's more important (0.1) who (.) said something than what the person said (.) If I say something (.) no one might care about it (.) somebody else say and they were highest status in society (.) everybody would listen (.) so (.) umm (0.1) yes (.) networking is (.) is extremely important factor in business as in politics as in anything (.)

R: How different is your life style on this assignment from your home country?

P11: Very different (.) very different (.) my life style is completely different (.) I take taxi everywhere ((LG)) I eat out everyday (.) I err (0.1) I (0.2) have people (0.1) I have err maid clean my room (.) I have people do my laundry for me (.) and these are all luxury (.) I clean my own laundry (.) and I take taxi only I have to and umm (0.1) so I live a very very privilege life style here (.)

R: Compare between Thailand and Germany, you think which one suits you?

P11: Suits me better? to my working or general (.)
R: In general first.

P11: Umm (0.2) I can't compare the two (.) umm I can't say which one suits me more because I like both a lot (.) Germany is my home country and umm I enjoy spending my time there a lot (.) it's completely different from Thailand (.) so (.) I can't compare at all (.) umm having said that (.) I enjoy Thailand a lot (.) I enjoy living here and I would gladly stay here longer (.) if (.) if (.) if I could but I can't (.) I've accepted position in Scotland (.)

R: Which aspect of Thai culture are you most familiar with?

P11: Familiar with (.) the eating culture (SL) the eating culture (.) I'm more familiar with the eating culture for sure (.) because that's the culture that (.) I expose to at least 3 times a day and that I enjoy 3 times a day and that err ::r that err (0.1) I can understand (.) because I come from a country (.) I'm half *** (.) so (.) which
is a country where food is very (.) has a very essential role as well as it has in Thailand (.) so that must be food (.)

R: So, what do you miss most from your home country?

P11: Umm. (.) this is difficult question because (.) I feel pretty content (.) err (0.1) with err (0.1) with life here (.) maybe I miss (.) umm (0.2) I miss the (0.1) I miss being able err (0.1) to walk (0.2) after work on the street (.) go for a walk (.) going to the park (.) sit down at a coffee place (.) had a cup of coffee and these are things that we can’t do in BKK (.). BKK is not a walking city (.) if you want to walk (.) you either die of heat or pollution (.) so umm (0.1) so (.) so (.) so these are little comfort I miss (.)

R: How do you expect to be treated as an expat professional?

P11: Umm I (0.1) I (0.1) didn’t have any clear expectation (.) I just know that if you are friendly to people (.) they will be friendly to you (.) whether you’re expat professional or tourists or (0.1) whatever it is (.) umm that goes for everywhere (.) and then (.) I had some knowledge about Thai cultures (.) I know that Thai people are extremely friendly err (0.1) to foreigners especially (.) so (.) I have no worries at all (.) I know that as a foreigner if you (0.1) if you know (.) unless you behave outrageously err (.) impolite that you won’t be very well treated (.)

R: but in terms of working, people must expect something that, you should be treated as a superior or something?

P11: I should be treated as superior ahh (0.1) because I’m a farang? no (.) I (.) I mean again (.) I don’t work in a Thai company or Thai environment (.) This is (.) the *** (.) So (.). umm (.) we are international (.) I mean we are people from everywhere in here (.) Thais (.) Germans and err (.) that’s very international crowded (.) so (.) so (0.2) race really doesn’t play that much of important role (.) perhaps it does but I don’t (.) I don’t feel it does (.) I have Thai colleagues who are :::e very high positions here (.) who are my superiors (.)

R: The last question, can you please describe factors affecting your success in this international assignment?

P11: Describe what sorry?

R: Your success or difficulties in this assignment?

P11: In this particular assignment?

R: Yes.

P11: Umm (0.2) I would say umm (0.1) difficulties were the fact that umm (0.1) I had to pretty much create my own structure here (.) the job which I’m doing now (.) hasn’t been created (.) I mean (.) this job didn’t existed before (.) so (0.1) I came here and my responsibilities were not very clear (0.1) I had to create pretty much myself (0.1) and sort it out (.) that was one difficulty (.) the other difficulty was the fact that I had little knowledge about *** (.). Workplace related *** (.). *** matters (.) umm (.) on the positive side (.) umm (.) success was the fact that despite the difficulties (.) it turn out well at the end (.) whatever err (0.1) responsibilities I got given I think (.) I manage to handle them in a satisfactory way and umm (0.1) they were few positive outcome (.) positive achievement which I can look back on at (.) I learn a lot (.) I learn a lot not only my subject but about how international organisation works (.). how ministry works and so on (.)

R: Do you see the weakness of the ministry you work with?

P11: A weakness of the ministry or a weakness of this place?

R: The Ministry of Labour.
P11: The weakness of the MOL (.) umm (0.2) I have been working with one department only (.) of the MOL which is a *** and umm (0.2) that department has been (0.1) very dedicated err (0.1) with regards to the course that my office work for which is *** (.) so because of that (.) I had rather positive experiences (.) umm (0.2) we have a very good connection with a partner at *** (.) umm they share our concern and umm cooperation (.) it has been more than easy because of that (.) we don’t need to convince them (.) umm (.) they understand the issue at the stake (.) and we have made several projects together (.) err (0.1) in *** province and so on (.) we have been worked on project together (.) so (.) I’ve found cooperation very easy (.) but (0.1) I have a very limited err (0.1) knowledge of (.) of the MOL (.) because I’ve been only worked with one department which shares my view anyway (.) so umm (.) perhaps my view would be less positive if I spend more time here (.) or more time working with the MOL (.) but I understand I can’t say anything negative at all only positive (.)

R: Why you say it might be less positive if you stay here longer?

P11: Because err (0.1) because I might err (0.2) I might work on other project (.) where I find cooperation more difficult (.) but the project that I’ve been worked on (.) I’m very lucky (.) the cooperation was great (.) whenever there was an issue err (0.1) whenever had a query with the ministry (.) I would get in touch with err (.) my contact person at the *** (.) she would always be helpful and (.) and we cooperate very well (.) we just invited the minister herself (.) to one session organising at the *** Conference (.) the minister is attending (.) so cooperation really goes quite smoothly (.)

R: Congratulations. Do you have anything you’d like to add?

P11: Umm (0.1) well other the fact that I would like to stay longer in Thailand and I enjoy my time very much here (.) umm (.) I think that is most important thing (.) yeah (.)

R: OK. Thank you very much.
This respondent participated in the pilot study in which some questions prepare for the in-depth interview, were already responded. Therefore, those questions are not asked again here. Some responses from the questionnaire follow this interview script for the completion of information.

R: When did you start working with the MOL?
P12: (0.1) I think I started in (0.2) 2001 working with the MOL on *** issues (.)
R: Before coming here, have you received any multicultural education or training?
P12: A little bit (. ) umm (0.1) I studied (0.1) *** in Germany and France (. ) I had a lot of foreign experience working in other countries (. ) so (. ) I think it’s through (. ) my exposure to different cultures umm (. ) within Europe and outside Europe (. ) err (0.2) was a sort of training or an experience (. ) but in terms of explicit multicultural training (. ) I’ve received a little bit during my postgraduate study (. ) development management was one component on (0.2) on (0.2) on intercultural communication but very little (. ) I did some exercises (. )
R: I’ve heard that in Germany, they provide the course for people who are going to work abroad.
P12: Mmh (. ) mmh yes (. ) but I think this is only the case for (0.1) when I started it used to be only the case for (. ) German working in German technical cooperation programmes (. ) not too much (. ) they went (. ) to work with the *** system (. ) but I went to the *** which provides training and development management and err (0.1) we had one and a half day session (. ) err during a whole period of 9 months of intercultural communication (. )
R: Do you find it useful?
P12: I should say because (0.1) I think intercultural communication or training is very much related to the cultures you interact with (. ) and what you can do in such training (. ) I suppose (. ) I’m not an expert on this (. ) is to raise awareness about communication different interpretations of (0.1) culture codes or (0.1) form of interactions like a general awareness of how (0.1) people communicate (. ) and how people understand (. ) messages from other persons from other cultures (. ) they can be addressed but specific cultural issues cannot be addressed (. ) unless really focus on a particular country for example or language (. )
R: In the questionnaire (. ) you’ve mentioned about intercultural communication and you said there are some … that your national counterpart doesn’t know the priority of their work (. ) thing like that=
P12: =Did I? (0.1)
R: =Something like that or they have some frustrations that they didn’t open enough to tell you what’s going on and this caused some unnecessary delays.
P12: ^^^ that question was I was referring (. ) but what I see certainly (0.1) at the chance that needs to be addressed or needs to be aware of is that (0.1) umm (0.2) due to my inability of speaking Thai (. ) and due to different form of expressing frustrations (0.1) it’s (. ) very hard sometimes to understand (. ) underline problems or ongoing problems for me as a foreigner (. ) for example (. ) I attended planning meeting (. ) advisory board or steering committee meeting on *** and (0.2) there’s a disagreement on the proceedings of the procedures (. ) this is very good and my experience hardly ever be (0.1) explicitly umm (0.1) make clear or would hardly ever been expressed on the Thai government side
and umm (0.1) some issues might be raised in Thai and I don’t understand (. ) I had repeated experience that I left the meeting in good spirit and I thought wow that’s a great meeting and we all came to understanding and agreement and then I’m being told our national project talk about national programme officer umm (0.1) what the issues that are unsolved actually are (. ) that’s one problem (. ) sometimes people say yes (. ) and then afterwards (. ) they inform someone else the national programme coordinator not national programme officer umm (0.1) that they don’t agree (. ) that’s another problem or another issue (. ) challenge (. )

R: And so, how adjusted you feel are to your job and responsibility?
P12: Hmm?? adjusted? that’s hard to say (. ) you need to ask other people about my interaction with the MOL ((SM))

R: No, no, no. From your perspective.
P12: From my perspective? (0.2) I’m adjusted (. ) yeah?? to a certain extent that (. ) I (0.2) have (0.1) learned over the years (0.1) to read (. ) and to weight certain passions by my counterparts (. ) so I would not necessary read them in the same way (. ) as few years ago and would be a little bit more realistic in the interpretation of (0.1) whatever the statement has been made (. ) and I think I still need to learn a lot in terms of patience (. ) and in terms of (0.2) in terms of finding a right balance between (0.2) assisting in (0.1) activities and expecting (0.1) the counterpart to do certain activities by themselves (. ) but there is probably always subject to negotiation (. ) yeah (. ) this is something I could improve on (. ) you know what I mean?

R: How have you feel about experience of living and working in Thailand?
P12: How? (0.2) it’s fascinating experience and (0.1) I think I have (0.1) also personally learned a lot in terms of (0.1) err (0.2) interact with people and I think I less judgemental because of my exposure to different culture (. ) I observe adults (. ) making immediate conclusions (. ) without passing adjustment (. ) which is good and bad I suppose (. ) and (0.3) Thailand is a wonderful country (. )

R: Is that for working and living?
P12: Yes (. ) certainly (. ) yeah (. ) I have excellent working experience in Thailand (. ) umm (0.1) I’ve seen people being personally very. very committed to specific goals (. ) ideas particularly (. ) when it came to the informal level like the role of networks (. ) and personal relations are incredibly important in my point of views (. ) my experience with people from the government or from the other organisations (. ) that has been quite a::: a strong experience which I think it’s different from some western countries (. ) incredibly (. ) seems to be incredibly important to have very good relations with individuals with whom you (. ) work together to a certain and (0.1) in a country I’m from Germany you would much more rely on formal processes (. ) I guess (. )

R: Therefore, forming relationship with the local culture is one of your goals in working here?
P12: Not a goal (. ) it’s a means (. ) I mean it’s umm (0.2) I don’t know what my (0.1) I (. ) I find it’s difficult to say what my goal is here in Thailand (. ) I mean I live here (. ) right? in the moment it’s my home (. ) so (. ) I don’t have a goal or clear objective (. ) I just happen to live here (. )

R: Your goal for this job, this assignment.
P12: My (. ) my goal for this assignment is (. ) is certainly to (0.2) to address *** and to try to (0.2) help *** (. ) this is my goal and I think the communication aspect that I’m in to the end and integrating into culture and of course I have to
understand (0.2) the least an attitude and working processes (0.1) in order to reach my goal (.)

R: In your opinion, what strength the expats should have in order to adapt successfully?

P12: What? Strength? do expatriate have?

R: Should have=

P12: =Should have (0.2) I think experience in itself (.) err It’s very helpful to adapt to different cultures (.) you’ve lived a long period of time you might find it’s easier to (0.1) to adapt to another culture when you move on (.) precisely because you maybe less judgemental (.) and are more able to think out of the box of where you are from (.) yeah (.) of course the context you’re originally from (.) experience is very helpful (.) umm (0.2) mean requirement also too? Listening skill (.) self- criticism or self err (0.1) certain modesty that’s important (.) asking for feedback is very important (.) that’s why it’s important to have our programme officers (.) like for Thailand (.) umm (.)

R: How about language?

P12: Wow (.) I mean I would say no (.) it’s very important to speak Thai but I don’t (.) so (.) I don’t speak Thai (.) but it would be a great asset (.) I mean language carries much more than just words carries (0.2) understanding of culture (.) right? and if I speak in English I (0.2) I’m (0.1) adapting a little bit to English or American cultures while speaking (.) it’s not just the translation of words from German into English (.) so (.) it helps understanding in such a culture and it also (.) I mean as I said earlier you lose a lot of information by being not understand what being said particularly between the lines (.) and umm (0.1) speak the language helps of course (.) and (.) err (0.1) certainly it’s very important (.) It (.) it’s (.) it’s (.) The counterparts always appreciate if you speak the language (.) I think foreigners speak Thai (.) is always great appreciated (.) That’s my experience (.) when I see other speaking in Thai (.) I hardly speak Thai so (.) and I think that helps also (.) speaking a language of the country where you live and show interest in the country (.) and show appreciation (.) and I think it helps also (0.1) you reaching the goal of (.) I don’t know your goal (.) you may have in the country for example (.) in the area of work (.)

R: What is the best way to create good relationship with the Thai colleagues or Thai people in general?

P12: (0.2) really depends on the context (.) I mean (.) it’s (.) I mean working with another bureaucracy requires different things than working with a Thai NGO (.) working with colleagues in (.) within (.) this organisation requires different skills than working with the MOL (.) so (.) it’s really I mean it’s not just a culture (.) It’s also like organisational context (.) So it’s very hard to say what belongs to (0.2) to what (.) I think (.) I think umm (.) modesty is important (.) umm (0.3) hold on umm (0.3) I’m just thinking now about things that not common like particularly cultural specific it’s very hard to say (.) of course (.) being responsive this is also applicable to any other cultures (.) and intra-culture (.) like my own culture is very important to response to request and reliable of things but this is not cultural specific (.) umm (.) I think=

R: Is this also related to MOL people?

P12: What? what kind of skills? I just said modestly and sense of humour (.)

R: Sense of humour. patience and=

P12: =modesty (.)

R: Is it applied to them?
P12: definitely (.) it's very important (0.2) from my perspective I have certain goals (0.1) and I want to achieve them and (0.2) umm (0.2) my priorities might not be their priorities (.) so (.) I need to find ways of (0.2)=
R: = compromise?
P12: of compromise yeah (0.1) compromise is very important here I guess (.) and (0.2) I need to find the ways of (0.1) communicating my goal in a way that (.) my counterpart identify and share the same sense of urgency (0.1) what I find very difficult (.) and (0.2) you know what I find quite (.) difficult to assess is the question (0.1) to :::: what extent (.) we should actually compromise (.) not in terms of goals (.) but in terms of actions to achieve those goals (.) very simple example (.) you (0.1) organised together with the MOL (0.1) a workshop and *** requested a draft of a speech of the *** (.) this is something where I feel umm (0.3) that the true collaboration not happening because (.) we just put our words into the mouth of the government (0.2) which may show that the government doesn't really care about our concerns (.) which is I mean (0.1) that's alright (.) right? umm (0.2) maybe we can't afford anything (.) but I mean it shows that there is not much ownership sometimes (.) or it shows that in the name of I don't know (.) it is a technical cooperation (0.1) we exploit ourselves (0.2) too much and not necessary to what extent we assist (.) to what the extent to we (0.2) enter the equal partnership (.) which involves like (.) also responsibility of the counterpart (.) it's very much related to the issue of (0.1) having a sense of urgency (.) or idea of priority (.) identify the goal in which you work as a priority (.) I guess if the Thai government (0.1) accepts *** as an issue of priority then umm (0.2) it would then will translate (.) much (.) much great ownership (.) umm (0.2) yeah (.)
R: Since you've started working until now. Do you think the situation is improved?
P12: In what sense?
R: Sense of ownership.
P12: I'm not quite sure about that (.) I mean my direct counterpart certainly is very active umm (0.1) she's working very (.) very hard on *** issues (.) I'm not so sure to what extent the MOL has endorsed (.) the topic (.) I mean we move (.) we move ahead (.) *** umm but I don't know to what extent this is really own by the ministry (.) and so (.) it's very much stuck at the level of implementation of a few people who are *** and the rest I don't really know like political level I don't know to what extent they really bother (.) I mean we're in the post of adopting *** (.) but again there are delays (0.1) and umm (0.1) I mean (0.2) not legitimated we (0.2) push too harsh beyond the certain point (.) I mean it's not up to the ministry to (.) to (.) to release it (.) and to get it pass through the legal department or not (.) I mean we work certainly in terms of overall informants I think we have met progress (0.2) like with other agencies (.)
R: =Not the MOL
P12: =Like the media (0.1) a lot of media attentions in *** (.) with NGOs (0.1) and so on (.) but the MOL itself I don't know to what extent they are really ::::y active (.) to what extent I mean (.) sure we have err (0.1) the MOL usually ::::y there (.) when it comes to workshops err (0.2) at working level umm (0.1) my counterpart is incredibly active (.) umm (0.2) so (0.1) but (.) but beyond that's taking that up their own issue (.) I'm not so sure (.) the *** wasn't there (.) I don't know much what happening in the ministry (.) if *** wasn't there (.) probably not much happen (.) we have done training for provincial (.) all *** officers from all provinces have been trained on *** (.) it was great (.) umm
(0.2) the ministry has put aside its own funding (.) I don’t know where the funding came from for training activities for *** officers (.) but there’s a lack of strategy umm (.) to really use (.) training activities or training skills develop for *** (0.2). umm (0.1) luckily there are a lot of outside resources (0.1) there were funds for *** (.) *** fund (.) there used to be some *** funding (.) and through that umm (.) the ministry has done a lot (.) I mean they have translated and reproduced (0.1) materials but we’re out (.) producing by themselves they’ve requested (.) They are reproducing the *** by themselves (.) this is very good (0.1) but it’s with outside funding and I don’t think the top level (.) I don’t think the policy level is involved in this (.) the working level (.) yeah (0.2) that’s quite frustrating (.) and (.) coming back to the issue of culture of communication (.) it’s not very easy to understand at all for foreigners (.)

R: Why?
P12: Because (.) often we have events where the minister speaks (.) we had like (0.1) informal settings and (0.2) ceremony (.) the ministry’s always doing very well and expressing its (0.1) err (0.2) the needs to work on *** and so on (.) so (.) for someone who has passionate about this topic umm (0.2) might be easy deceived (.) which not at all their false because they don’t really understand the role of ceremony or umm (0.2) yeah (0.1) sometimes it’s gap (.) like the wishful thinking and the reality (.) you know what I mean?

R: Come to more relaxing question (.) how different is your life style on this assignment from your home country?
P12: My life style? to what extent (.) you have to go to details ((SSL)) very different (.) very different (.) I err (0.2) umm (0.1) I mean I meet international group of friends (.) before that my friends were largely from my home country (.) umm (.) relations are much more lose I think than before (.) I leave far away from my family (.) umm (0.1) I live as an expat that means I live in a culture of its own (.) The expats community culture (0.1) where you have a certain set up (.) values (.) and codes which some are only applicable to expats’ culture (.) umm at the same time (.) I do not live within the Thai culture (.) I’m stranger because I don’t speak Thai (.) I don’t have Thai family or Thai (0.1) partner (.) umm (.) so (0.1) yeah (.) this is quite very different and from the life style at home (.) very much more proud of err (0.1) I don’t know (.) I don’t want to say culture because culture is so wake (0.2) I’m not sticking out on this (.) being (0.2) like the odd one out (.) I much more integrate into the society in Europe (.) in Germany (.) in Thailand (.) umm (0.2) financially I’m well off in Thailand and different between my income and income of general populations much higher than it would be in Europe (.) that’s an impact on my life style I guess (.)

R: What do you miss most from your home country?
P12: Umm (0.2) food believe it or not ((SSL)) European food (0.2) I miss controversy (.) not in terms of negative sense but I (0.1) in Europe we controvert for all different opinions and things as challenge (.) in Europe from my lack of understanding of local cultures (.) and being unable to read between the lines umm (0.1) sometimes I feel like everything accepted the way it is (.) and in European context is much more controversy and critical spirit (.) and I don’t perceive it here (.) I don’t understand (.) also (.) in terms of the art (.) the arts are much more diverse (.) much more daring (.) and I find that in Europe I find that more (0.1) inspirational and (0.1) I miss that (0.1) refreshing sense of (0.2) challenging the way things are (.) here people (0.1) seem to be at peace with reality (.) They don’t express or they express the way I don’t understand (.) and I
miss my friends (.) I mean I have many nice friends here but I miss close friends and family (.) I miss seasons (0.1) you know it’s nice in spring time (.) autumn (.) I don’t like winter so much (.) umm (0.2) I miss forest (0.1) I miss being able to go into nature very quickly (.) very easily which is possible in most European cities (.) more or less (.) umm (0.3)

R: How adjusted are you to interact with Thai people in general? As you said you cannot read between the line…

P12: No (.) I think umm (0.1) yeah I mean that’s right (.) but on the one on one basis (.) it’s very well I think (0.2) I think so (.) It depends on my mood of course ((SM)) I mean (0.1) I’m not Thai I need to adjust whenever I speak with someone from another culture to a certain extent (.) you have to find balance between being yourself and whatever that means (.) I don’t know what that means exactly but being in you own culture and reaching out to another culture to come to understanding (.) sometimes I don’t have energy to do that the way I would like to do it (.) so (.) I mean it’s very easy to cocoon (.) right? (0.3) particularly (.) if you’re under stressed (0.1) but err I mean (0.1) superficially I think (.) I’m excellent (0.1) I mean my interactions with Thai people are excellent (.) wonderful (.) I like it (.) I mean my very first interaction (.) going to the market (.) joking with (0.1) those who sell some products (.) a little bit like the easy talk umm (0.2) exchanging smiles on the street umm (0.2) I love it (.) I find it much (.) I mean this is something I really like about Thai culture (.) the ease (.) which people interact with strangers (.) and with others and I feel very comfortable with that (.)

R: What aspect of Thai cultures that you most familiar with?

P12: That’s difficult to say what I most familiar with (.) I mean I’m familiar with Thai rude (.) if you regard that’s a part of Thai culture (0.2) I think I’m familiar with certain rude (.)

R: Rude??

P12: Objections (.) you do not putting the feet towards another persons or walking over the feet of someone else (.) things like that (.) they are not so (0.1) striking or important in daily basis but umm (change the tape) again how do you identify culture (.) I’m very familiar with the market around the corner (.) I’m familiar with (0.1) politeness but sometimes it’s hard (.) I’m too direct but anyway (0.4)

R: What is the most challenging for you on this assignment?

P12: On this assignment the workload is many countries I have to, to deal with (.)

R: How many countries now?

P12: Twelve (.) the workload is (0.3) in the sense of finding *** is very hard (.) that’s (0.2) but it’s (0.1) I mean I make progress (.)

R: What factors affecting your success or difficulty in this international assignment?

P12: (0.5) I do understand it (.) hold on umm (0.2) I think the important factor is to (0.1) have alliance (.) if you work for a country programme it’s hard for example it’s very important to have umm (.) to work with umm (.) Thai colleagues in the office to understand much better than I do what’s going on (.) as an expatriate (.) it’s very important to build trust (.) I think I can but it’s very important to build trust over a long period of time so that you are actually not a stranger (.) right? why on earth should I work on *** in Thailand or other countries? (.) people might ask (.) why? what is my interest in doing that (.) right? so I think (.) if you work only for (.) for a few years (.) on the topic people will (.) believe you that you are sincere maybe (.) maybe I don’t know particularly the issue which is not
believe that’s top priority (. ) if you’re an engineer and you’re really good in building bridges (. ) that’s not really matter if you believe in this bridge or not (. ) I mean what is necessary is your skills (. ) in the areas where you (. ) which are more political (. ) you need to do a lot of advocacy where you (0.2) have much (. ) much points to make in implementing programme in everyday you need (0.1) a trust of your counterpart (. )

R: So far you think you can build trust between you and your national counterpart well?

P12: You’d better ask them (. ) but I think it’s umm (. ) yeah (. ) I think they think I devote to this topic (. ) they probably think that I’m not focus enough on Thailand (0.1) responsive enough because I have so many other countries to deal with (. ) perhaps (. ) umm (0.1) yeah I think umm (0.2) I think sometime they think I’m a little bit (0.1) but I’m active they trust but they might think alright OK let them do (. ) ((SSL)) I mean they might think I’m energetic (. ) my work (. ) my commitment again not very controversial (. ) I’m not sure if I achieve ah (0.3) the priority from the Thai government (. ) I don’t really think so (. )

From questionnaire:

**Why are you interested in working internationally?**
Exposure to a variety of cultures; contributing to social justice in the context of globalisation; having a degree of responsibility which I would not necessarily have in my country of origin; belief in the role of the *** system.

**Did you anticipate any work-related problems before you began to work here?**
Yes. I had been informed about challenges of intercultural communication in Thailand (saving or losing “face” etc.).

**Have these problems come about?** Yes

**Have any others problems come about?**
Yes. Collaboration between my organisation and MOL does not always seem to be primarily guided by the concern for a particular technical topic being addressed (labour standards etc.), but by ulterior motives. Technical cooperation based on the assumption that an international or bilateral donor agency assists the Government in achieving certain common goals is, at times, illusionary (goals or priorities are not always shared; implementation is often too dependent on foreign intervention, i.e. lack of national ownership which may result in lack of sustainability). Problem solving is often guided by the principal concern of pleasing the disparate (non-technical, i.e. financial etc.) interests of all parties concerned rather than by the goal of achieving the best possible results from a technical perspective. The social importance of hierarchy and status in Thailand may enhance communication and collaboration challenges further.

**Were there any cultural areas of concern that you had when you decided to work internationally?**
Yes, related to inter-cultural communication. See above. While issues of national capacity may be more important with regard to pursuing a jointly agreed goal, it is at times very hard to ascertain what the priorities of the national counterpart are. Concerns and frustrations on the side of the national counterpart are never being openly addressed, which may cause “unnecessary delays” (seen from a western perspective!) in
the process of project implementation. Lack of national ownership (partly because principal reservations about the identification of a problem had not been openly raised in the first place) often leads to demands from the part of the national counterpart regarding the fulfilment of tasks that officially belong to the core responsibility of the national counterpart.

How do you expect to be treated as an expatriate professional?
I should be evaluated based on my technical contribution to the solution of a commonly identified problem. It is my own responsibility to try to understand and adapt to prevalent communication patterns in Thailand.

Do you feel you are being treated appropriately at the moment?
Yes. On the one hand, I am treated with a degree of respect, which I would not necessarily encounter in other parts of the world (e.g. Europe). On the other hand, except for the relations with my direct counterpart at MOL, I am not always sure if concerns, problems etc. are addressed openly (which could be an indicator of a lack of respect/trust on a more substantive level than that of official status). At times, I feel that my performance is being measured on the basis of standards much higher than those that seem to be applied to my national counterparts.

Do you think it is helpful to understand different insights, approaches, values and preferences for different performance at work when people from different national/cultural backgrounds are working together?
Yes. This is crucial, but very difficult to achieve. Understanding the “different insights, approaches, values and preferences for different performance at work” requires an understanding of both cultural communication patterns and of interests that may define these differences.
R: How long have you been working with the ***?
P13: One year and eleven months.
R: And how about the MOL?
P13: (0.2) err Thailand?
R: Yes.
P13: The same.
R: Before you coming here, have you work in other countries?
P13: Yes. (0.2) you must know it's in the South Pacific (0.2) next to *** (0.2) I was working for *** and err (0.2) on the topic of youth (0.1) youth err (0.1) development activities.
R: For what organisation?
P13: I was a Japanese volunteer (0.1) sent by Japanese government like US Peace Corp.
R: Is it***?
P13: Yes (.) the programme is called *** (.) which is one of ***'s programmes (.) I was not ***'s err (0.1) officer but the member of their programme (.)
R: Why are you interested in working internationally?
P13: Err (0.3) I (0.1) must interested in social issues (0.1) when I was in undergraduate (.) and then I was working for the (0.2) issue of immigrants from Thailand and (0.2) then I was working for a case - code case (.) so (0.3) one accident (.) incident in my province (.) then my friend knew that I want working activities in social issues (.) so (.) she asked me if I want to go to Nepal and Vietnam for the ::e health education programme as a volunteer (.) so (.) I joined (.) and that was my first time to go to overseas and work with the foreign countries (.) people (.) so (.) it was quite interesting (.) opening experience for me (.) so (.) I want to continue to work the overseas in that area of development (.)
R: And what is the reason that you come to Thailand?
P13: Err (0.3) I (0.1) I wanted to work in this region (.) I (0.1) don't think it's good idea for me to work in the South America (.) Central America (.) Eastern Europe (.) West Africa because I don't speak their languages (.) I don't speak French (.) I don't speak Spanish (.) And then (.) if you go to err (0.1) and then here in Southeast Asia (.) the (0.1) people speak English (.) English is the working language and those err (.) presence of Japan is higher than other areas where we have more connections with Japanese err (0.1) government and also access to many things including donors (.) so I wanted to work in the Southeast Asia (.) so (.) when I was studying in the ::e err Masters degree (.) I visited UN organisations (.) bilateral organisations (0.1) in this region and I interviewed some err (0.2) work office err (0.1) professionals in the UN organisations (.) then (.) I thought the ::e working for the *** (.) for the *** is interesting (.) so (.) that's why I chose (.) not Thailand (.) but the organisation plus the topic that I work with (.)
R: Before you coming here, have you received any multicultural education or training to help you to adjust to the new environment? Even though it's in Southeast Asia but there must be something different.
P13: Yeah (.) yeah (.) yeah (.) I think my experience in ** (.) was very useful (.) umm (.) I was living in remote Island where only 2 Japanese (.) Err (.) 2 other
Japanese are also volunteers and I was living in the compound of government officers (.) surrounded by the local people (.) I work with the local people (.) spoke local language (.) and there (.) there are social behaviours err (.) very different from what I have (.) what we have in Japan (.) or in other developed countries (.) so (.) and then we didn’t have (.) I didn’t have the budget (.) which come with me (.) I work for their organisation (.) so we had a problem in the budget and we had to negotiate (.) so (.) the situation is very different (.) If you work for the international organisation (.) bilateral organisation you have budget and then you can use this budget for the (0.1) leverage of your work (.) I couldn’t do it (.) so (0.2) the working there required a lot of patience (.) a lot of planning (.) so that’s was big experience for me but comparing to that err (.) here the (0.1) people I work with much higher level and they’re professionals (.) they can speak English (.) and the people in Thai government often have err education in overseas (.) I don’t (.) err (.) I don’t have a lot of culture shocks (.)

R: So, you feel more comfortable when you come to work here, compare to ***.

P13: Yes (.) and (0.1) yes (.)

R: You didn’t get any particular training before you come here?

P13: No (.)

R: How about your family or your spouse? Do they travel with you here?

P13: Err I’m err single (.) I’m alone here (.)

R: Did you anticipate any work related problem before you began to work with the MOL in Thailand?

P13: (0.2) No (.) I mean for example since we are the third party (.) decision making process is in the hand of politicians of Thailand (.) and then the planning err (0.2) the activities are often in the hands of the (.) the government officers of Thailand (.) and we are the third person who facilitates or maybe help (0.1) to develop the capacity of different areas (0.1) so (.) at some points (.) our intervention (.) the area of our intervention is limited (.) we cannot go work with the Thai government until the (0.1) end of the policy (.) for example (.) we can work but the (0.1) always there are political issues (.) I mean (0.1) the policy is not made of 100% err (0.2) err (0.2) something policy is not made of things that can be solved by scientific issues (.) always sometimes you have to decide (.) which is the work of politician (.) and we can safe in that area (.) so (.) in that sense (.) we have limitation but I don’t think that’s a problem (.)

R: And, how adjusted you feel you are to your job and responsibility?

P13: Can you make that question more specific?

R: OK. How adjusted you feel you are, I mean do you satisfy with your job and your expectation from the job so far?

P13: OK (.) Err (0.2) I think there are basically two ways (.) for working for the international organisations (.) one is umm (0.1) rather ::::r raising awareness (.) of politicians or (.) the government officers (.) so (.) you organise seminars (.) you go and give presentation (0.2) and (0.2) on the other hand (0.1) you have some technical assistance activities (.) you work with the government (.) you work (.) you calculate together (.) you draft the role together (.) and you (0.2) identify the (0.2) the problem of the organisation programme and fix them together (.) so there (.) I think two ways of working for the international organisation and (0.2) and (0.1) in terms of err (0.3) organisational structure (.) this too requires two different structures (.) yeah (.) if you are more on the side of the create awareness (.) you need umm (0.2) you need the people in higher position and talk to the ministers (.) and (.) you don’t (0.1) you’re not required to
know the technical details (.) on the other hand if you on the technical assistance (.) you have to know that technical details (.) and you have to have a lot of researchers (.) officers in (0.1) the (0.1) younger positions (.) not senior position and I’m in the latter (.) latter half (.) latter side of the (.) the activities (.) so (0.3) in that sense I feel the (0.2) the organisation is not very supporting (.) and the (0.1) technical assistance activities (.) because I have to have 5-10 co-workers to do the work that I’m doing (.)

R: Do you mean here or … ?

P13: Here (.) yes (.) I have to have my unit (0.2) yes (.) I think that’s fair to say (0.2) and (0.2) so I end up like working like 15 hrs a day (0.1) and I think it weight to the budget constraint of the organisation (.) so we have say (.) growth of the budget we can’t increase a number of people (0.1) and that’s why maybe they would like to increase younger officers but they can’t (.) also (.) the (.) before *** had the permanent employment (.) which they hired people for the permanent contract (.) so it’s difficult to fire a lot of people (.) If you get older *** salary never decrease (0.2) and a lot of portion of the regular budget is to pay (0.5) so (0.2) yeah (.) so we don’t have budget increase (.) we don’t have many people (.) that makes us very difficult to work in technical cooperation area (.)

R: But sometimes they don’t expect only budget. They also want your technical expertise…. I mean, the Thai organisation.

P13: Ahh (.) Thai organisation (.) I though your question was if I have a frustration with *** organisation (.) is that right?

R: Sort of and also want to know your feeling with the MOL or the organisation you work with. ***, right?

P13: OK (.) let me get straight (.) for my organisation *** (.) we have two activities (.) one is awareness raising of policy and one is technical assistance (.) technical assistance requires a lot of researches (.) and people who know that details (.) so (.) you have to have a fix organisation (0.1) but because of *** budget we don’t have err (0.1) permanent I mean regular recruitment of young people (.) and also because of the (0.1) employment contract that was made long time ago (0.1) which was the permanent employment (.) then (.) it is difficult to lay out those people who are in (.) the older (.) elder officers (.) therefore (.) that makes the *** difficult to hire young people (.) OK (.) so then (.) my concern is that the (0.2) we are in the situation where (0.1) it is difficult for us to provide good technical cooperation (.) I think that Thai government umm (0.2) in general (.) I guess (.) the government was OK for money and technical cooperation (.) But *** is not donor (.) we don’t give money (.) we give technical cooperation (0.1) and awareness raising (.)

R: Do you find any difficulty dealing with the MOL?

P13: (0.4) I work with umm the counterpart of mine (.) the *** (.) umm our services is actual the services for the *** (.) that’s our work (.) and (0.2) we (.) I have to say we have good relationship with *** (.) umm (0.3) they (0.2) do you want to know problem? problem umm (0.2) I don’t have a problem related to (0.2) I mean (0.1) I don’t (.) I can’t see (.) can you give me an example what kind of problem?

R: Language problem, organisation culture problem (.)

P13: Language problem we may have a little bit (.) yes (0.2) but some of them speak well English (.)

R: And the delay of the approval, according to many layers of approval (.)
P13: I think that’s our problem.
R: Your problem.
P13: Yes, we are very slow because the work is not very decentralised and the role and responsibility is not clear so we plan to produce and put forward we need some kind of approval from the head quarter but to whom it’s not very clear and how long should we wait is not clear because sometimes we don’t get any response. OK here is the draft therefore they say 3 weeks or one month sometimes you just don’t get any response and sometimes you can call but if you call too much that will affect your relationship with the person. I think that’s what I understood. I don’t think I’ve never heard the is slow.
R: How have you felt about your experience of living and working in Thailand?
P13: Working and living is pretty err  comfortable very safe people kind Err food and some other services are very cheap like taxi and the atmosphere is good yeah so if you compare to other countries in some countries you cannot walk alone during the night and if you go to most dangerous country you can’t even stop your car before you enter your house because that’s the most dangerous moment because people might come and shoot you and take your car away that kind of thing never happens in BKK and if you take express bus Friday night you can go to anywhere in Thailand and come back Sunday and those buses are very cheap and many places to go in Thailand a lot of diversity e-san north Thailand South Thailand beaches so I think in that sense Thailand is one of the greatest countries to stay.
R: And in terms of working.
P13: What do you mean working?
R: How do you feel with the experience working in Thailand compare to other countries you’ve been working before?
P13: OK in Thailand is not well developed so the communication is very slow and then Thai covers captures very limited so if you use hotmail it’s very slow and the access to high speed internet is very limited even in the office but in terms of the working environment issues umm in general Thai colleagues in general I mean it is true everywhere you have to be careful about people work with I mean this is not particularly the case of Thailand the same in Japan same in America you don’t want to mess up your human relationship in your office so you have to be very cautious.
R: OK. Is forming relationship with local people or local culture one of your goal?
P13: That’s right yes I choose my apartment in err the area I can see people’s lives and my apartment is very local at the ground floor the owner’s family is living so I can see the baby everyday and say hi and sometimes she cries I can talk to them in Thai and they can speak English
(...) so (0.1) that’s very nice (...) but I think you have to speak Thai language in order to know Thai people (...) 

R: Where did you learn Thai language? 
P13: Err (...) first half year I learn in my office (...) then I stopped (...) and I start here again (...) 

R: So, you can communicate in daily conversation. 
P13: Yeah (...) but the thing is that Thai is not working language (0.1) and my office is regional office have about ten countries (...) so (0.3) if I just work for Thailand (...) then I have a great incentive or (0.2) this is a must to learn Thai language like Japanese people working for the factories here (...) they can speak really good Thai but the (0.3) not really important to know or learn Thai (...) 

R: Your work portfolio is not only in Thailand. 
P13: Yeah (...) I work for Cambodia (...) China (...) Thailand (...) Laos (0.2) and Malaysia (...) 

R: What is the best way to create good relationship with Thai people? 
P13: Good way to establish relationship (0.5) umm (0.2) if I live like a volunteer (...) that would be the best way (...) some of volunteers here live in the countryside and live in villages and work with Thai government in very local level (0.1) and then (...) you are supposed to speak Thai (...) and you know people and they invite you their home and so on (...) but here (0.1) you come to work in the office (...) work very late (...) go home to sleep and come back to work (...) umm (0.2) we cannot do it (...) 

R: So, you hardly socialise with Thai people. 
P13: (0.2) I don’t socialise with Thai people (...) umm (0.1) but who are you talking about when you say Thai people (...) who are they? 

R: OK, I mean your Thai colleagues and Thai people in general. 
P13: Thai colleagues (...) I don’t really hang out with Thai colleagues here because they are much older than me (...) they have families (...) and most of them are women (...) I mean in their 50s (...) so you don’t hang out (...) not because they are Thai (...) they are different (...) They have their lives (...) They have to go home (0.2) so in that sense I don’t have Thai younger colleagues (...) therefore (...) I don’t hangout (...) 

R: How different is your life style on this assignment from your home country? 
P13: Err (...) very similar because my boss is Japanese (...) I’m working in the Japanese way I guess (...) 

R: Which aspect of Thai cultures are you most familiar with? 
P13: What kind of aspect does we have ... 

R: It depends. Some people told me food, food cultures. Some people said Thai people are very polite and they are very familiar with that kind of behaviour. Some people say that Thai people are always aware of social status when they interact with others. 

P13: Ahh yeah (...) so (...) the question is what I like most about Thai? 
R: What is your most familiar? 
P13: Umm (0.3) difficult (0.1) Yeah (...) Thai food (...) yes (...) I also think it’s err (0.2) interesting err (0.1) OK (...) Thai music (...) Thai TV commercial very interesting (...) I don’t understand Thai in TV (...) but some TV commercial really funny and (0.1) has a high (...). umm (0.2) how do you call it? high sense? For example (...) you want to present you want to promote your product (...) the way they make the TV commercial is very sophisticated (...) sometime humorous (...) sometime a bit of surprise (0.1) I enjoy watching Thai TV commercial (...) and also I think Thai
people have a great sense of art (0.1) if you go to the market (0.1) those products are very high standard in terms of the artistic sense (0.1) comparing to the other countries in the region (0.1) and (0.1) the way they use colour they use different colour not green (0.1) but green has I don’t know ten twenty kind of green (0.1) so they are aware of the differences (0.1) very nice (0.1)

R: I think it’s very similar to Japan. Japanese people are also very neat.
P13: Yeah (0.1) we neat (0.1) and we (0.1) we yeah we use a lot of colour we have (0.1) ten different red (0.1) ten different blues in Japan (0.1)

R: What do you miss most from your home country?
P13: Umm (0.3) friends (0.1) Here (0.1) Japanese restaurants in Thailand very nice (0.1) some as we have one in Tokyo (0.1) so Japanese friends (0.1) I miss family and friends (0.1)

R: Since you come here, have you gone back to Japan and visit them?
P13: Yes (0.1)
R: How do you expect to be treated as an expatriate professional?
P13: By whom?
R: By your colleagues here at the *** and also your colleagues at the ***.
P13: I’m now *** (0.3) My status in the *** is low (0.3) umm (0.3)

R: How do you expect to be treated as a colleague?
P13: I want to work together (0.1) I just (0.1) I think it’s very (0.2) I don’t think it’s productive if you go and say things and they just listen (0.2) err (0.2) I don’t think people learn from that kind of interactions (0.2) you make something together (0.1) and then there are issues you want to discuss and (0.1) if you make something together they understand the background (0.1) they understand process (0.1) they understand the importance of the issue (0.1) so they understand (0.1) and of course our analytic limited and where we can make the, the solutions for the problem (0.2) umm (0.2) and that’s my general working policy (0.2)

R: And what is the situation so far? Like you already said?
P13: Yeah (0.1) in terms of (0.1) I work with *** (0.1) The *** is (0.1) very professional (0.1) they have different divisions (0.1) they have roles and responsibilities (0.1) they have arrangement (0.2) necessary for each task (0.1) so (0.1) I learn from them so much (0.1) and for the *** the only problem is the (0.1) the (0.1) the training section is not in the *** (0.3) The planning section is weak (0.1) and usually planning section officers in the MOL which is not the case in Thailand (0.1) and we have to work with planning section but the planning section is weak (0.1) so that’s the only problem (0.1) so the (0.1) it’s not problem of Thai government (0.1) or it’s not problem of our organisation (0.1) it’s just the problem of the structure of the organisation of *** (0.3) the err (0.1) organisation for implementing *** so (0.1) running their business is the most important business for them so then (0.1) they have (0.1) so much work to do (0.1) so they cannot really spare some workforce for planning for us (0.1) for planning (0.1) then working with the *** maybe not as productive as working with *** because of that reason (0.1)

R: Can we say that this is the most challenging for you on this international assignment?
P13: What is the …

R: The most challenging problem doesn’t (0.1) doesn’t come Thai government (0.1) it’s the internal problem of the *** (0.2) for example (0.1) the (0.1) we have budget (0.1) *** budget (0.1) and almost of all *** budget (0.1) is used for people salary (0.1)
there's no budget for projects (.) therefore (.) you have to (.) find your donor if you want work (.)

R: You mean you have to find on your own.

P13: Budget (.) yes (.) so (.) the people end up with writing project proposals (0.2) and you don't have time for working technical work (0.1) and if you (0.1) always use consultant to do the technical work (.) your technical ability will be deteriorated or the organisation will not hire people who know things (0.2) but people who (.) know how to write project documents (.) so (.) the umm (0.1) core business is being lost (.) the *** (.) the *** organisations are hardly doing core business scheme (.) because they depend on so much consultants (0.1) consulting firms (.) here (.) money allocation (.) budget allocation (0.1) is the biggest problem (0.1) working issue (.)

R: OK. The last question. Can you please describe factors affecting your success and difficulty in this international assignment?

P13: Which assignment?

R: Assignment at the ***. Your work here.

P13: Work here depends on what?

R: On which factors? The factors that bring you the success or difficulty.

P13: OK (.) OK (.) I think it depends (.) The recognition depends on people (.) some people say (0.1) if you use (.) if budget on your project is big is good (.) some people say budget is not a problem (.) some people say umm (0.3) err (0.4) OK some people are keen on (.) finding big (.) establishing big project (.) some people keen on impact which is good (.) some people keen on more internal issues of the *** (0.1) OK (.) this is not for example working for certain issue doesn't require big project and doesn't bring big impact (0.1) of the outside organisation but it's important for your organisation if some people are keen on working in such issues (0.2) for me (0.3) success (0.2) I have been (.) I'm lucky to work with my boss who has very solid technical background (.) and we've been working along the consistence err (0.2) line (0.2) umm (.) so the (0.1) we've been carried out researches (.) we would like to carry them to the end (.) at least to present them to the (.) stakeholders in Thai government (.) and of course we hope (.) that the (0.1) Thai government accept our recommendation but (.) like I said (.) some issues include political decision so that we can't step in that area (.) so (.) the (0.1) for my contribution to the Thai government (0.1) for the extension of social security (.) I'm providing the scientific err (0.3) basis (0.1) which may (0.1) inspire some policy makers (.) then (.) I would be happy but I don't think that will make my new contract (.) I mean that doesn't have a direct relationship to my new contract (.)

R: How long will you be here?

P13: Until the end of the year (.)

R: OK. Thank you very much.
How long have you been working with the MOL?

Umm (0.2) I've been in BKK for about 4 years and during those 4 years I had a couple of activities with this ministry in particular. But also I've been in contact with other offices which is not in the MOL I think.

No. Before you coming here, have you worked in other countries?

Err (0.1) yes I've done some works in Laos and then I worked in Luxemburg where I'm from and then Germany for a few years.

Why are you interested in working internationally?

(0.3) umm I think it's the challenge, it's the diversity, challenge and it's also I mean issues you encounter are different when you working in other countries.

And is this one of the reason that you come to Thailand? Or it's the job assigned?

Well it's more I wouldn't say it's the point that I'm in Thailand actually I moved to Laos and then I met my former boss and then I came here for 6 months contract and somehow I get stuck in Thailand visited the and the work was very appealing to me so and I was properly contracted to stay longer.

Before coming here, have you received any multicultural education or training to help you to adjust to the new environment?

Err no I must say though that I'm from Luxemburg it's very small country and multilingual country with different cultures and being in present especially the French culture the German culture most European cultures and I've well I've travelled for the best in my life so I've been exposed to other cultures before I came.

So, it's a sort of the way that you prepare yourself to work in Asian country.

Well I wouldn't say I was especially prepared I mean I know there is training process about cultures or some activities for working natures but yeah it is obviously different than working in Luxemburg.

How different?

it's a different culture it's a different way to deal with issues and especially with social relationship I would say in Europe we are much more to the point and in Asia it's I mean you have things that you can't talk you can never reveal your emotion the way that you do in the West for example.

Did it make you feel uneasy when you first arrived?

Umm I wouldn't say uneasy I would say it's very easy it's very easy it can be frustrating sometimes sometimes you have impression that OK there is umm (0.2) you can't can't show your emotion huh sometimes you get frustrated and you have to respect polite and it's sometimes it doesn't help to resolve the issue you want to resolve.

How about your family or your partner, have they travelled with you when you work internationally?

No I'm here by myself.

And your family support you to come?

Umm not directly but I wouldn't say they are very supportive but they didn't oppose it either so it's more like my choice.
R: Did you anticipate any work related problem before you began to work in Thailand?

P14: No (.) I didn't anticipate any (0.1) any problem (.)

R: How adjusted you feel you are to your job and responsibility here?

P14: (0.2) I think (.) I've been in this job for 4 years and I think (.) I'm now fully adjusted (.) it took me (.) took me sometimes (.) to get used to working in Asia (0.2) to get used to the *** (0.2) it's my first posting with international organisation (.) so (.) it also takes some :::times of adjustment (0.2) and also the life styles (.) I mean I'm travelling quite a lot (.) working in different countries (.) so it took me a while I would say (.) 2 years to adjust fully (.)

R: And how have you felt about your experience of living and working in Thailand?

P14: Oh it's very (.) it's very positive (.) well (.) it's not all positive (.) but it's (.) generally (.) it has been quite nice experience and my work has been very successful I think (.) We have achieved (.) a lot of things (.) we have a very good cooperation with *** (0.1) which paged back to *** when the *** was established (.) I mean there is a close (.) close cooperation since the beginning (0.1) and I think the *** has also a good cooperation with the MOL in general (.)

R: You said about positive experience about living in Thailand. Can you give me some examples of that positive experience?

P14: It's just umm (0.2) it's just a comfortable life (.) I mean it's the climate (0.1) and it's the people (.) everybody somehow err (0.1) smiling (.) and then (.) it's easy to travel around and it's beautiful places to visit (.) in Thailand (.) and so (.) yeah (0.1) from that side I would say Thailand is a nice place to live (.) and I think every expert would agree (.)

R: What is your most impressive cultural experience while working internationally?

P14: Err (.) you mean in my current job?

R: Yes.

P14: In my current job (0.2) I would say (0.2) you mean professionally or personally?

R: Both. Professionally first.

P14: Professionally (0.3) it's difficult to say (0.2) I would say (0.1) it's my work in Laos (.) because it's very challenging (.) and it's (0.2) there's a lot of (.) responsibilities I would say on our shoulders (.) they're doing *** in Laos and umm (0.2) they rely somehow on the *** to (0.2) to assist them (.)

R: You mean both expertise and budget or only expertise?

P14: Err both (.) we have a big project in Laos (.) and that's a country (.) I mean it's a least developed country (.) and there's a lot to do in this country and so it's also very challenging to work in (.) much less in Thailand for example (.)

R: How about your living? What is the most impressive cultural experience?

P14: Umm (0.2) culturally :::y I would say (.) well the first time I came to Asia it was in 1990 (.) I went to Japan (.) that was my first contact with Asian culture and (.) that was a kind of culture shock (.) I still have a lot of good memory from that time (0.1) umm (.) otherwise (0.2) maybe the middle-east (.) I've travelled within the middle-east (.)

R: You've visited and worked in many countries.

P14: I haven't worked in many countries but I have travelled to quite different countries (.)

R: In your opinion, what strength the expats should have in order to adapt successfully?
Well, I think the first thing is cultural sensitivity. First of all, realising that things work differently in different cultures respecting each culture’s specific features and then trying to work in that context. Yeah, I think it’s fundamental. Is forming relationship with the local cultures one of your goals?

Forming relationship with the local cultures is one of our goals. Of course, you cannot understand the culture unless you interact with others and this goes to personal relationship. What is the most effective way to create good relationship with Thai colleagues and also Thai people in general?

Umm, with Thai colleagues you mean my office or from =
And also from the ***.

Yes, I mean from my office. It just isn’t easy actually. I’ve found out that it’s not easy working with my own colleagues. It is sometimes this culture differences coming your way. You want to get things done. You want to get things done quickly and easily. And it’s not always easy to operate in that context in that context. Now, it all goes to personal relationship. Maintaining good personal relationship on the professional basis of course. I mean we have like regular contact. We exchange information and I would say in my experience working with the *** is very positive. I mean they have been very helpful and in providing information and. And I mean the cooperation has been well. I think.

In which division are you working with?

I’m working mostly in the department. I think it’s called department of err. Technical studies and researches. So, I’m working with the people who work on financing study.

How do you think about what they say, Thai business rests not on know how but know who?

That’s generally true. That’s my first impression. I think that’s how this country works. It all works through personal relationship and either you know people or you don’t it’s. I have impression that the way it works is very good. I think also in government, it’s very similar.

When compared to other countries, you said you’ve worked in Japan and also in Laos, you also found the same experience like you’ve found in Thailand?

It’s different. It’s different or it’s similar. It’s silly nature but it’s different especially Japan is different. It’s more hierarchical I would say.

You mean in Japan or in Thailand.

In Japan I would say.

How different is your lifestyle on this assignment from your home country?

Oh, it’s very different. Because of my job first of all which requires me to travel a lot and working in international environment. But also just the fact living in Thailand far away from my family in a different climate and completely different environment so yeah my lifestyle is different from what I used to be.

But now you get used to it.

Well, I have been in Asia for 5 years now more than 5 years so I guess so. Yeah. I’m used to it now.
R: Which aspect of Thai culture are you most familiar with?

P14: That's kind of difficult to answer because I don't think I'm not very knowledgeable about Thai culture. I find it's difficult to penetrate Thai culture. I think there's a language barrier. I mean my Thai is not good enough to have a decent conversation in Thai. For Thais the same can't afford to have conversation in English. It's not for all but for most we've found.

R: Do you always socialise with Thai people?

P14: I occasionally yes but mostly with westerns. I mean experts I would say. I find it's I mean there is language barrier. I mean my Thai is not good enough to have a decent conversation in Thai. And for Thais the same can't afford to. I mean there isn't enough offer in English. Not for all but for most we've found.

R: What do you miss most from your home country?

P14: I would say fresh air and maybe the European culture. I mean the music, performances and literatures. I find it's not very pleasant. I'm in BKK and you have all the cultural institutes of European countries but still I mean the offer is limited. And of course my family and my friends. I miss them.

R: How adjusted are you to interact with Thai people in general?

P14: Well umm I'm not fluent in Thai but I get by. I think I figured out how things work in Thailand and I can talk to taxi driver telling where to go and without funny humour. I think I get around.

R: How do you expect to be treated as an expat professional? From Thai colleagues.

P14: I would say I would say with the same respect that I have for them. I think cultural sensitivity goes both ways. I think that for some Thais it's more difficult because this is their country and they haven't worked work abroad and they haven't had the same exposure. Let say western culture. And this is something I mean for me it's clear that maybe we have to adjust more than our counterparts if we are after all working in their countries. We have to take into account of this context.

R: What is the most challenging for you on this assignment?

P14: The most challenging. I mean professionally?

R: Yes.

P14: Professionally that's just just err. I mean there are too many issues at the same time and too many work items and yes.

R: Workload.

P14: The workload but also we're covering too many countries. We cover 12 countries and it just too much work.

R: 12 countries and you're alone?
P14: No (.) we are :::::e 4 in our team (.) but still if you want to do substantive work in the country (.) it’s not (.) not just doing workshops (.) we’re trying to publish technical reports and do really substantive work and that’s not easy because we have a lot of rather (.) more administrative let say err (0.3) bureaucratic type of (0.1) umm (0.2) work to do so (.) it’s not easy to deal with (.) work items (.)

R: Last question, can you please describe factor affecting your success or difficulty in this assignment?

P14: (0.3) the factors affecting success (.)

R: … affecting success or even difficulty.

P14: (0.5) umm I would say one factor of success would be (0.2) perseverance (.) you know you have to (.) keep going even if things sometimes don’t work out (.) you have to be patience and wait for the right moment (.) and because the contact we’re working is political sometimes (.) so sometimes you have to be patience and wait for the right moment (0.1) and otherwise (.) yeah I would say (.) good personal relationship I think is very important (.)

R: When you say good personal relationship, it’s just professional or even after work. Do you meet Thai colleagues after work sometimes? At the ***.

P14: Umm no (.) I don’t umm (0.1) I don’t have err (0.2) I don’t interact with my counterparts on the personal I mean (0.1) outside from work (.) I don’t relate with my counterpart (.)

R: So far you satisfied with the achievement.

P14: Yes (.) I’m very satisfied (0.1) I think (.) at least in my area (.) err Thailand is a country where we have achieved most (0.1) in last year (.) but it also relates to just (.) let say the political contact and things are moving in certain areas for the moment (0.1) and especially in *** (.) the landscape has changed dramatically in last year and we’re working in the part of this change (.) so I think in that sense (.) and we have (.) I think some impacts on this, on this change (.) on the direction of this change (.) so in that sense I would say (0.1) the cooperation between the *** and the MOL has been quite successful (.) ...

R: OK. Thank you very much.

P14: You’re welcome (.)