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Rapport Development and Native Language Use Between U.S. Advisors and Afghan Counterparts

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Abstract

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Advisory activities form a central element of the U.S. National Security Strategy to mitigate the need for employment of large military formations. The commitment of large U.S. combat formations has resulted in more than 6,000 fatalities since September 11, 2001; poor relationship skills were cited as contributing factors in 51 or more fratricide-murders of U.S. soldiers by Afghan compatriots in 2012. Informed by social exchange theory, servant leadership theory, and role theory, the Army conceptual rapport framework provided a lens for this phenomenological symbolic interactionism study of rapport between Afghan counterparts and U.S. advisors. Participants included 15 English-speaking Afghan soldiers, police, and government officials. Data from semi-structured interviews conducted via Internet or telephone were manually coded and analyzed for overarching themes. Findings indicated that mutual understanding and respect were principal components to building rapport, and rudimentary use of Afghan languages by U.S. advisors provided symbolic value that contributed to rapport development. Findings may contribute to positive social change by informing advisor employment policies, enhancing preparatory training, and improving relationships between U.S. advisors and the foreign leaders with whom they work.

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Dedication

This study is dedicated to my father, John J. Ryan, Jr., a man who cherished lifelong learning.

Acknowledgments

I wish to thank my family, friends, and colleagues for unwavering support throughout this doctoral journey. Special thanks go to my wife, Lei, for her patience, support, and understanding for the countless hours that were spent on academics, research, and writing this study. My sister, Maureen, and brother, Lou, were steady and consistent in their support and encouragement.

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Last, but not least, I must acknowledge the courageous Afghans who spent time sharing their experiences and perspectives with me. Their dedication to improving the conditions in Afghanistan was inspiring. Their contributions made this research possible.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the phenomenon of rapport between U.S. advisors and their Afghan counterparts through the lived experiences of the Afghans. This chapter provides background on U.S. advisory efforts, rapport, the theoretical foundations of the study, and the methods. I describe the antecedents of rapport including how Afghan counterparts' perceptions of the use of their native languages by U.S. advisors contributed to rapport.

By the end of 2014, 58 U.S. military personnel had lost their lives by Afghan soldiers in fratricide incidents (iCasualties, 2015); at least 50 fatalities represented bona fide murders of coalition soldiers. Fratricide is degrading trust between advisors and Afghans (Rosenberg, 2012). Bordin (2011) estimated that 6% of coalition casualties resulted from counterpart fratricide. Although absolute certainty about the motive behind fratricide incidents remains elusive, the cultural affronts and public denigration that shattered the rapport between the counterparts and their advisors apparently accounted for an unspecified number of those fatalities.

At the beginning of 2015, 11,000 to 12,000 U.S. personnel were Afghanistan. Although contemporary language programs lack focus, every soldier receives some language training prior to deploying, at an aggregated annual cost of $955 million (GAO, 2011). This amount accounts for 95% of the Department of Defense budget for language training. Despite the size and duration of the operations in Afghanistan, no defined objectives exist for language training (GAO, 2011). Language represents the largest symbol of a culture according to Kramsch (2013), which provides the reasoning behind

the emphasis placed on language proficiency in historical advisor preparatory curricula (Gardner, 2012).

Archived Army Special Forces doctrine indicated that rapport based on mutual trust, respect, and understanding contributed to a positive relationship between advisors and counterparts (U.S. Army, 1990, 2009). Many advisors promoted the idea that effective relationships enhanced personal security, but soldiers who routinely worked with Afghan soldiers demonstrated little awareness of the role played by rapport in personal security (Bordin, 2011; O'Conor, Roan, Cushner, & Metcalf, 2010).

Most contemporary research focused on U.S. perspectives and omitted counterpart perspectives (Hajjar, 2014; O'Conor et al., 2010; Zbylut et al., 2009; Zbylut, Metcalf, & Brunner, 2010). Bordin (2011) concluded that cultural rifts could lead to violence, and doctrine indicated that effective rapport can prevent misperceptions and lead to effective working relationships. In this study, I focused on counterpart perspectives on how to build effective rapport, including how native Afghan language use affected rapport.

Background of the Study

The United States continues to maintain advisors in Afghanistan, Iraq, and other countries. Although the campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq remain the best-known capacity-building operations involving advisors, the United States also embeds advisors in ministries like Kosovo, Mongolia, and Montenegro (Johnson et. al., 2015). The advisor programs represent a central element of the U.S. national security strategy that focuses on building the security and governance capacities of strategic partners as a means of

securing U.S. interests (Obama, 2010, 2015). Johnson et al. (2015) highlighted that capacity building is an effort to avoid the need to station large numbers of U.S. soldiers in unstable countries overseas. Advisor programs continue to be challenged by diplomatic hurdles and issues associated with recruiting and training effective advisors (Johnson et al., 2015).

Practitioner and scholarly interest in the quality of foreign security force advisory activities increases during periods of extended conflict. Ramsey (2006) provided historical perspectives on advisory operations from World War I to the present. Not surprisingly, practitioner articles spiked during and immediately after each world war and the Vietnam conflict, and is again spiking since U.S. and international involvement in Operation Enduring Freedom passed the 5-year mark (Ramsey, 2006).

As Ramsey (2006) demonstrated, academics produced studies on advisor effectiveness during Vietnam and in the current conflicts with significant gaps in between. Hickey and Davison (1965) provided rich insights into effective advisor practices observed during a 10-month qualitative study conducted throughout Vietnam in 1964. Hickey, an ethnologist familiar with the Montagnard tribes in Vietnam, observed interactions between U.S. advisors and indigenous soldiers and tribesman during the study.

Hickey and Davison proposed that rapport and language proficiency represented critical success factors. Advisors who were proficient in local languages and developed positive rapport demonstrated greater effectiveness than those who had not. Special Forces advisors reportedly demonstrated the highest incidence of rapport with their

counterparts among all U.S. advisors. Unfortunately, Hickey's findings were rejected by the Department of Defense due to the loss of his field notes during the attack on Camp Nam Dong (Hickey, personal communication, 2007; Ramsey, 2006).

Positive relationships in the form of rapport between professional colleagues translate into the influence that could enhance the favorableness that indigenous counterparts displayed toward active advisors. Chemers (1968) demonstrated the relationship between rapport, favorableness, and influence during an experiment involving U.S. and Iranian counterparts. Chemers coined the term *favorableness* to describe the effect revealed by counterparts who experienced positive rapport with their U.S. colleagues. Cross-cultural training and language preparation led to superior performance.

U.S. Army Special Forces in the late 1980s and early 1990s cited rapport and language proficiency as critical success factors (U.S. Army, 1990, 2009). That emergent doctrinal framework supported the training and evaluation of U.S. Special Forces personnel specifically tasked with advisory activities at the end of the Cold War (U.S. Army, 1990). According to that archived doctrine, understanding developed with foreign colleagues via mutual trust and respect formed the foundation of rapport. That doctrine also defined *rapport* broadly as the professional relationship between U.S. advisors and their foreign counterparts. According to the Army doctrine, rapport represents a dyadic social interaction between two people in a professional context. The U.S. Army (1990) addressed practitioners' needs but did not consider a scholarly foundation. The

subsequent investigation into historical archives did not reveal any foundational materials for that doctrine.

Doctrine written between 1990 and September 11, 2001 did not emphasize rapport as advisory activities waned in importance in the national security strategy during the 1990s (Clinton, 1994, 1998). Rapport represented a critical success factor in several recent studies (Phelps, 2009; Zbylut et al., 2009; Zbylut et al., 2010). Chemers' (1968) experiment linked rapport with influence. Ibarra and Andrews (1993) subsequently demonstrated that influence networks built through deliberate programs promulgate the perception of power and influence that affects how people make sense of their experiences. The compilation of these perspectives supports U.S. administrations intent on projecting power without deploying large force structure.

The overwhelming majority of contemporary studies of military advising activities have been quantitative. The findings supported earlier conclusions that rapport was essential. Most research studies included trust, respect, rapport, and mutual understanding between advisors and counterparts as discreet and independent variables (Phelps, 2009; Zbylut et al., 2009). However, these studies did not address covariance or interdependence between relevant variables. Each study considered rapport as significant to advisor effectiveness, but none provided a useful taxonomy for rapport.

Exceptions to the trend of confounding relationship variables were three quantitative studies on cultural cognition, trust, and innovation outside of the context of military advising (Chua, Morris, & Mor, 2012). Chua et al. (2012) hypothesized that cultural cognition leads to better cognitive trust, affective trust, and dyadic creativity and

innovation. Interactions in the form of conversation were shown to mediate development of affect-based trust (Chua et al., 2012). It is important to note that although several findings by Chua et al. occurred outside of traditional standard values for $p < .01$ or $p < .05$, the findings from these studies consistently demonstrated support for the correlations between cultural cognition, intercultural experience, cognition-based trust, affect-based trust, and dyadic creativity in intercultural dyadic relationships.

Chua et al.'s (2012) findings supported the hypotheses and consequently supported the previous studies (Chemers, 1968; Zbylut et al., 2009). Results published by Chua et al. also supported the conceptual framework posed by Army Special Forces doctrine, which posited that intercultural understanding between counterparts reduces preconceived biases and enhances rapport (U.S. Army, 1990, 2009). The use of structural equation modeling in three related but independent studies also demonstrated that certain aspects of rapport can be studied quantitatively, controlling for affect-based trust before rapport could be established (Sol, Beers & Wal, 2012).

Similar to Chua et al. (2012), who used structural equation modeling to study rapport and trust through intercultural cognition, Ihtiyar and Ahmad (2015) studied intercultural communication competence (ICC), customer satisfaction, and service reliability. Ihtiyar and Ahmad found a positive correlation between ICC and customer satisfaction. The authors also determined that individuals with higher ICC demonstrated greater respect and greater responsiveness than those with lower ICC. These findings indicate a linkage between ICC, respect, and rapport-building skills. Customer satisfaction scores also imply that foreign counterparts view such behaviors positively.

Language skills formed a central element emphasized in earlier reports and articles (Hickey& Davison, 1965; Ramsey, 2006). Zbylut et al. (2009) and Phelps (2009) reported language to be useful but not critical to advisors' success. Surveys were used to capture the perspectives of 583 recently returned U.S. advisors from Iraq and Afghanistan (Brunner, 2010; Zbylut et al., 2009; Zbylut et al., 2010). However, the data collection instruments referred to native language use only in terms of technical communication. The value of using a native language in building rapport and understanding culture or thought processes was not considered. Focusing on technical communication represented a significant difference from earlier studies that referenced language skills from a relationship-building context. Respondents considered translators and interpreters to be sufficient, rendering language proficiency less important.

Phelps (2009) surveyed U.S. advisors and their counterparts in Al Anbar province Iraq regarding overall advisor effectiveness. However, Phelps did not explore rapport or native language use. Phelps's use of leader-member exchange theory as a theoretical foundation led to an intense focus on trust between advisors and counterparts, but his research did not address the antecedents of the relationships.

Other researchers explored perspectives of U.S. advisors (Brunner, 2010; Zbylut et al., 2009; Zbylut et al., 2010). Brunner (2010) used the same data set as Zbylut et al. (2009) but used structural equation modeling to analyze the importance of intercultural competence to building rapport. Like Phelps (2009), Brunner did not attempt to answer questions regarding the antecedents to rapport beyond the impacts of intercultural

competencies. Hajjar (2014) offered observations from personal experience but did not triangulate or confirm those observations in a scholarly manner.

Glesne (1989) supported the perspective that rapport represented a dyadic relationship between the advisor and counterpart that was different from friendship. Researchers using leader-member exchange theory acknowledged the dyadic nature of rapport between professionals (Brunner, 2010; Phelps, 2009; Zbylut et al., 2009; Zbylut et al., 2010). The lack of foreign counterpart input into the contemporary body of knowledge introduces questions regarding the comprehensive nature of rapport between U.S. advisors and foreign counterparts. This lack of understanding extends to the role of native language use in the context of developing rapport between advisors and their foreign counterparts.

Problem Statement

The general problem was that even though up to 6% of U.S. direct-fire casualties result from fratricide in Afghanistan, the U.S. national security strategy continues to place great emphasis on advisor effectiveness to protect Americans and U.S. national interests (Bordin, 2011; Obama, 2010, 2015). Osborne (2012) alluded to a long history of U.S. reliance on advisors for national security. U.S. advisor effectiveness was clearly questioned following fratricide cases and other critical incidents in contemporary operations (Bordin, 2011; Zbylut et al., 2010). The United States continues to incur casualties and invests billions of dollars supporting large numbers of military personnel in stability and counterinsurgency operations in areas like Afghanistan and Iraq.

The DOD also spends nearly $1 billion annually on foreign language training without defined objectives or measures of effectiveness (GAO Report, 2011). Cultural incompatibility and poor relationship skills contributed directly to incidents of fratricide (Bordin, 2011; Ramirez, Personal Communications, August 26, 2004). Advisor effectiveness is a complex phenomenon affected by the relationship between the advisor and foreign counterpart (Brunner, 2010; Chemers, 1968; Zbylut et al., 2010). Most researchers addressed language use only in the context of general or technical communication, discounting how native language use affects relationship development. The lack of research on building effective relationships indicates a gap related to knowledge critical to advisor preparation in rapport and language skills (Phelps, 2009; Zbylut et al., 2010). Specifically, limited research exists regarding how speaking a native language affects building rapport.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological symbolic interaction research study was to explore what Afghan counterparts believe to be the antecedents of rapport and to identify, interpret, and report on what symbolic meaning foreign counterparts assign to the rudimentary use of a native language by an advisor during rapport development. Rapport is a dyadic social phenomenon representing a developing relationship between an advisor and counterpart. Whereas most contemporary studies addressed only U.S. perspectives, I examined how foreign counterparts perceived U.S. advisors' attempts to use the native language in military settings through the perspectives of counterparts' lived experiences.

Kramsch (2013) posited that language may be the largest symbol of any culture. I used a qualitative phenomenological symbolic interactionism design to explore whether effort made to speak a counterpart's language had any symbolic meaning. I wanted to determine whether developing a deeper understanding of how building rapport and using the native language benefits the advisor's mission, reduces U.S. military casualties, and promotes more efficient use of taxpayer dollars.

Research Questions

RQ1: What do foreign counterparts believe to be the antecedents to building effective rapport with their advisors?

RQ2: What symbolic meaning do foreign counterparts ascribe to their advisors' use of their native language and what effect did they perceive it had on rapport development?

Theoretical Foundation

Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory builds on a foundation of cost/benefits analysis. People engage in a continuous analysis to determine whether relationships are worth pursuing (Ribarksy, 2013). For intercultural military advisory relationships such as those between U.S. and Afghan soldiers, professional rewards, cultural factors, tribal issues, personal allegiances, and family security can all factor into the relationship calculus. Cultural similarities reduce certain transaction costs whereas cultural disparities raise transaction costs in relationships (Chang, Tsai, Chen, Huang, & Tseng, 2015). Although there is a

dynamic quality to each person's perspectives on costs and benefits associated with relationships, the cost/benefit analysis remains extremely personal in nature.

Immediate versus long-term rewards represent a significant factor in cost/benefits analysis. Every person must decide whether a relationship is worth pursuing depending on what he or she deems important at that particular point in time, including immediate gain and value amortized over a longer period (Ribarsky, 2013). Those preferences and decision criteria change throughout peoples' lives.

Servant Leadership

Servant leadership is an established theory that recently reemerged as an important international leadership theory. Servant leadership concepts date back to Greenleaf in the 1970s (Waterman, 2011). Waterman expressed the essence of servant leadership in terms of being mentor minded and focused on developing others.

Van Dierendonck (2011) applied servant leadership in international environments and developed the Servant Leadership Survey (SLS) as a means of measuring servant leadership traits. Van Dierendonck's application of servant leadership in international settings is consistent with Service and Kennedy (2012), who concluded that leadership fundamentals apply interculturally. Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) outlined eight characteristics that defined servant leadership: empowerment, accountability, standing-back, humility, authenticity, courage, stewardship, and interpersonal acceptance. Servant leadership includes effective interpersonal relationships that lead to mutual trust, respect, individual development, and increased personal and collective performance. Intercultural and interorganizational factors impact how servant leadership may be applied (Savage-

Austin & Oris Guillaume, 2012), but these characteristics align closely with the traits associated with effective advisors (Ramsey, 2006; Zbylut et al., 2009). The SLS advanced servant leadership to a point where it can be measured and operationalized.

Conceptual Framework

U.S. Army (1990) Special Forces doctrine provided a framework for rapport between advisors and foreign counterparts that informed the study. U.S. Special Forces soldiers maintain a reputation as premier U.S. advisors. Special Forces doctrine provided a definition of rapport and a broad conceptual framework useful in shaping the study design, data collection, and coding.

Archived Army Special Forces doctrine defined rapport strictly as a relationship between two people. The doctrine narrowed this definition using a context of a professional relationship between advisors and their foreign counterparts. Rapport could be positive or negative based on the nature of the relationship.

The doctrine further described the foundation for building rapport. Army doctrine defined rapport in terms of a conceptual foundation of mutual understanding, respect, and mutual trust. This framework accounted for application of cultural nuance allowing for use across cultural boundaries irrespective of the cultures involved. The Army Special Forces rapport framework is described more fully in Chapter 2.

Nature of the Study

Symbolic interactionism is appropriate for identifying, interpreting, and reporting whether foreign counterparts perceive that using a native language affects rapport development between advisors and counterparts. This study required an approach that

allowed for examination of individual perspectives and experiences (Charon & Hall, 2009; Patton, 2002; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Relationships between individuals depend on numerous factors and are affected by a person's views (Kram, 1988). Due to the personalized nature of relationships, the essence of rapport is very personal. Further, how a counterpart ascribes meaning to an advisor's attempt to speak the native language involves perceptions and assumptions that may impact their relationship. Understanding how counterparts perceive rapport and how symbolic meaning associated with native language use affects rapport are phenomenon best researched through qualitative methods.

Quantitative research is appropriate for examining relationships between discrete variables (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). Contemporary empirical researchers focused on advisor effectiveness and identified that numerous aspects of advisor activities are necessary, but did not address why specific activities were important (Phelps, 2009; Zyblut et al., 2009). Quantitative research is suitable for studying the relationships between variables, but was not appropriate for studying the essence of individual perspectives, as planned in this study.

Phenomenological symbolic interactionism was an appropriate design to study how counterparts perceive the nature of rapport and to identify, interpret, and report on the symbolic aspects of native language use and the associated impact on rapport development according to the lived experiences of foreign counterparts (Charon & Hall, 2009; Patton, 2014; Smith et al., 2009). Patton (2014) also highlighted that language is highly integrated with cultural perspectives. Kramsch (2013) posited that language is a

symbol of culture. The potentially symbolic aspect of native language use suggested that a symbolic interaction study, a derivative form of phenomenology, was appropriate for this study (Kotarba, 2014).

In contrast to phenomenology, case studies are commonly used to investigate events or processes, and narrative research is typically used to describe people's lives (Patton, 2014). A case study or narrative design could be used to explore the process of rapport development, the broader experience between advisors and counterparts, or the people involved. However, the nature of rapport, coupled with the novel or symbolic aspects associated with using a native language, indicated that a phenomenological design would be best to answer the research questions. Other research approaches would not have filled the knowledge gap in the area of rapport development and would not have explained how native language proficiency impacts advisor-counterpart rapport development.

Definitions

Foreign counterpart: Personnel from the military or government of another nation who are being supported by U.S. advisors (U.S. Army, 2009).

Military advisor: Personnel assigned to serve as advisors to military or government officials from another country (U.S. Army, 2009).

Mutual trust: The acceptable expectation between two individuals of how they will behave in the future (Selnes, 1998, as cited by Hashim & Han, 2015).

Rapport: The professional relationship between advisors and their foreign counterparts that lacks discernable lines of authority (Glesne, 1989; U.S. Army, 1990).

Ho (2011) emphasized that rapport is inherently subjective based on each individual's perspective.

Assumptions

Assumptions are claims considered to be true in the absence of supporting facts (Foss & Hallberg, 2014). Research assumptions may impact the reliability or validity of the study. There were three assumptions in this study. First, I assumed the antecedents depicted in the conceptual framework for rapport were correct. U.S. Army (1990, 2009) doctrine provided the conceptual framework without the benefit of scholarly support. Relationships between trust, understanding, and respect were not examined; hence the three antecedents were assumed to be mutually interdependent within the phenomenon of developing relationships between advisors and their foreign counterparts.

Also, I assumed there was symbolic relevance to the counterpart regarding the use of the counterpart's native language by the advisor. Implicit in this assumption was an additional assumption that there was some degree of consistency between how individual foreign counterparts viewed the use of native language use. This assumption was significant with respect to the choice of symbolic interactionism as a research design.

Scope and Delimitations

The study was limited to 20 participants or until data saturation was achieved. Participants from Afghanistan, who possessed experience working with U.S. advisors, composed the study sample. Three languages are primarily native to communities in Afghanistan: Pashto, Dari, and Tajik. All three languages are listed by the Department of

State's Foreign Service Institute as significantly different from English and correspondingly challenging to learn. The perceived differences between English and the Afghan languages contributed to the cultural perspectives about U.S. advisors who use, or attempt to use, Pashto, Dari, or Tajik. All study participants were functionally fluent in English.

Connelly (2011) described delimitations as factors that bound the scope of a study. This study was limited to Afghan leaders who were fluent in English and had experience working with U.S. advisors. The perspectives of these leaders, based on their lived experiences, characterized how people involved in Afghan government or security institutions viewed rapport building. Whether native language use impacted rapport development was addressed in this study. People from other cultures may view rapport development differently, including how native language use is viewed.

Limitations

Factors that limit the validity or reliability of a study constitute limitations (Patton, 2014). This study was limited by the cultural perspectives associated with the sample population. Different cultures may view relationships and the use or attempted use of their native language differently. Patton (2014) alluded to potential limitations associated with researchers interpreting participants' reactions during interviews across cultural boundaries. My extensive international experience provided the potential for bias; I mitigated this bias by studying the perspectives of Afghans objectively and by keeping an open mind, as suggested by Ihtihar and Ahmed (2015). A more culturally diverse study would be necessary to allow for broader generalizability of findings.

Context may also limit findings of this study. U.S. advisor activities may span a range of circumstances from simple training or advising in sedate settings to active combat situations. Although many aspects of this study may apply across different types of professional associations, such as consultants and their counterparts, the uniqueness of some military settings may limit the transferability of findings.

Significance of the Study

Findings from this study may inform the evaluation of rapport development and language use in other populations. Themes and symbols identified in this study may provide researchers with a foundation for evaluating rapport. Findings may be applied outside of military settings or outside of U.S–Afghan relationships. Questions, data collection approaches, and interview formats may be used to research other populations and to study rapport in other cross-cultural circumstances.

Significance to Practice

The results of this study may help the DOD save lives in advisory operations. Active advisory activities are a central element of the U.S. national security strategy (Obama, 2010). U.S. military advisors' improved understanding of effective relationships and rapport development may reduce the likelihood of massive U.S. troop formations in places like Afghanistan.

Insights from this study may assist U.S. government leaders in tailoring predeployment language training for advisors. This study provided a deeper understanding of how foreign counterparts view advisors who use their mother tongue.

Such insights may aid in refocusing language training objectives and improve rapport development skills. This study may lead to improved use of taxpayer dollars.

Significance to Theory

Results of this study may inform future research into professional relationship development in cross-cultural situations. Providing a deeper understanding of how foreign counterparts view native language use by advisors during rapport development may establish a foundation for further study into rapport development and advisor efficacy. Results of this research may also add to a scholarly understanding of rapport.

Significant parallels exist between military advisory activities and global consulting and leadership (Carter, 2013). This study may provide insights leading to future research into global leadership and consulting. Insights from this study may enhance the abilities of advisors in global environments to achieve positive social change.

Significance to Social Change

Many foreign counterparts interact with people from the United States only during advisory operations. This study on rapport and the role of native language use in building effective relationships may produce conclusions that could lead to improved practices that produce better international relationships and improve perceptions of people from the United States. Additionally, insights from this study may improve relationship building skills in the context of global leadership leading to positive social impact on a broader scale.

Summary and Transition

Interest in effective advisory activities is taking a central role in the U.S. national security strategy. Large scale deployments of U.S. general purpose forces to places like Afghanistan and Iraq are resulting in significant casualties and expense (iCasualties, 2015; GAO, 2011). Historical research and Army Special Forces doctrine emphasized that building rapport with foreign counterparts and speaking the native language were critical success factors for effective advisor activities (Hickey & Davison, 1965; U.S. Army, 1990).

Contemporary research supported the positions expressed in earlier research, except that language was considered only in the context of technical communication, neglecting the contribution of native language use to building rapport (Brunner, 2010; Hajjar, 2014; Zbylut et al., 2009; Zbylut et al., 2010). Most contemporary research was quantitative, which failed to address the antecedents of rapport and to consider counterparts' perspectives. In the dyadic intercultural social relationships that develop between advisors and their counterparts, the omission of foreign perspectives coupled with the paucity of research related to native language use in contemporary research constituted gaps in knowledge worth studying.

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological symbolic interactionism study was to describe the antecedents of rapport and to develop an understanding of how counterparts perceive the rudimentary use of a native language by an advisor during rapport development. The first research question addressed what foreign counterparts view as the antecedents to rapport with their advisors. The second research question

addressed how foreign counterparts' perceptions of their advisor's use of their native language affects their rapport development.

U.S. Army (1990, 2009) doctrine provided a conceptual framework for studying rapport between advisors and their counterparts. Servant leadership provided a valuable and appropriate theoretical framework that supported social interaction theory in the context of advisor-counterpart developmental relationships (Ribarksy, 2013; Van Dierendonck & Nuijten; 2011). In Chapter 2, I review the historical and contemporary research and frameworks that underpinned this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Literature searches for references on building rapport between military advisors and their counterparts began several years ago. Simple searches of military journals and interviews with former advisors evolved into searches across a broad range of topics. *Advisors*, *rapport*, *trust*, *respect*, *relationships*, *intercultural communications*, *cross-cultural leadership*, *servant leadership*, *coaching*, and *mentoring* were terms or topics associated with researching literature for studying this problem. This chapter includes the specific problem and the corresponding purpose of this research, the literature search strategy, theoretical and conceptual foundations, and reviews of historical and contemporary literature relevant to rapport and language use in military advising.

The specific problem is that cultural incompatibility and poor relationship skills contribute directly to incidents of fratricide (Bordin, 2011; Ramirez, Personal Communications, 2004, August, 26). Advisor effectiveness is a complex phenomenon affected by the relationship between the advisor and foreign counterpart (Brunner, 2010; Chemers, 1968; Zbylut et al., 2010). Most research treated language use only in the context of general or technical communication discounting how native language use affects relationship development. Critical incident reports described ineffective rapport and miscommunications leading to reduced counterpart performance (Zbylut et al., 2010). The lack of research into building effective relationships implies that a gap exists related to knowledge critical to advisor preparation in rapport and language skills (Phelps, 2009; Zbylut et al., 2010). Specifically, limited research exists regarding how speaking a native language affects building rapport.

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological symbolic interaction research study was to identify and report what foreign counterparts believe to be the antecedents of rapport and to identify, interpret, and report on what symbolic meaning foreign counterparts assign to the rudimentary use of a native language by an advisor during rapport development. Cross-cultural interpersonal relationships are inherently complex. Several factors affect intercultural competence (Shuang, 2014). Situational dynamics associated with U.S. advising efforts add to the complexities. Significant gaps in time between credible studies into advisor activities existed, which reflected a changing strategic emphasis. These factors led to the inclusion of subject areas such as national security strategies, leadership theories, rapport, foreign language training and use, cultural intelligence, cultural competence, social exchange theory, and role theory.

Figure 1 depicts the integration of topics that affect the development of effective professional relationships between U.S. advisors and counterparts. All of these factors become relevant when attempting to understand the complex dynamics of rapport development between military professionals separated by cultural and linguistic divides.

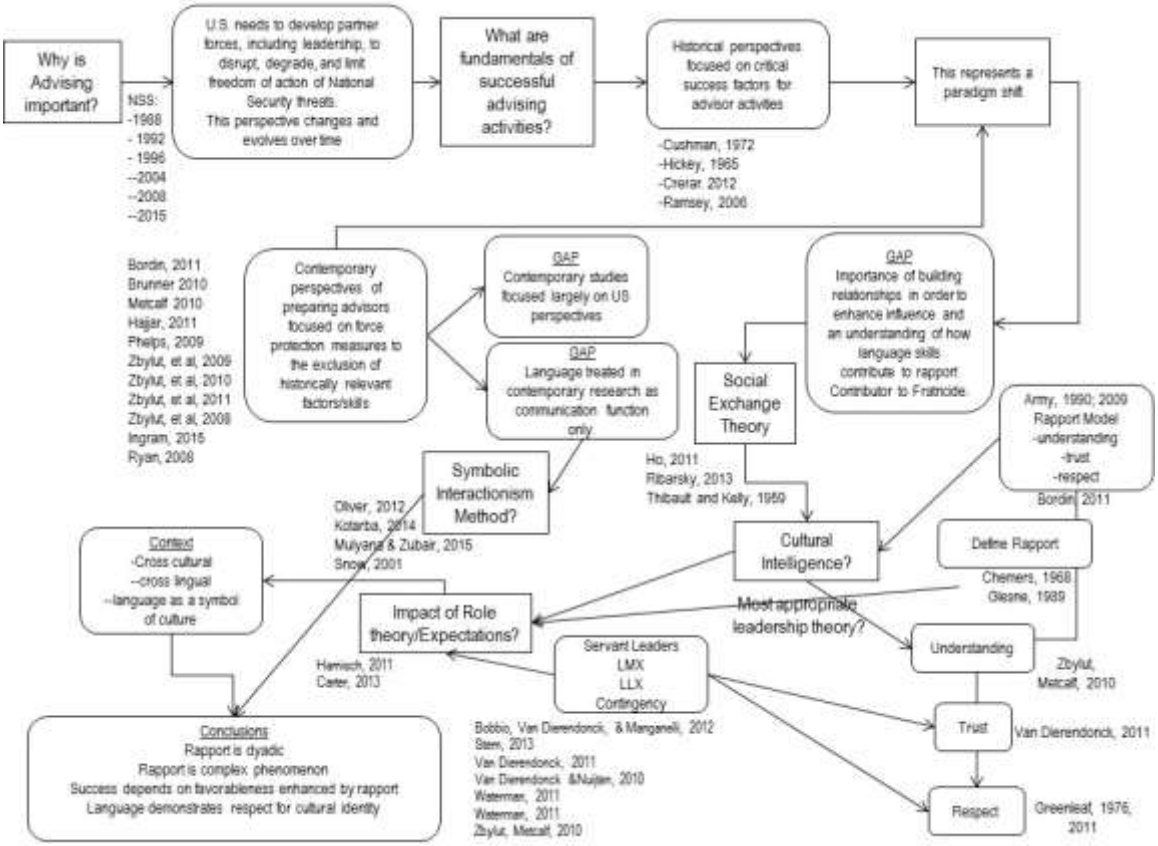

Figure 1. Literature review map that depicts the synthesis of literature-related concepts, theories, and ideas associated with advisor-counterpart rapport development.

Information available online continues to increase exponentially. Salmon (2013) emphasized how online information coupled with opportunities for individuals to interact, communicate, and share data enhances online academic opportunities. Despite the prevalence of online information, much data were found only through networking with knowledgeable resources at military libraries, museums, and personal archives.

Sources included literature across a range of topics related to advisor relationships. Commonly used scholarly journals contained in online databases offered a plethora of information on theoretical foundations. Military doctrine, military-specific

research studies, and specialized databases were primary sources for advisor-specific literature. Specialized organizations maintained much of the data due to the highly nuanced and specialized nature of military advisory activities.

Searches of military doctrine proved challenging due to the nature of doctrine. Military doctrine reflects interpretations of best practices based on recent experience. Consequently, the doctrinal content can lead to knowledge gaps over time. Interest in advisory activities surged and ebbed over time as an reflection of changing national security strategies. The available literature on fundamental advisor skills like rapport and foreign language proficiency gained and lost emphasis over time.

Literature Search Strategy

I used a common research strategy throughout the literature search process. Broad topic and keyword searches evolved as research revealed standard sets of terms and phrases that fell in and out of vogue over time. Practical automated Google Scholar key word searches provided alerts as authors published additional research on advising, rapport, and symbolic interactionism. Building on the steps recommended by Rubin, Rubin, Piele, and Haridakis (2010), I used the following six steps in the literature search for this study.

1. Identify types of required sources.
2. Leverage networks of specialized professionals to expand access to data sources.
3. Select specific databases and sources.
4. Develop and conduct iterative key word and phrase searches.

5. Cross-reference standard primary sources.
6. Select, evaluate, and summarize sources.

Search Engines

I used typical academic search engines through the Walden University online library, Google Scholar, and the Laureate Thoreau. These standard academic search engines proved valuable for research into leadership theories and cultural intelligence. Google Scholar provided automated key word searches that produced daily alerts as newly published source became available.

Databases

Conventional scholarly databases such as JSTORS and ProQuest provided landmark historical sources as well as contemporary peer-reviewed research. Specialized searches included databases maintained by the Army War College (AWC), the Command and General Staff College (CGSC), the Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC), the Army Research Institute (ARI), and the Joint Center for International Security Forces Assistance (JCISFA). These organizations yielded significant papers and literature beyond the articles published in typical open source publications.

Search Terms

Search terms used varied according to the specific topics researched. More commonly used academic search terms included *leader-member-exchange, LMX, servant leadership, international leadership, cultural intelligence, cultural effectiveness, rapport, cross-cultural rapport, trust,* and *respect. Role theory, social exchange theory, cultural competence, intercultural communications, international communications competence,*

and *expectancy theory* were very specific search terms revealed in earlier research efforts. Similarly, terms like *phenomenology* and *symbolic interactionism* served as both search terms and screening criteria when searching and evaluating relevant literature.

For searches focused specifically on military advisor activities, specialized terms dominated key word searches. Terms included *advisor*, *military advisor*, *advise and assist*, *Security Force Assistance*, *SFA*, *Foreign Internal Defense*, *FID*, *foreign military training*, *language training*, *Special Forces advisors*, *transition teams*, *military transition teams*, and *embedded training teams*. These last three terms reflected the contemporary references to military advisor teams that were unique to activities in Iraq and Afghanistan. The transition team terminology reflected a shift in phrasing intended to emphasize the temporary nature of these activities in contemporary operations and avoid references to the politically sensitive protracted U.S. involvement in the Vietnam conflict (Sherlock, Personal Communication, 2011, August 15).

Summary

Searches of specialized proprietary databases and documents augmented source material from common academic databases to yield adequate literature to ground this study, although much literature was older than the desired 5 years due to the cyclical nature of interest in advising. Data search engines such as those in the Walden University library and Google Scholar were used to identify peer-reviewed journal articles, theses, and dissertations related to this study. Key search terms were refined and tailored during literature reviews, and new terminology was uncovered. Librarians, researchers, and staff at military libraries, museums, and centers of excellence aided in scouring proprietary

collections of data related to historical and contemporary advisor activities. When selecting and summarizing the literature, I applied a concerted effort to identify and note biases that might affect credibility, especially in government and DOD chartered research.

Theoretical Foundation

Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory addresses the complexities of human interactions in the context of dynamic individual preferences and perspectives. The idea that profit motive explains most behaviors within relationships dates to the early conceptualization of social exchange theory (Thibault & Kelly, 1959). Early theories applied the idea that relationships centered on the exchange of resources. Cost-benefit considerations associated with those relationships are dynamic, situational, and highly personal in nature (Ho, 2011; Ribarsky, 2013). Social exchange theory refers to the pragmatic nature of relationships.

According to Ribarksy (2013), social exchange theory builds on a foundation of cost/benefits analysis. Ribarsky posited that people engage in a continuous analysis to determine whether relationships are worth pursuing. Intercultural military advisory relationships such as those between U.S. and Afghan soldiers involve many factors. Professional rewards, cultural factors, tribal issues, personal allegiances, and family security can all factor into the relationship calculus.

Cultural similarities reduce certain transaction costs in relationships whereas cultural disparities raise transaction costs (Chang et al., 2015). Many of those factors

represent highly personal issues and can change over time. There exists a dynamic quality to each person's perspectives on costs and benefits associated with relationships. Placed in the context of a military advisory operation, integrating dynamic personal perspectives with cultural similarities or dissimilarities reveals that the social cost/benefits analysis is complex and can change rapidly.

Immediate versus long-term reward represents a significant factor in cost/benefits analysis. People must decide whether a relationship is worth pursuing depending on what they deem more important at that point in time: immediate gain or value amortized over a longer period (Ribarsky, 2013). Those preferences and decision criteria change throughout peoples' lives.

Chang et al. (2015) posited that good relationships depend on a level of interdependence. Some social exchange theorists asserted that professional relationships involve economic and social factors (Chang et al., 2015). Salaries or other monetary or barter exchanges represent common economic factors. Social factors are more complex than economic factors. Exchanges of knowledge, skills, social status, and positive personal feelings may represent social factors. Hunter et al. (2013) found support for the hypothesis that servant leadership by one party created tendencies for reciprocal support and positive relationships that represented value by the other party. Some value considerations include aspects of symbolic value such as love or respect.

Many factors external to the personal dynamics between advisors and their counterparts may also affect their relationship. Like the cost-benefit balance associated with relationships between advisors and counterparts is the cost-benefit balance between

the two governments (Simons, 2013). Simons (2013) implied that the political positioning of governments and superiors may also affect advisor-counterpart relationships. Per Simons, advisors must discern the true motivations of the counterparts and their respective governments. This function may hold the greatest strategic value to U.S. national security because development support should target realistic partners with compatible strategic goals and agendas. Insights gained by advisors from their counterparts during countless hours of working alongside them provide the basis for strategic and functional assessments as well as forming the foundation of mutual understanding and trust.

Trust is a central requirement in high value relationships. Chang et al. (2015) defined trust as a belief in an exchange partner's reliability, credibility, or ability to accomplish an action (as cited by Hausman & Johnson, 2010). Repeated demonstrations by a counterpart that reinforce consistent performance set an expectation of credibility and trustworthiness.

In summary, social exchange theory provides a framework that accounts for individual preferences and the complexities associated with human relationships. A continuous evaluation of costs versus benefits takes place between exchange partners. Perspectives on the value of a relationship may change over time as conditions or personal views change. Individual preferences or needs change throughout one's life, which further affects the assessment of whether a relationship is worth pursuing. Social exchange theory implies that an advisor must provide value to the counterpart for the relationship to be worthwhile from the counterpart's perspective.

Servant Leadership Theory

In contrast to most contemporary studies on military advising, which used Leader Member Exchange Theory (LMX), this study leverages Servant Leadership as a foundation for addressing the relationships between advisors and counterparts (Brunner, 2010; O'Conor et al., 2010; Phelps, 2009; Zbylut et al., 2009). Whereas LMX focuses primarily on trust between leaders and followers, servant leadership provides a broader foundation directly applicable to advisor functions.

Servant leadership is an established theory that re-emerged as an important approach in recent years. Servant leadership concepts date back to Robert Greenleaf (1977). Waterman (2011) expressed the essence of servant leadership in terms of being mentor minded, focused on the building and developing others. Mittal and Dorfman (2012) posited that servant leadership was rooted in a fundamental human drive to bond together and better society. Greenleaf provided a conceptual basis, and researchers only recently developed an empirically supported framework (Van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011; Van Dierendonck, 2011).

Numerous attempts failed to develop a verifiable framework for servant leadership prior to the verification of the model demonstrated by Van Dierendonck (2011). Laub (1999, as cited by Van Dierendonck, 2011) developed a 60-item survey instrument organized in six clusters, each divided into three sections, entitled the Organizational Leadership Assessment as part of his dissertation Later attempts to develop a valid servant leadership instrument resulted in frameworks ranging from one to 12 dimensions

containing from 22 to 35 items. Subsequent attempts to verify these frameworks failed (Van Dierendonck, 2011).

Liden et al. (2008) created a 28-item, seven-dimension survey largely considered to consolidate earlier instruments (Van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011). Although confirmatory analysis supported the Liden et al. model as the best fitting model at that point in time, it focused more on the external aspects of servant leadership (e.g., developing community) than the leader aspects. The Liden et al. model lacked the essential elements of leader accountability and moral courage per Van Dierendonck and Nuijten. The numerous unsuccessful attempts to develop a valid and verifiable instrument alluded to the complex and multi-dimensional nature of servant leadership.

Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) combined deductive and inductive approaches in Europe that led to development of an eight-dimension framework which defined servant leadership: empowerment, accountability, standing-back, humility, authenticity, courage, stewardship, and interpersonal acceptance. The initial deductive analysis of previous literature supported by interviews of subject matter experts led to an original 99-item survey. Subsequent exploratory analysis led to a more refined tool involving 39 items. Snowball sampling by Van Dierendonck and Nuijten provided four statistically valid samples including 668 participants.

A secondary conformational study involved 263 participants and used a confirmatory factor analysis that validated the SLS instrument Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2010). Further refinement of the SLS reduced the survey from 39 items to 30 items. The comprehensiveness of this research differentiated the SLS from earlier

research. Servant leadership emphasized effective interpersonal relationships that lead to mutual trust, respect, individual development and increased personal and collective performance.

Bobbio, Van Dierendonck, & Manganelli (2012) validated the servant leadership survey in an international context through a sample of 814 Italian participants. With an average age of slightly more than 38 years old, participants were 51% male and 49% female. Tests of the eight characteristics used 30 items and a 6-point Likert-type scale. While servant leadership appeared to be less common in Italy than in previous studies in Holland, the servant leadership survey proved valid and reliable.

The eight characteristics or dimensions aligned with the traits highlighted as critical for successful advisors (Axelberg, 2012; Bobbio, Van Dierendonck, & Manganelli, 2012; Cushman, 1972; Phelps, 2009). Servant leaders are compassionate collaborators who can resolve conflicts and incorporate the views of their followers (Vinod & Sudhakar, 2011; Waterman, 2011). Servant leaders focus on providing value to their followers by assisting them to achieve their potential. This is reflective of U.S. advisors.

Hunter et al., (2013) studied the practical effects of servant leadership behaviors at the individual and organizational levels. Hunter et al. found that servant leadership precipitated results favorable for advisor-counterpart relationships. Servant leadership behaviors such as agreeableness, demonstrated trust, and enabling supported increased likelihood of reciprocal support and promoted favorable relationships that aligned with social exchange theory, according to Hunter et al.

Role Theory

The roles that people assume affect relationships in complex ways. Harnisch (2011) explained how roles shape relationships and influence personal perceptions. Roles involve more than simple positional frameworks. Ho (2011) highlighted how communities of practice may differentiate between core and peripheral members. Harnisch emphasized that roles affect individual's self-identities as well as shape expectations about how interpersonal and social dynamics should occur. A challenge for advisors centers on achieving a core member status that increases the advisor's influence with a counterpart.

Role conceptualizations affect how individuals view themselves, how individuals expect others to treat them, and how individuals envision their relationships. *Figure 2* depicts the roles, role conceptualizations, and relationships associated with U.S. advisors, their counterparts, interpreters, and their respective commands. According to Harnisch, an advisor develops a self-identity in the context of the advisor's mission. Similarly, counterparts develop self-conceptualized identities in the context of the advisors' roles and their respective relationships. Their roles define their relationships to one another; their relationships could change if their respective roles change.

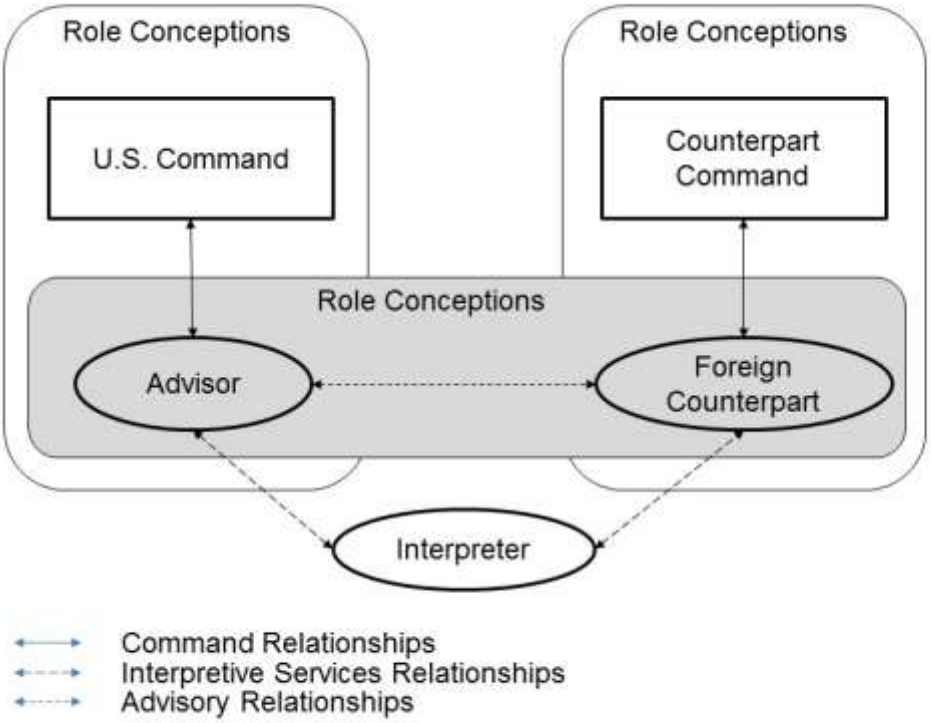

Figure 2. Army counterpart roles: Differences in relationships that structure and influence behaviors between advisors and their counterparts.

Command relationships are directive and authoritative in nature. Interpreters provide professional translation and interpretation services. Advisors interact with their counterparts in a consultative, non-authoritative professional relationship. Each set of relationships define certain role conceptions that establish identities and expectations in the context of competing influences.

Role theory is an extension of expectancy theory. Expectations affect how people respond to one another of how they apply themselves in terms of work effort, willingness to change or accept advice, or build trust in cross-cultural relationships. Expectations are

powerful factors in attitudes and perspectives (Carter, 2013). Expectations may begin shaping attitudes and perceptions before counterparts even meet, based upon reputations or information acquired beforehand. Boundaries and specific duties associated with the precise roles taken by advisors represent a framework that shape perceptions and attitudes of advisors and their counterparts.

Conceptual Framework

Army Doctrine Rapport Framework

Army (1990, 2009) Special Forces doctrine provided a framework for the rapport between advisors and foreign counterparts that informed study design. U.S. Special Forces soldiers maintained reputations as premier advisors. Special Forces doctrine provided a definition of rapport and a broad conceptual framework useful for training advisors, and useful for shaping the study design, data collection, and coding. Special Forces soldiers trained in building professional relationships per this doctrine since the creation of Special Forces in 1952. *Figure 3* depicts the Army rapport framework.

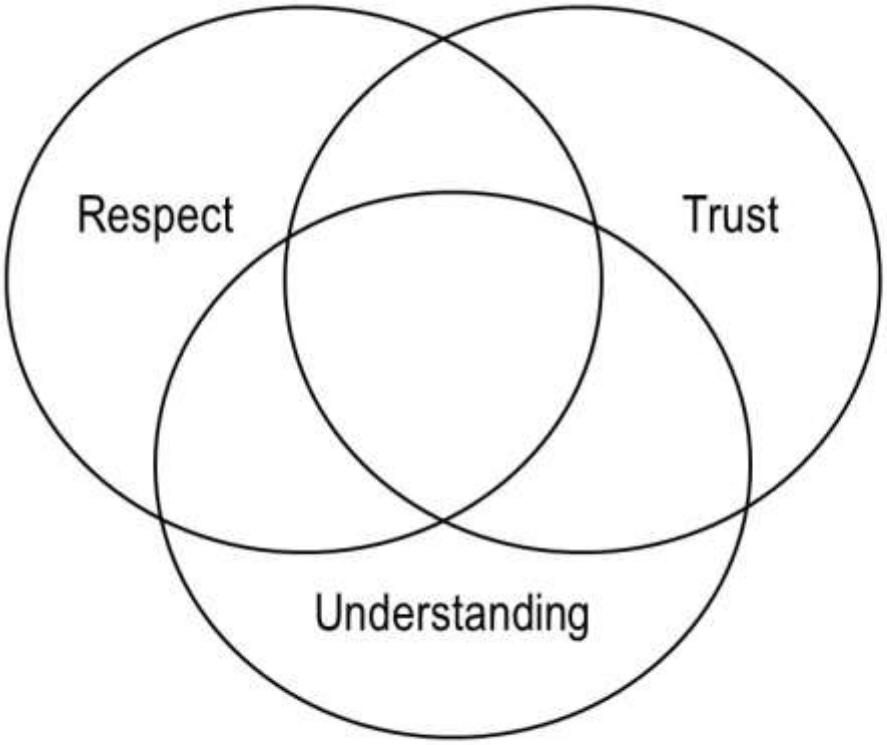

Figure 3. Rapport framework depicting the interrelatedness of understanding, respect, and trust in the context of developing rapport. The greater the synergy between the three elements, the stronger the resulting rapport. Derived from the Army Rapport Framework.

Doctrine writers defined rapport as a professional relationship between people (p. D-1). In this context, rapport is neutral. Good rapport represents positive, productive relationships based on kinship or mutual trust between two professional counterparts. Bad rapport indicates troubled relationships characterized by friction, animosity, or dislike (U.S. Army, 1990). Glesne (1989) shared the view that rapport represented professional relationships and emphasized that rapport was different from friendship.

Rapport continues to represent a foundational aspect of effective advisory operations (Army, 2009). Advisors' effectiveness depended on how they wielded

influence through their relationship with their counterparts because advisors hold no official position of power or command authority (p. 7-5). The Army rapport framework defined three components for rapport: understanding, respect, and trust. Each component represents a dyadic commodity.

Understanding

Understanding requires personal level knowledge and perspectives. According to current Army doctrine, developing understanding requires knowledge of culture, language, and the situation faced by their counterparts (Army, 2009). Developing a mutual understanding requires advisors and counterparts to think critically about the cultural disparities they confront and to reconcile, or at least recognize differing worldviews that may affect decisions (Campbell, 2013; Jenkins, 2012). Understanding expands as advisors and counterparts share insights about one another and observe each other.

Respect

Respect can be challenging to establish across cultural barriers. Salmona, Partlo, Kaczynski, and Leonard (2015) explained that teachers must be willing to develop strong relationships to be productive across cultural boundaries. The phenomenological study findings by Salmona et al., noted respect as an element of effective relationships. Demonstrating respect requires culturally diverse counterparts to recognize the disparity of their views (Campbell, 2013; Jenkins, 2012). Despite differing perspectives on sensitive issues, such as human rights and gender-related issues, advisors must find aspects about their counterparts that they respect (Ryan, 2008). Within military sub-

cultures, traditions and traits like courage, tactical competence, and technical expertise commonly draw respect and admiration. Modeling professional soldierly behaviors and demonstrating technical proficiency are means to building mutual respect with counterparts (Army, 2009).

Trust

Trust takes the time to develop. Trust is a product of demonstrated reliability and credibility per Hashim and Tan (2015). Army doctrine reflected the same perspectives in terms of demonstrated and predictable behaviors between counterparts (U.S. Army 1990; 2009). Authors of Army doctrine posited that it was imperative for advisors to establish credibility by delivering always what they promised to their counterparts. Implicit in these perspectives on trust was an assumption that trust is situational in nature rather than absolute.

Other researchers who studied trust in cyber systems and online communities posited that complete trust does exist, supporting the situational conceptualization of trust (Richters & Peixoto, 2011; Robertson & Laddaga, 2012). Contemporary research into online systems and networks was self-limiting in scope, which rendered them situationally relevant. In other research, Sol et al., (2012) associated trust and commitment through a dynamic social learning construct. Perspectives on trust between the scholarly and practitioner communities support the importance of trust in relationships, concur that trust is related to credibility, and agree that trust is affected by situational factors.

Literature Review

The existing body of literature related to rapport, advisory activities, intercultural communications, and language use naturally align into historical and contemporary categories. Literature on symbolic interactionism and phenomenology follow separate trends. Literature on advising increased during and immediately after times of extended conflict such as World War One, the Vietnam conflict, and during the recent Global War on Terror, but collecting an authoritative list of scholarly research dated within five years proved problematic. To appropriately review literature relevant to military advising, historical accounts by advisors, masters' theses, and dissertations were reviewed in large numbers. The organization of this literature review reflects the evolutionary trends associated with cyclical interest in advisory activities.

Historical Background

Historical perspectives appear to align with the experiences of modern advisors. Certain themes recur throughout military history although the focus placed on preparing advisors clearly changed (Gardner, 2012; Phelps, 2009). Ramsey (2006) reviewed advisor literature dating from World War One to the Global War on Terrorism. Advisors in both World Wars, the Korean Conflict, Vietnam, the Cold War, and the Global War on Terrorism shared similar experiences and challenges (Ramsey, 2006; Simons, 2013). Simons accounted for the varying roles assumed by advisors throughout conflicts since World War One. During World Wars One and Two advisors led indigenous fighters more than they advised. From Vietnam onward, leading indigenous fighters evolved into

predominantly advisory activities focused more on developing or advancing apolitical professional security forces (Lawrence, 1926; Ramsey, 2006; Simons, 2013).

Lawrence (1926) emphasized the importance of advisors not usurping the authority of their indigenous counterparts. Lawrence's recommendations included emphasizing the need for advisors to understand situations through the eyes of their native counterparts, to be professionally competent, to benefit their counterparts, and to be able to engage their counterparts effectively. Experienced advisors from Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan arrived at similar conclusions (Axelberg, 2011; Cushman, 1972; Ramsey, 2006; Snyder, 2011). The recommendations were reflective in nature, based solely on their experiences working with indigenous tribesman or soldiers in the respective conflicts.

Lawrence's narrative analysis was ethnographic in tone and approach; T. E. Lawrence lived among the Bedouin in Hejaz for years before, during, and after WWI (Ramsey, 2006, p. 3). Woven throughout *The Twenty-Seven Articles* were cultural nuances that Lawrence (1926) highlighted as critical for advisors to understand. Among Lawrence's recommendations was a direct reference to speak the counterpart's native language. Lawrence emphasized that translating between dialects or languages resulted in lost meaning and referred to other esoteric aspects of native language use. Lawrence's repeated references to how an advisor should bolster the authority and prestige of the counterpart placed a context of respect behind native language use, but did not directly state that opinion, nor did he scientifically support that conclusion.

Like Lawrence, Cushman (1972) provided a reflective after-action report from his last tour of duty as an advisor in Vietnam. Cushman served three tours of duty in Vietnam between 1960 and 1972. Cushman served his first tour as an advisor to Vietnamese Division Commander, Major General Ngo Quang Truong. He later commanded a U.S. Army Brigade in Vietnam during the 1968 Tet offensive and then advised Lieutenant General Ngo Quang Truong a second time in 1972, at IV Corps. This background is important in terms of appreciating the depth and breadth of experience possessed by then Major General Cushman. Ramsey (2006) referenced Cushman's report on the traits and skills required in advisors due in large measure to Cushman's iconic status and reflexive writing on advisor activities (Ryan, Personal Communication, 2008).

Cushman (1972; 2008) posited that insight was the most important trait for advisors to possess. Insight represented an ability to see things from the perspectives of the advisor's counterpart (1972, p. 50). Contemporary advisors recounted similar perspectives after serving 12 months in Iraq or Afghanistan, but did not correlate language skills with insight (Axelberg, 2011; Hetherington, 2009; Snyder, 2011). Army doctrine also emphasized the need for this level of understanding between advisors and counterparts (U.S. Army, 1990; 2009).

Rapport received controversial treatment as an element of advisory activities. Hickey and Davison (1965) strongly advocated for the incorporation of rapport building and language skills into advisor training. Hickey interviewed 370 U.S. military advisors during a 10-month long government funded study of advisor effectiveness in Vietnam in 1964. Hickey was unable to question directly indigenous personnel during his landmark

study, but did glean insights by observing indigenous persons and listening to Vietnamese conversations about American advisor behaviors. Hickey and Davison concluded that rapport was not an end state objective for advisors, but rather a means to an end, which was consistent with conclusions made by later researchers (Chemers, 1968).

Hickey used his acute observation and language skills, as an ethnographer, to interpret the situation and was credited with saving numerous lives. Hickey highlighted to then Captain Roger Donlon that the situation in the area surrounding Special Forces Camp at Nam Dong, Vietnam was growing increasingly intense and worrisome. Hickey concluded that an attack against the Nam Dong camp was imminent (Ryan, Personal Communication, 2008). As a result of Hickey's observations, Donlon increased security preparations at the camp, which was soon thereafter attacked by a reinforced North Vietnamese Battalion. Nine of the twelve Americans at Camp Nam Dong survived and Donlon received the Congressional Medal of Honor for the defense of Camp Nam Dong citing Hickey's key role.

The Department of Defense later rejected Hickey and Davidson's report on the basis that Hickey's field notes were destroyed during the attack on Camp Nam Dong. Snyder (2011) reflected negativity similar to Hickey's and Davison's critics, expressing that a good relationship did not guarantee operational results., but did not address external factors that may have biased his personal observations. Chemers (1968), however, supported Hickey and Davison's earlier conclusions noting that rapport was a moderating variable than enhanced the likelihood that a counterpart would accept advice.

Chemers termed this condition "favorableness" and determined that cultural training enhanced the possibility of advisors gaining counterparts' receptivity (p. 6).

Language training received varying levels of support and emphasis throughout history. Hickey and Davison (1965) posited that language skills represented the most useful tool for advisors seeking to reduce cultural barriers. Ramsey (2006) highlighted how the institutional Army resisted implementing permanent changes to enhance language and cultural effectiveness for military advisors across professional specialties. Short-term changes in pre-deployment training did occur as recommended by Hickey and Davison, however, but did not last.

Ramsey (2006) pointed out that the Haines Board produced a report in 1964, after ten years of heavy advisor involvement in Vietnam, which recommended broad changes to Military Assistance Officer Program training. The report authors recommended a training academy to improve skills in language, culture, and social sciences; the Army chose not to adopt the recommended changes. Army Chief of Staff, General Harold Johnson reconsidered DCSPER-40 recommendations in 1967, but ultimately implemented a less robust training model. The responses to DCSPER-40 by the Army highlighted the disparity exhibited within the Department of Defense and many academics over the importance of language proficiency for advisors. Similar attitudes toward language training were evident during advisor activities in Iraq and Afghanistan (Phelps, 2009). Interest in advisor activities waned substantially after Vietnam and training reoriented on Cold War major combat requirements until demands for rebuilding

security forces to combat terrorism returned focus to advisor skills according to Axelberg (2011) and Snyder (2011).

Contemporary Research

A review of history and the most recent national security strategies revealed that advisory and assistance activities remain a central element of the United States security activities. Advisory and assistance activities represent portions of the Security Force Assistance (SFA) framework. SFA includes all activities related to unified action related to organizing, training, equipping, rebuilding, and advising foreign security forces and their institutions (Gates, 2012; Note, 2013). Implicit in the role of SFA in the U.S. national security strategy is the underlying assumption that foreign security forces want advice from the United States. This assumption logically applies at the strategic level between nations where political considerations reign supreme, and at the tactical level where soldiers from disparate cultures may receive orders to work side by side regardless of personal preferences.

Contemporary operations in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom represented a modern example of SFA activities coupled with more conventional security actions. There is broad belief that SFA activities will remain a principle element of defense activities in the future as articulated in the U.S. national security strategy (Axelberg, 2011; Butler, 2013; Snyder, 2011). The U.S. response to the emergence of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) supports such beliefs (Gwinn, 2015).

The purpose of this study is to identify and report on the antecedents of rapport between advisors and their counterparts and to identify, interpret, and report on how counterparts

perceived the use of their native language by their U.S. advisors when developing relationships. Several studies focused on the primary knowledge, skills, and abilities required by advisors. Most contemporary research drew solely from U.S. advisors' perspectives (Brunner, 2010; Metcalf & Brunner, 2010; Zbylut et al., 2009). Few studies sought to gain counterparts' perspectives and only one of those specifically explored rapport or native language use (Bordin, 2011; Phelps, 2009**).**

Influence

Influence and leadership are inseparable. The role of influence is the essence of leadership (Cialdini, 2009; Hajjar, 2014; Hudson, 2013; McLean, 2012; Phelps, 2009). The Army concisely defined leadership as, "the process of influencing people" (p.1-2). Yukl (2006) categorized influence exercised in the context of leadership as a proactive influence. Proactive influence emphasizes eliciting changes in attitudes or behaviors of others, which may involve formal or informal relationships (Wisecarver, Schneider, Foldes, Cullen, & Zbylut, 2011). Leadership or influence in the context of an advisory activity refers to relationships typically devoid of traditional lines of authority placing greater importance on informal aspects of influence.

While the importance of influence is recognized and numerous sources provide insights into influencing strategies, the major elements, which promote influence, are more elusive (Cialdini, 2009; McLean, 2012; Zbylut, Metcalf, & Brunner, 2010). Social exchange theory outlines how one individual's influence with a counterpart should increase when they provide value. Ribarsky (2013) explained that value is a highly personal concept dependent upon the personal perspectives and needs of an individual.

The value that a leader offers to a follower or counterpart positively correlates with the influence they wield as a leader.

Credibility and rapport also factor into the influence exerted by advisors or leaders through complex mechanisms (Chemers, 1968; Wisecarver, Schneider, Foldes, Cullen, & Zbylut, 2011; Zbylut, Metcalf, & Brunner, 2010). Zbylut et al., (2010) analyzed advisor surveys to identify quantitatively the need for leaders to manage perceptions and establish credibility as a foundational element to influencing counterparts. Wisecarver et al., (2011) studied leader influence outside of advisory activities; findings from the study identified credibility and power to be instrumental to an individual's influence vaguely linking those concepts to such factors as technical competence and trustworthiness.

The Army established leadership doctrine that defined the requirement for leaders to set a professional example for subordinates to follow (McLean, 2012). Army doctrine outlined leadership behaviors, such as "setting the example," as requirements as a practical way of emphasizing the need to establish credibility with subordinates, superiors, and peers. The Army's organizational values of loyalty, honor, duty, selfless service, integrity, respect, and personal courage provides additional considerations for establishing a credible leadership presence per McLean.

Credibility was statistically significant in several studies of advisor effectiveness (Zbylut et al., 2009; Brunner, 2010; Zbylut, Metcalf, & Brunner, 2010). Analysis of survey data completed by 517 former U.S. advisors upon their return from Iraq or Afghanistan indicated that role modeling (i.e., setting the example) as the most effective

influencing strategy, for example. The surveys built by the Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance (JCISFA) used a 5-point Likert-type scale. Role modeling, as an influence strategy, received an importance rating of α=.87 according to Zbylut, Metcalf, and Brunner. These importance ratings were consistent between advisors deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. Analysis coded role modeling as a form of impression management. Zbylut et al., determined credibility also received an importance rating of α=.87. The authors of these reports acknowledged that these studies were correlative and did not ascertain why credibility or role modeling was important to advisor effectiveness, however.

O'Conor et al., (2010) conducted research for the Army Research Institute focused on identifying differences between individual advisors and counterparts as well as cultural and situational differences that affected training and coaching efforts. The genesis of this research came in part from the 2007 Congressional report that found intercultural training and development efforts insufficient. "…greater emphasis on language, culture, and advisor skills is needed," according to report by the U.S. House of Representatives (Fenner et al., 2007, p.141). Researchers interviewed former U.S. advisors and foreign nationals from Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Horn of Africa. The authors concluded that advisors required cultural knowledge, basic language knowledge, and some knowledge of the cultural differences between the specific U.S. and foreign counterparts to be effective.

Implicit in this report was recognition that good advisors built trust and understanding with their counterparts or students as a foundation for transferring

knowledge and conveying advice. Demonstrations of respect differed between cultures. Former advisors expressed recognition that understanding their counterparts also augmented their survivability (O'Conor et al., 2010). Nearly all soldiers interviewed expressed the view that pre-deployment training in language, culture, and advising skills was inadequate. Despite these clear and supportable findings, the authors did not provide a meaningful framework for rapport, just stating that it was necessary.

In summary, influence serves as the primary mechanism through which an advisor accomplishes the advisory mission. Influence is a complex phenomenon derived at least in part from the value provided by the advisor to a counterpart. The credibility of the advisor is another factor involved an advisor's influence with a counterpart. Finally, the advisor's relationship with the counterpart also affects the counterpart's receptiveness to advice (Brunner, 2010; Hajjar, 2014; Zbylut et al., 2010; Ryan, 2008). Within the context of producing influence with a counterpart, rapport affected the advisor's likelihood of success, but was not a guarantee for success.

Rapport. Rapport refers to a dyadic professional relationship. Different from friendship, rapport represents a relationship earmarked by trust and confidence (U.S. Army, 1990; 2009; Glesne, 1989; Hajjar, 2014). Glesne differentiated rapport from friendship, stating that friendship possessed an emotional element of liking whereas rapport represented a professional relationship**.** O'Conor et al., (2010) and Chua, Morris, and Mor (2012) differentiated between cognition-based trust and affect-based trust as elements of rapport, emphasizing that affect-based trust as an element of rapport proved advantageous for influence purposes over cognition-based. These different perspectives

regarding the role or appropriateness of an emotional element to rapport originated from Glesne's role as an ethnographer with ethical considerations and O'Conor et al who focused on advisor/trainer effectiveness.

Army training doctrine placed rapport in a broader context as, "any form of . relationship" (U.S. Army, 1990; 2009). This Army doctrinal reference, however, amplified this broad position classifying rapport as a relationship "usually thought of in terms of mutual trust, understanding, and respect" (p. 9-1). The three elements of mutual understanding, respect, and trust represent three interdependent and mutually supporting facets of rapport. This definition of rapport does not imply a positive or negative connotation; rather, rapport may be effective, implying a positive orientation, or ineffective, implying a negative orientation. This definition is logically broad enough in scope to apply effectively across a wide range of dyadic relationships including those typically found in advisory relationships.

Rapport and intercultural perspectives were primary foci of a controversial study conducted in Afghanistan and published in 2011. Bordin (2011) reported that between mid-September 2009 and mid-May 2011, 21 incidents resulted in 51 murders of coalition soldiers by Afghan security forces. The author cited historical evidence that murder-fratricide was a prevalent practice in Afghanistan during previous regimes involving former Russian advisors. Some senior officers contested the findings citing unnecessary bias (Busch, Personal Communications, 2015). With the context above established, Bordin described the four purposes of the research as follows:

1. Inform key decision makers that the murder of ISAF members committed by Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) personnel do not represent "rare and isolated events" as currently proclaimed.
2. Explore why this tragic phenomenon is occurring by extensively canvassing ANSF members on their perceptions of U.S. soldiers and identifying what behaviors, characteristics, and situations provoke them towards anger and possible violence (Bordin, 2011, p.4).
3. Examine U.S. soldiers' experiences with ANSF personnel and what perceptions they have.
4. Based upon both the ANSF members' and U.S. soldiers' attitudes develop recommendations to counter the growing fratricide-murder threat that ANSF personnel pose to ISAF soldiers (p.3).

To accomplish these four purposes, Bordin (2011) sampled 613 ANSF, 70 U.S. soldiers, and 30 interpreters located throughout four provinces. The researcher assessed 68 focus group sessions with Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) members. Informal interviews of U.S. soldiers involved 2-3 person groups or as part of six small focus groups. Researchers interviewed five groups of interpreters from Nangarhar, Laghman, and Kunar provinces. Additionally, some U.S. participants completed surveys. Bordin explained that he excluded interpreters' views from reported results, but used them to validate ANSF perspectives; opinions expressed by interpreters broadly aligned with the perspectives of the ANSF.

Participants cited numerous grievances and sources of distrust. Quantitative analysis of responses included values for the importance and intensity of issues. Importance involved the numbers of times issues arose in discussions. Subjective values were assigned to indicate power based on researchers' perspectives of the respondents' physical reactions according to Bordin (2011).

Grievances reported by the ANSF respondents purportedly led to armed confrontations with U.S. soldiers (Bordin, 2011, p.12-13). The most egregious behaviors that angered ANSF to the point of violence demonstrated a gross lack of respect for Afghan values. These acts included night raids, searches of Afghan women and residences, and acts of dominance over native Afghans during routine daily activities. Afghans reportedly viewed these acts as culturally offensive. U.S. soldiers also insisted on conducting operations per U.S. standards of performance and behavior. Afghans, members of a proud culture, reportedly resorted to violence or threats of violence against their counterparts when they were unable to influence the Americans to function within Afghan cultural limitations.

Afghan soldiers commonly interacted with embedded training teams and more traditional U.S. combat units that conducted operations alongside Afghan units, but without a consistent partnership. An unwillingness demonstrated by U.S. soldiers to listen to the Afghans also resonated throughout many reported perspectives. Taken together these reported grievances demonstrated a lack of rapport between the members of the two disparate cultures. In contrast, ANSF generally viewed embedded training teams that lived and worked alongside them a more positive light according to Bordin (2011).

Brunner (2010) considered rapport from a specific perspective, relating cultural competence and rapport building skills. Brunner's findings were consistent with earlier and later researchers. Both previous and later researchers ascertained that effective rapport between U.S. advisors and foreign counterparts was important. Effective rapport increased the counterparts' receptiveness to proffered advice (Bordin, 2011; Chemers, 1968; Zbylut et al, 2009). Brunner used structural equation modeling to analyze survey responses from a sample of 583 U.S. advisors. Brunner found that relating rapport and intercultural competence as discreet independent variables was problematic (p. 48).

Brunner (2010) initially hypothesized that developing a deep cultural understanding of a counterpart first required an effective relationship (p. 31). Brunner represented intercultural knowledge and rapport treated them as discreet variables in structural equation modeling. This approach failed to acknowledge the relationship between cultural knowledge and the development of mutual understanding or any possible interdependence between intercultural knowledge, understanding, and rapport. In contrast, earlier literature characterized understanding as a foundational element of rapport (U.S. Army, 1990; 2009; Ryan, 2008). Brunner modified the structural data models; results suggested a probable interrelatedness between intercultural knowledge and rapport, which supported previous Army doctrine and literature (U.S. Army 1990; 2009; Chemers, 1968; Ryan, 2008). Brunner recommended that further research into rapport be necessary.

Chua, Morris, and Mor (2012) subsequently conducted three quantitative studies into cultural cognition, trust, and innovation. Chua et al., hypothesized that cultural

cognition leads to better cognitive trust, is more likely to result in affective trust, and better dyadic creativity and innovation. Implicit in the hypotheses by Chua et al., were assumptions regarding understanding developed between colleagues as a result of interactions facilitated by cultural cognition and cognition-based trust. Interactions, in the form of conversation, were shown to mediate development of affect based trust (p. 126). It is important to note that while several findings by Chua et al., (e.g., $p<.65$) occurred outside of traditional standard values for $p<.01$ or $p<.05$. The findings from these studies consistently demonstrated support for the correlations between cultural cognition, intercultural experience, cognition-based trust, affect-based trust, and dyadic creativity in intercultural dyadic relationships.

Findings from the structural equation modeling research conducted by Chua et al., (2012) supported the Army (1990, 2009) doctrinal framework and the earlier experimentation by Chemers (1968) when accounting for the entire process of interactions involved in dyadic relationships across cultural lines. The use of structural modeling through the series of three related, but independent studies, also demonstrated that studying certain aspects of rapport quantitatively required controlling for affect-based trust before rapport could be established. Controlling for inherently complex variables involved in relationships requires deliberate planning and an intimate knowledge of the qualitative aspects of the topics studied.

Xiaodong and Guo-Ming, (2015) supported the concept that effective professional relationships were instrumental in crossing the cultural divide between individuals of different cultures. Xiaodong and Guo-Ming posited that overcoming intercultural

conflicts was inherently difficult and required effort. According to Xiaodong and Guo-Ming suggested that both parties created intercultural space in which to bridge the cultural divides through understanding built from interactions and an assumed desire to work effectively together to achieve common objectives.

The concept of interculturality was the term that Xiaodong and Guo-Ming (2015) used to describe the space between two or more individuals working to reduce cultural differences, develop understanding and shared meanings, and build recipricol relationships (p. 101). Implicit to inculturality was an acknowledgement that relationships across cultural boundaries were dynamic and were influenced by disparate personal perspectives and a myriad of external factors.

Additionally, interculturality accounts for disparate and potentially volatile power dynamics that can exist between individuals from different cultures (Xiaodong & Guo-Ming, 2015). Possession of resources, access to support structures, social power, and control over communications can represent elements of evolveing and fluid power dynamics. Xiaodong's and Guo-Ming's description of the asymmetry of power between intercultural colleagues closely describes advisor-counterpart relationships such as those in Afghanistan. Overcoming such power asymmetry required work to develop the necessary understanding and tolerance to agree upon mutually compatible perspectives and objectives. Implicit in Xiaodong's and Guo-Ming's presentation of interculturality was an assumption that both parties desire effective working relationships. Anything less than a commited effort to develop productive rapport could sabotage the overall effort.

Like Chua et al., (2015), Xiaodong and Guo-Ming (2015) posited that rapport involved cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects. Xiaodong and Guo-Ming added a moral dimension to intercultural relationships. Consequently, Xiaodong and Guo-Ming supported the positions espoused by contemporary and historic authors (U.S. Army, 1990; Brunner, 2010; 2009; Chua et al., 2015; Zbylut et al., 2009).

Zbylut et al., (2009) found rapport positively correlated with advisor effectiveness. Like Brunner (2010), Zbylut et al., used secondary survey data collected by JCISFA, which used 6-point Likert-type scales to evaluate the frequency and importance of 151 advisor activities. The authors explained that these two reports were companion documents, the first, Army Research Institute (ARI) Report 1248, and the subsequent addendum that provided descriptive statistical analysis of the human dimension of advising.

Researchers analyzed the importance of each activity and the frequency that each activity occurred. Zbylut et al. determined that rapport correlated positively with the advisors' perceptions of their effectiveness; advisors rated building a close relationship with their counterparts, M=4.15, SD=1.21. Building Rapport was rated separately, M-3.75, SD=.97. No definition of rapport was present in the report, nor was any differentiation between rapport and relationships defined. Basic language skills also contributed to rapport, which received scores of moderate importance in the survey responses, M=3.54, SD=1.59, enabling cordial interaction between advisors and counterparts and demonstrated respect according to Hajjar (2014) and Zbylut et al. (2009).

There were several inconsistencies in the ratings for frequency of use and levels of importance. Additionally, inconsistencies in ratings between rapport and close relationships also raised questions about whether respondents were clear about what survey questions meant or were entirely accurate and reflective in their responses. For example, gaining the trust of a counterpart received relatively high scores for frequency of use, M=3.11, SD=1.47, but gaining trust was not rated as important. Implicit in their analysis were assumptions that responses were accurate and well informed regarding what each of the 151 advisor behaviors meant.

Guillemin and Heggen (2009) posited that power and conflict significantly affect rapport. Power and conflict are implicit in relationships. Power and conflict shaped the relationships between advisors and counterparts. Counterparts and advisors each work under discreet chains of command. Professional relationships may require people to maintain a respectful distance to protect them (Guillemin and Heggen, 2009, p. 295). Advisors and counterparts participate in dyadic, complex relationships affected by internal and external factors, some of which are beyond the control of the advisor.

A major weakness of the quantitative approach used to analyze the JCISFA data was the exclusion of counterpart feedback for analyzing dyadic relationships (Zbylut et al., 2009). Researchers considered only responses from U.S. advisors; any interpretation of this data must assume inherent cultural bias. Subsequent research supported the position that rapport was important to advisor effectiveness in Iraq and Afghanistan (Bordin, 2011; Hajjar, 2014; Phelps, 2009).

Phelps (2009) provided one of the few research studies of advisor activities in the past decade to include the perspectives of the foreign counterparts. Phelps collected surveys from 76 U.S. Marine advisors and their 76 Iraqi counterparts in Anbar Province, Iraq. He used a quantitative, cross-sectional research design under the advisement of Zbylut to study advisor skills, selection, and training during a period of significant insurgent activity in Iraq. The military advisory mission focused on developing Iraqi security forces capable of protecting the Iraqi public. Phelps used a 7-point Likert-type scale to measure social skills, interpersonal influence, interpersonal facilitation, inspiration, networking ability, social astuteness, and apparent sincerity. Phelps based his framework on the political skills inventory (Ferris et al., 2005).

Phelps (2009) sought to answer the central question of how interpersonal skills of American advisors related to Iraqi perceptions of the American advisors' performance (p.3). Like Zbylut, Phelps used Leader Member Exchange (LMX) theory as a theoretical foundation for his study. This framework focused on trust and interpersonal skills, but assumed a hierarchical relationship between leaders (advisors) and members (counterparts). Advisors, however, did not share authoritative relationships with their counterparts, but rather had distinct chains of command (Brunner, 2010; Harnisch, 2011; Phelps, 2009).

Phelps' survey instruments presented questions focused solely on interpersonal skills without addressing specific skills or effects such as trust or respect. Phelps used ANOVA to analyze the survey results. He found an 82% variance (r^2=0.818, p=.000), which represented a strong correlation between advisors' interpersonal skills and the

respective counterparts' perceptions on advisors' effectiveness. The author concluded that the interpersonal skills of advisors significantly affected their influence with their Iraqi counterparts.

Phelps (2009) did not attempt to delve into what defined of lead to effective relationships between advisors and their counterparts. While the author did account for the Iraqi counterparts' perspectives, the data collected limited the scope and value of the study in terms of understanding the antecedents of rapport or importance of using the native language. Questions related to language only addressed information exchange and technical communications.

Understanding. Understanding is a broad and ambiguous concept. Multiple levels of understanding exist that range from regional and cultural factors to more intimate or personal considerations (Army, 2009; Bordin, 2011; Zbylut, 2010). Developing understanding between counterparts and advisors across cultural boundaries is a complex process involving many considerations.

The process of developing a broad regional or cultural understanding begins before counterparts meet (Army, 2009). Appreciating the differences between cultures is valuable for the advisor who seeks to develop influence across cultural boundaries (Munley, 2011). Understanding the differing perspectives of foreign counterparts based upon cultural orientations is a critical step toward advisors and counterparts understanding one another. Salmona et al., (2015) alluded to the importance of developing understanding in building effective relationships. Brunner (2010) further

associated rapport with cultural competence. Together the perspectives described by Salmona et al., and Brunner supported the Army (1990; 2009) conceptual framework.

Hofstede and the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) project provided frameworks for comparing and contrasting cultural perspectives. Researchers differentiated between individual, organizational, societal, and leadership factors (DeMooij & Hofstede, 2011; Hofstede, 2011; Ronen & Shenkar, 2013). Leadership involves the application of influence between individuals; cultural factors occur at the societal and organizational levels. DeMooij and Hofstede asserted that cultural values define individuals' views of their identities as well as elements of their personalities (p.86). According to Hofstede, differences in cultural orientations affect perceptions, thought processes, and consequently value judgments.

Hofstede analyzed secondary data collected by IBM Corporation that involved 100,000 employee responses from all levels and social classes across 50 countries (Hofstede, 2011). The Hofstede Model categorized cultures according to five dimensions: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism/collectivism, long-/short-term orientation, and masculinity/femininity (p.88). Hofstede added long/short term orientation after incorporating data from Chinese respondents (DeMooij & Hofstede, 2011). More than 200 subsequent studies validated Hofstede's indices. An important contextual aspect of Hofstede's model is that he differentiated between national-level and individual aspects of culture. Hofstede explained how mixing data across these levels of responses confounded initial attempts to develop a reliable model. Hofstede's

conclusions about the importance of individual cultural perspectives reinforces the accuracy of the Army model.

In contrast to Hofstede's work, the GLOBE project involved responses restricted to management and executive-level employees (Minkov & Blagoev, 2012). Minkov and Blagoev highlighted how the research conducted under the GLOBE project involved 200 researchers in 62 countries and 17,000 survey responses (p.505). GLOBE surveys included 112 questions that covered leadership attributes or behaviors. Researchers involved with GLOBE differentiated between national-level cultures and broader transnational cultural groups. Sixty-two country cultures grouped into ten cultural clusters. The GLOBE project also produced the culturally endorsed leadership theory (CLT). Cultural clusters, national-level cultures provided context for individual cultural perspectives.

Understanding counterparts involves more than cultural factors; motivations factor into the dynamic. Maner and Meade (2010) posited that there are two types of prevalent leader motivations. Maner and Meade characterized power and prestige as competing forces within leader motivations. Power or prestige dominated a leader's motivations depending on that individual's character, temperament, and orientation. Power-oriented leaders sacrificed organizational goals when personal power bases came into conflict with organizational objectives according to Maner and Meade. In contrast, prestige-oriented leaders remained focused on organizational objectives primarily because their motivations derived from the respect of superiors, peers, and subordinates. Developing an appreciation of counterpart leader motivations represents an important

aspect of understanding how counterparts approach decision-making, including how counterparts make decisions regarding what relationships are worth pursuing.

The process of developing understanding that began months before deployment continues throughout an advisory assignment. The Congressional report on The Continuing Challenges of Building the Iraqi Security Forces highlighted that building relationships with Iraqi counterparts began with learning more about them. Advisors reportedly used the time spent with the previous advisor teams and their counterparts to accelerate the process of becoming familiar with their counterparts (House, 2007). Advisors consistently reported that building relationships and developing understanding with counterparts was an ongoing process important to the efficacy of the advisors' missions (Brunner, 2010; Hajjar, 2014; Zbylut, 2010). Developing understanding requires an ongoing process throughout the advisor's assignment that involves an interdependent relationship with trust, respect, and rapport.

Respect. Respect is a foundational element of productive professional relationships, especially relationships built with a purpose of professional development (Russell, 2001; Mittal & Dorfman, 2012; Van Dierendonck, 2011). Understanding the cultural paradigm of a counterpart provides advisors with the knowledge of how to demonstrate respect for their counterparts (DeMooij & Hofstede, 2011; Ihtiyar & Ahmad, 2015; Mittal & Dorfman, 2012; Brunner, 2010). Both Hofstede and the GLOBE project established that the power/distance aspects of cultures affected individual perspectives on respect (Mittal & Dorfman, 2012, p.558).

Ihtiyar and Ahmad (2015) found that ICC correlated with customer satisfaction with a 0.632 coefficient. The authors further alluded to a correlation between intercultural competence, respect, and customer satisfaction. The conclusions formed by Ihtiyar and Ahmad implied a positive relationship between respect and intercultural effectiveness with rapport serving as a moderating variable.

Respect formed a central element of developmental relationships (Hudson, 2015; Van Dierendonck, 2011). Van Dierendonck explained respect represented the guiding principle behind cognitive moral development as first formulated by Kohlberg (1969). Logically, mutual respect between mentors and mentees enhances the relationship, and by extension, enhances the receptiveness to the advice of the mentor. Contemporary researchers supported respect as a mediating variable (Brunner, 2010; Van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011; Zbylut et al., 2009; Zbylut, Metcalf, & Brunner, 2010).

Murphy and Rodríguez-Manzanares (2012) explained that rapport is a dyadic phenomenon based in part on mutual understanding and respect in the context of student-teacher relationships. Rapport, according to Murphy and Rodriquez-Manzanares, required mutual attentiveness with a harmonious or positive result. This study of challenges faced by teachers and students developing rapport characterized rapport development as a process involving a degree of mutual effort.

Trust. Trust forms a critical element relationships, including situational professional relationships. According to Hashim and Tan, (2015) trust represented an adequate level of expected behavior regarding some future event. Implicit in this

explanation is the assumption that past behavior is sufficient to offer some predictability toward future performance.

Trust, like respect, represented a critical factor in successful mentor-mentee relationships. Researchers commonly considered trusting an essential element that promotes receptiveness to mentors' critical reflections and constructive feedback (Brunner, 2010; Hudson, 2015; Van Dierendonck, 2011). Sufficient trust must exist to enable productive feedback and exchanges between advisors and counterparts.

Language. The role fulfilled by language in the rapport process remains unclear. Contemporary research findings supported the historic perspective that speaking the native language of counterparts was important for advisors (Hickey & Davison, 1965; Brunner, 2010; Zbylut et al., 2009). Why native language use was important is not clear from available literature. Hajjar (2014) posited that translators fill the critical communications role between advisors and counterparts. If translators fulfill the requirement for communications, how does nascent native language use contribute to the relationship between advisors and their counterparts? *Figure 4* depicts potential relationships between understanding, trust, respect, rapport, native language use, and influence in an advisory relationship.

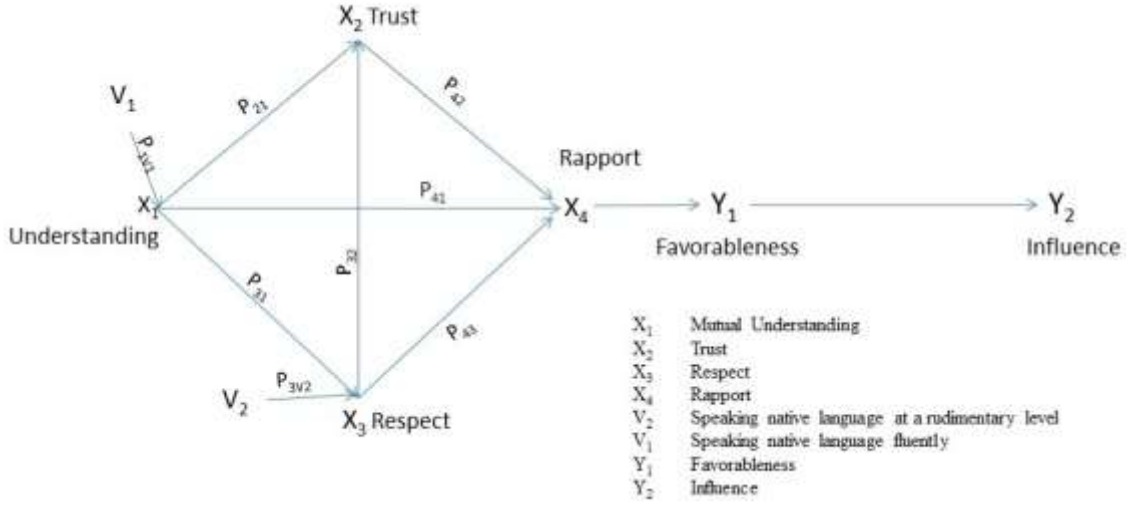

Figure 4. Rapport-language integration model depicting the relationship of the antecedents of rapport to the influence as a result of by speaking a native language during the rapport-building process. V_1 represents language spoken with a high degree of fluency; V_2 represents a rudimentary language skill used during rapport-building. This model presents an assumed framework that speaking a native language even at rudimentary level is perceived as demonstrating respect for the counterpart's language and culture, which correlates to rapport (X_4) development. Rapport leads to a condition of Favorableness (Y_1), which ultimately contributes to Influence (Y_2). Derived from research by Brunner, (2010); Chemers, (1968); Ribarsky (2013); Wheeldon & Ahlberg (2012). and, Zbylut et al., (2010)

Rapport, as a professional relationship across cultural boundaries, represents a concept defined by personal perspectives. While Glesne (1989) differentiated between friendship and professional rapport, Chua et al., (2012) concluded that affect-based trust was present in professional intercultural relationships. Findings by Chua et al., refined scholarly knowledge of relationship dynamics, but highlighted the importance of interactions between advisors and counterparts in terms of enabling the transitioning from cognition-based trust to affect-based trust. Implicit in the findings by Chua et al., were assumptions that understanding supported the evolution from cognition-based trust to affect-based trust, and rapport, by extension.

Further, the consistency of research results that reflected the importance of trust, modeling behavior, credibility, and rapport collectively alluded to the interdependence of trust, understanding, and rapport (Brunner, 2010; Hajjar, 2014; Ho, 2011, Zbylut et al, 2009). While language was not deliberately studied as an element of rapport, all of the existing research implied that developing understanding between advisors and counterparts was instrumental to building rapport. Respect, which is a central component of military relationships, was also implicit to interpersonal interactions between advisors and counterparts in ways that benefited the relationships (Hajjar, 2014).

Gaps in the Literature

Most contemporary research into advisor-counterpart activities focused on U.S. only perspectives (Brunner, 2010; O'Conor et al., 2010; Zbylut et al., 2009; Zbylut et al., 2010). These quantitative studies also treated interdependent variables such as respect, trust, understanding, and rapport as discreet and independent, which confounded results (Chua et al, 2015). Brunner noted in the dissertation findings that additional study into rapport was necessary to clarify the ambiguities found through structural equation modeling using secondary data from JCISFA.

Researchers who included perspectives from foreign counterparts faced questions of bias (Bordin, 2011; Busch, Personal Communications, 2015). Bordin focused on the issue of fratricide, which led to an imbalanced treatment of the phenomenon of rapport. In contrast, Phelps (2009) conducted a balanced quantitative study of U.S. Marine advisors and their Iraqi counterparts. Findings in Phelps' thesis indicated that Iraqi counterparts differentiated between professional and personal relationships, but Phelps'

use of LMX as a foundational theory did not address the differences between cognition-based trust and affect-based trust. Interviews of Afghan counterparts may yield different perpsectives due to cultural differences between Iraqi and Afghan cultures (Bordin, 2011; DeMooij & Hofstede, 2011; Hofstede, 2011; Ronen & Shenkar, 2013; Phelps, 2009).

Comparing the analysis provided by Brunner (2010), O'Conor et al., (2010), Zbylut et al., (2009) and Zbylut et al., (2010) with the detailed integrated quantitative analysis provided by Chua et al., (2015), it is clear that analyzing complex phenomenon like rapport requires detailed planning and deliberate execution of studies beyond the level of secondary data provided by JCISFA. Controlling for affect-based trust was a critical step in Chua et al's research that was not possible given the data available to Brunner or the Army Research Institute researchers.

While Hajjar (2014) posited that native language use by advisors produced positive responses by counterparts, his research was informal and based solely on casual interactions and personal perspectives. O'Conor et al., (2010) identified language training and relationship building skills as essential elements of preparatory training for trainer/advisors, but did not identify how those skills contributed to trainer/advisor effectiveness. JCISFA surveys addressed the use of native language use, but lacked context and clarity leaving open to assumptions any relationships between native language and rapport. No contemporary studies addressed the possible symbolic meaning ascribed by counterparts to native language use by their advisors. Further scholarly research into the perspectives of Afghan security force personnel on rapport and native language use is necessary.

The use of LMX as a foundational leadership theory was common in contemporary research and primarily stemmed from the influence of the Army Research Institute Researchers (Brunner, 2010; O'Conor et al., 2010; Phelps, 2009; Wisecarver et al., 2010; Zbylut et al., 2009). The association of LMX and advisor research appears logical, based upon the emphasis in LMX literature placed on trust. Servant leadership theory provides a broader foundation across the complex dimensions of advisor-counterpart relationships, however.

Servant leadership dimensions used by Van Dierendonck (2011) closely align with the attributes of successful advisors (Zbylut et al., 2009). Similarly, the value provided by advisors was implicitly assumed in contemporary literature. Omitting the impact that the advisor had on a counterpart's perception of value created a need to assume away a fundamental element of relationships described by Social Exchange Theory.

Summary and Conclusions

Several themes recur through research conducted into effective advisory activities. While opportunity sampling repeatedly emphasized U.S. unilateral perspectives to evaluate military advisor effectiveness, anecdotal research into intercultural relationships provided more balanced perspectives (Chemers, 1968; Chua et al, 2012; Davison & Hinkey, 1965; O'Conor et al., 2010; Zbylut et al, 2009). Only Bordin (2011), and to a lesser degree O'Conor et al., (2010), deliberately studied the perspectives of foreign counterparts. The Department of Defense challenged Bordin's findings, which were intently focused on the issue of fratricide/murders of U.S. soldiers

by Afghan security forces, due to implicit assumptions and biases (Ryan, Personal Communications, 2015). O'Conor et al., studied the requirements for preparatory training in the context of training foreign security forces, a role that is distinct from combat advising.

The issue of importance of relationships in influencing foreign counterparts represented one common recurring theme in national security strategies. Forms in which advisors provide value to their counterparts changed over time, but some measures of value and the credibility of the advisors themselves to deliver results were consistent themes. Social exchange theory captured the underlying theoretical foundations that explained the relationships of value, credibility, relationships, and influence, but were lacking in the literature on advisor effectiveness.

Similarly, trust, respect, and rapport repeatedly arose as significant factors in both quantitative and qualitative research. Elements of professional relationships now associated with servant leadership, including accountability, stewardship, courage, authenticity, standing-back, empowerment, and interpersonal acceptance repeatedly appear in studies and interviews (Davison & Hickey, 1965; O'Conor et al., 2010; Zbylut et al, 2009). Contemporary research into detailed analysis of rapport, trust, respect, credibility, influence, and language use by advisors consistently relied on secondary data that lacked sufficient detail to differentiate or integrate the concepts (Brunner, 2010; O'Conor et al., 2010; Zbylut et al, 2009).

Surveys completed by U.S. advisors for JCISFA did not reflect the detailed planning and insight necessary to control for potentially interdependent variables and did not account

for subtle, but discreet variables such as cognition-based trust and affect-based trust. Consequently, contemporary research into military advisor relationships treated these elements independently and addressed predominantly the U.S. half of dyadic relationships that were known to fall under the influence of numerous external factors in complex environments.

Consistently, contemporary research supported studies from the 1960's within the limitations of the secondary data and limited perspectives surveyed (Brunner, 2010; Chemers, 1968; Davison & Hickey, 1965; Zbylut et al, 2009). More balanced contemporary studies also largely supported earlier research (Chua et al., 2012; Hajjar, 2014; O'Conor et al., 2010; Phelps, 2009). Overall, contemporary research left gaps in the areas of studying the foreign counterparts' perspectives on relationships, trust, respect, understanding, and language use. Surveys completed by U.S. advisors referred to language use solely in context of communications (Phelps, 2009; Zbylut, et al, 2009), which omitted a possible role that foreign language use may fill in building relationships.

This qualitative phenomenological symbolic interactionism study into the Afghan counterparts' perspectives of rapport with their advisors addresses rapport and the use of Afghan native languages by the advisors in a focused, but more holistic context than any other contemporary studies. Interviewing Afghan counterparts to answer the research questions added Afghan perspectives to the current knowledge that may offer insights into how U.S. advisors can be more effective. Building on the foundations of servant leadership, social exchange theory, and role theory, coupled with conceptual foundations provided by Army doctrine, findings from this research may illuminate ways to refine

advisor training and enhance advisor effectiveness as an element of U.S. National Security Strategy.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological symbolic interaction study was to identify and report what foreign counterparts believed to be the antecedents of rapport and to identify, interpret, and report on what symbolic meaning foreign counterparts ascribe to the rudimentary use of a native language by advisors during rapport development. Rapport is dyadic in nature representing a professional relationship between an advisor and a foreign counterpart.

Most contemporary research focused on the advisors' perspectives (Hajjar, 2014; Zbylut, 2010). Glesne (1989) and Ho (2011) characterized rapport as a professional relationship distinct from friendship. Cushman alluded to the distinction between professional rapport and friendship when he described the complex relationship that evolved between him and Lieutenant General Truang between the early 1960s and the mid 1970s (Cushman, Personal Communications, 2008, January 20). By interviewing individual foreign counterparts who possessed experience working with U.S. advisors, I studied how foreign counterparts perceived their advisors' attempts to use the native language in the context of building rapport in military settings.

This chapter provides the main points underpinning the research construct. Many methods could be used to study rapport and the use of native language by advisors. Key points covered in this chapter include the logic behind the phenomenological symbolic interaction design; the reasoning behind why other possible research designs and approaches were less appropriate; definitions of key concepts such as advisors, counterparts, rapport, and trust; research questions; role of the researcher; a description of

the methodology including participant selection and instrumentation; descriptions of participant recruitment and data collection; an explanation of the data analysis plan; issues of trustworthiness including reliability, transferability, dependability and confirmability; and a description of ethical issues. In summary, Chapter 3 provides an outline of how I conducted this study to ensure that the study was confirmable and scholarly.

Research Design and Rationale

Although many research approaches are feasible for studying phenomena like rapport and language use, qualitative symbolic interactionism was most appropriate for identifying and interpreting how using a native language affects rapport development between advisors and counterparts. Charon and Hall (2009) highlighted how language is inherently symbolic and serves as the foundation for expressing meaning in broader contexts. Kramsch (1998, 2013) noted that language was arguably the greatest symbol of any culture. Advisor-counterpart relationships are dyadic, like many other relationships. Adding to the body of knowledge related to advisor effectiveness required gaining the perspectives of the foreign counterparts.

This study focused on answering two research questions:

RQ1: What do foreign counterparts believe to be the antecedents to building effective rapport with their advisors?

RQ2: What symbolic meaning do foreign counterparts ascribe to their advisors' use of their native language and what affect did they perceive it had on rapport development?

Adding to the body of knowledge by answering these questions required collecting, synthesizing, and interpreting the individual perspectives and experience of foreign counterparts (see Dowling & Cooney, 2012; Patton, 2014). Relationships between individuals depend on numerous factors and are impacted a person's different views (Oliver, 2012). Due to the personalized nature of relationships, a phenomenological design was appropriate to study the essence of rapport. The intrinsic symbolism associated with language highlights symbolic interactionism as the preferred method for studying the effect of using a counterpart's native language on developing rapport (Oliver, 2012; Patton, 2014).

Quantitative research is suitable for examining relationships between variables, but not for gleaning the essence of complex phenomena such as relationships (Oliver, 2012). Recent empirical research indicated that numerous aspects of advisor activities are necessary but did not address why specific activities were important (Zyblut et al., 2009). Quantitative research is appropriate for studying the relationships between variables, but not for studying the essence of individual perspectives as planned in this study.

Kafle (2013) differentiated between various forms of phenomenology. Kafle explained Husserlian or transcendental phenomenology, and hermeneutical or interpretive phenomenology along with several variations of each. Kafle highlighted the philosophical differences underpinning the principle forms of phenomenology referencing the perspectives of seminal theorists as Husserl, Heidegger, and Van Manen.

Kafle (2013) also referenced the comparative analysis by Finlay (2012) who illuminated six fundamental questions that face researchers who consider phenomenology

as a research design. Central among the points expressed by Finlay is a practical approach consistent with the position expressed by Giorgi (2009) that the practical pursuit of new knowledge is paramount to adherence to any one philosophically pure approach. Finlay viewed descriptive and interpretive phenomenological approaches as existing along a continuum rather than being mutually exclusive. Finlay bridged many of the differences argued over in phenomenology literature (Giorgi, 2009; Patton, 2014; Oliver, 2012) and established a pragmatic foundation for this study.

Phenomenology was an appropriate design to study the nature of rapport through the lived experiences of participants (see Patton, 2014). Oliver (2012) noted that determining the true essence of a phenomenon viewing that phenomenon beyond the inherently biased perspectives of the people who experienced the phenomenon personally. Although the ability of participants to accurately articulate their lived experiences remains a point of contention among phenomenological theorists, there is general agreement that reflexivity mitigates researcher bias and some degree of reliable analysis is possible based on interviewing participants (Dowling & Cooney, 2012). By interviewing individuals who experienced intercultural rapport development, I compiled and synthesized data gleaned from the participants' perspectives into a coherent description of rapport and its primary antecedents (see Giorgi, 2009; Vagle, 2014).

Patton (2014) argued that language is highly dependent on cultural and individual perspectives. Studying the relative meaning of native language use by advisors is made more complex by the inherently symbolic nature of language (Charon & Hall, 2009; Oliver, 2012). The potentially symbolic aspect of native language use could be a

significant research factor in the relationships between advisors and counterparts as it was between Chinese and Malay businessmen in Indonesia (Mulyana & Zubair, 2015). Symbolic interactionism requires interpretation of participants' accounts of their experiences in the broader context of the phenomenon. The need to account for a multitude of factors in advisor-counterpart relationships led to a conclusion that a phenomenological symbolic interaction design was appropriate for this study.

In contrast to phenomenology, case studies are commonly used to investigate events or processes, and narrative research is typically used to describe people's lives (Patton, 2014). A case study or narrative design could be used to explore the process of rapport development, examine a broader experience between advisors and counterparts, or describe the people involved. The nature of rapport, coupled with the novel or symbolic aspects associated with using a native language, indicated that phenomenological symbolic interactionism would be the best design to answer the research questions. Other research approaches would not have allowed me to fill the knowledge gap in rapport development and would not enabled me to explain how native language proficiency impacts advisor-counterpart rapport development.

Role of the Researcher

It is a primary responsibility of every researcher to manage bias to the greatest extent possible. As the sole researcher, I interviewed the Afghan counterparts who experienced building relationships with U.S. advisors. Cultural perspectives and world views create bias intrinsically (Kramsch, 1998, 2013; Patton, 2014). No direct previous relationships existed between me and any of the participants. Some participants and I

possessed common professional associates from my previous military career and service in Afghanistan, but no influential relationships existed.

Over the past 28 years, my primary duties led me to build rapport with military officers and government officials from more than 10 countries, including many in Afghanistan. I managed potential researcher bias by delving into the experiences of the Afghan counterparts and focusing on their perspectives and beliefs. Making clear the academic nature of this scholarly study and affirming the confidentiality of participants' contributions reduced the risks of misperceptions that participation in this study may provide any political advantages. No conflict of interest issues existed because I no longer work with the DOD, U.S. government, or Afghan government in any relevant capacity. Using participants from organizations other than those that I worked with previously assisted with mitigating potential researcher bias, conflicts of interest, or power differential issues. This research design also met all requirements for research involving Afghan citizens because the Afghan government defined no research requirements beyond those specified by the U.S. government for international research (U.S. Office of Human Research Protections [OHRP], 2016).

Methodology

The research method must account for evaluating an adequate sample of the overall population under study. Phenomenological research, and especially symbolic interactionism, depends upon the reduction of the perceptions to yield an understanding of why the phenomenon occurred including how and why participants assigned meaning to their experiences (Charon & Hall, 2009; Giorgi, 2009; Vagle, 2014). Methodological

factors create a framework that accounts for the considerations that allow recreation of the study.

Study Method: Phenomenological Symbolic Interactionism

Phenomenological research focuses on identifying the essence of a phenomenon. Patton (2014) referred to Van Manen's explanation that described the essence of a phenomenon as the thing that makes that phenomenon what it was. According to Vagle (2014), Husserl expressed a need to look beyond what was usually taken for granted or overlooked in order to identify and understand the essence of a phenomenon being studied. Implied in Husserlian phenomenology is the need to understand the relationship between the phenomenon and the people who experienced it. The people interviewed or observed represent a means for the researcher to capture insights into the essence of the phenomenon based on the participants lived experiences (Patton, 2014; Vagle, 2014).

The Husserlian approach to phenomenology assumes that complexity exists between a phenomenon and the way subjects view and interpret their experiences. Vagle (2014) highlighted the importance of intentionality to phenomenological research. Intentionality addresses the mental orientation, or relationship, of subjects with respect to the phenomenon under study (Oliver, 2014). One assumption that contributes to the foundation of intentionality is that everyone interprets their experiences and develops a mental perspective or assigns meaning to a phenomenon.

There is disagreement over intentionality in terms of the degree to which the cognitive orientation is a deliberate choice made by a subject and whether a phenomenon is the product of cognitive processes (Salmona et al., 2015; Vagle, 2014). A variety of

terms were used to describe aspects of intentionality. Vagle (2014) used the terms *intentional relations* and *intentional meaning* to articulate how cognitive functions and products result in relating to and making sense of a phenomenon. According to Dowling and Cooney (2012), Husserl believed that intentionality was a phenomenological property unique to each individual based upon their personal characteristics and perspectives. Phenomena can be physical or conceptual in nature. Cognitive processes can be deliberate or devoid of conscious choice.

The Brentano Thesis posited that mental phenomena can only be deliberate, hence exist consciously (Dowling & Cooney, 2013). Dowling and Cooney highlighted that Brentano was Husserl's teacher and consequently influenced Husserl's thinking. While Although the Brentano thesis remains controversial, the roles of conscious, deliberate thoughts and subconscious factors such as cultural orientations or unrecognized biases are relevant to the application of phenomenology to the study of intercultural rapport. Rapport is a phenomenon representing the relationship between two individuals (U.S. Army, 1990, 2009). Innumerable internal, cultural, and external factors affect individual perspectives that further impact relationships. Phenomenological researchers must study the relationship between the subject and the phenomenon to uncover the essence of the phenomenon. Understanding the complexity underlying the concept of intentionality is a necessary for researchers to thoroughly analyze and interpret data from interviews of individuals who experienced the studied phenomenon.

Understanding the effect that the phenomenon has on the study participants implied that the phenomenon was the focus of the research rather than the people. Based

on the dyadic nature of relationships, the perspectives of the individuals involved are especially relevant. Vagle (2014) explained that Husserlian phenomenology involves naturalistic and behavioral orientations. These philosophical foundations render Husserlian phenomenology appropriate for studying relationship-based phenomena.

Chan et al. (2013) agreed with Vagle (2014) emphasizing the importance of mental preparation. Chan et al. alluded to the need for researchers to reflect on their ability to remain open-minded and objective. A significant challenge, however, revolves around the need to balance objectivity with the need to focus on the phenomenon under study. Phenomenology involves the challenges of a potentially biased researchers and the risk of inaccuracy on the part of participant interviews.

Paley (2014) posited that interviews were ineffectual data collection tools. According to Paley, Heidegger theorized that a dualism existed between subjects and objects that rendered the perspectives of the subjects irreconcilably biased. Heidegger shared Husserl's opinion that the naturalistic and behavioral foundations underpinning phenomenology.

Heidegger maintained a contrary opinion to Husserl regarding the potential value of interviewing subjects. Heidegger believed that phenomenon must be studied primarily through observation or experimentation through a naturalistic approach (as cited in Paley, 2014, p. 1524). Paley also emphasized how Heidegger discounted the Cartesian idea that it is possible to separate objectivity and subjectivity. Heidegger's perspective on dualism assumed that the complexity associated with an individual's experience with a phenomenon was too complex to unravel through the individual's account. Paley also

described how Heidegger assumed a behavioristic position that intentionality was a function of behaviors rather than cognition. Heidegger believed that subjects created mental artifacts in the form of mental images that explained their lived experiences. Heidegger termed this process *confabulation*.

The personal nature of rapport challenges the validity of Heidegger's negative perspective on phenomenological interviewing as a research method. Bias and subjectivity certainly factors into how a subject may convey their perspectives on their lived experiences. Giorgi (2014) posited that researchers should focus on gaining knowledge by any means possible rather than remaining blindly loyal to one approach. It is therefore incumbent on the researcher to investigate the relationship between the subjects and the phenomenon to glean the true essence of rapport between advisors and their counterparts. The challenge of developing an understanding of how an advisor's use of the counterpart's native language affects building rapport increases the complexity associated with human relationships. Language represents a symbolic referent to culture (Charon & Hall, 2009; Kramsch, 1998, 2013; Mulyana & Zubair, 2015).

Symbolic interactionism represents a derivative form of phenomenology according to Patton (2014). Husserlian phenomenology and symbolic interactionism share certain philosophical foundations such as naturalistic and behavioristic approaches (Charon & Hall, 2009; Mulyana & Zubair, 2015; Patton, 2014; Vagle, 2014). The two methods also share critical assumptions (Oliver, 2012; Snow, 2001; Vagle, 2014). Researchers using this method pay attention to the meanings placed on phenomenon in

the context of the relationship between the subjects and the phenomenon, which bears resemblance to Husserl's concept of intentionality.

Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism represents another interpretive research method. Blumer (2015) explained that most perspectives on symbolic interactionism trace their roots back to work of philosopher George Herbert Mead (1934, as cited by Blumer). Blumer, who was a student of Mead's, described four primary conceptions associated with symbolic interactionism:

1. People act on the significance of meanings that they assign to objects that make up their world.
2. People associate in social interactions.
3. Social interactions occur between people during which they observe, interpret, and analyze their situations.
4. Social interactions represent dynamic and complex situations between people.

Blumer emphasized that understanding people's actions require researchers to see things from everyone's perspective. Assignment of meaning forms a central aspect of symbolic interaction and represents a core criteria of human science (Charon & Hall, 2009; Giori, 2014). Analysis becomes complex when considering human cognition according to Charon (2001). Cognition interprets reality using speech and social interaction (Charon, 2001). Developing an understanding of rapport between culturally diverse individuals and how speaking the native language affects rapport development requires understanding individual perspectives.

A significant portion of social interactions between people originate in the form of language exchange (Mulyana & Zubair, 2015). Language is intrinsically symbolic and individual interpretations derive from several influences, including culture, convention, and individual perspectives (Charon & Hall, 2009; Kramsch, 1998, 2013). The methodological ramifications are correspondingly noteworthy.

The importance of individual perspectives in the development of meaning also aligns symbolic interactionism with Husserlian phenomenological methods (Blumer, 2015; Charon & Hall, 2009; Patton, 2014). According to Charon, Mead described three philosophical roots to symbolic interactionism:

1. Symbolic interactionism is rooted in pragmatism.
2. Symbolic interactionism fits within the naturalist tradition of Darwinism.
3. Symbolic interactionism fits within the philosophical perspectives of behaviorism. Mead viewed people as responding to their interpretation of their situation rather than responding to an objective world (Oliver, 2012).

According to Charon and Hall (2001), Mead and Blumer supported the position that studying people begins with action. Gaining an appreciation of how individuals behaved during rapport development sets the condition for inquiry. This enables development of research questions oriented on understanding what caused the action. This sequence becomes significant since the unit of study is the social interaction. Following this logic, it was important to get participants to describe their interactions with their U.S. advisors before delving into their perceptions of how rapport developed. Once the descriptions of the interactions and an explanation of personal perspectives

establishes context, then inquiry can ensue into how native language use affected rapport development.

Mulyana and Zubair (2015) demonstrated symbolic interactionism in a qualitative phenomenological approach to study intercultural communications. Mulyana and Zubair studied the intercultural communications competence of the Chinese business population on Bangka Island, Indonesia. Perspectives from Mead (1934, as cited by Blumer, 2015) formed a theoretical foundation for studying how Chinese people on Bangka Island conceptualized their sense of self; and, Hofstede (2011) provided a framework for comparing the Chinese and Malay cultural perspectives. Mulyana and Zubair emphasized that nature of interactions between the two populations were dynamic and linked to the usefulness to each party, which was consistent with the views expressed by Charon and Hall (2001). Charon and Hall linked social interaction to the value provided to each party and highlighted how it was dynamic rather than simply episodic.

Mulyana and Zubair conducted this research as part of a larger study. The specific research questions for their study included:

1. How do the Chinese as the subjects of this study identify themselves as members of a particular ethnic group in Bangka Island dominated by the Malays and how do the Chinese identify with the Malays?
2. What tactics are used by the Chinese in presenting themselves before the Malays to achieve their personal and economic gains and what are the motives of those tactics of impression management (p. 303)?

Researchers collected data by interviewing 25 Chinese and eight Malays in four Indonesian locations (Mulyana & Zubair, 2015, p. 303). The authors failed to explicitly identify their research assumptions, but posited that the Chinese participants' fluency with the Malay language was central to their intercultural communication competence (p. 302). Based upon their understanding of the Malays' roles and self-identities, the researchers postulated that the Chinese participants modified behaviors to accomplish their business objectives. The researchers induced that fluency with the Malay language enabled the Chinese participants to develop a common understanding with the Malay counterparts.

Oliver (2012) demonstrated that symbolic interactionism bears a distinct similarity with interpretive description. Oliver clarified that interpretive description, as a methodology, was separate from phenomenology. Interpretive description originated in healthcare where an urgency for publishing description-level research outweighed the value of capturing the essence of a particular lived experience (p. 410). Despite this fundamental difference between phenomenology and interpretive description, the theoretical foundations of symbolic interactionism were equally compatible with each method, according to Oliver.

Oliver's deductions about symbolic interactionism as a theoretical framework underpinning interpretive description was appropriate for describing phenomena. Oliver highlighted how understanding human complexity requires inductive study that extends beyond mere description. The need for qualitative research to develop understanding was often overlooked or left assumed as a central tenet of symbolic interactionism (Mulyana

& Zubair, 2015; Snow, 2001). The role of symbolic interactionism as a pragmatic, natural, and behavioral foundation assumes individuals derived meaning from personal experiences. This similarity aligns with Husserlian phenomenology and supports a rich inquiry into rapport development and native language use.

Snow (2001) emphasized that symbolic interactionism drew significant criticism for being overly restrictive as originally described by Mead and Blumer. Snow posited that four principles applied to symbolic interactionism in ways that expand the theoretical applicability. Interactive determination, symbolism, emergence, and human agency served as guiding principles for applying symbolic interactionism according to Snow. Interactive determinism referred to the importance of context when studying how people derive meaning. Symbolism included both structural and constructive elements as symbols become routine and often remain overlooked while inciting responses. Consequently, human behavior may be driven by conscious or sub-conscious meanings ascribed to certain symbols, based on context. This thesis contradicts Heidegger's philosophical position regarding deliberate cognition.

Snow's (2001) view aligned with the cultural view posited by Kramsch (1998; 2013), but complicates the application of symbolic interactionism as a research theory. Emergence referred to the dynamic and evolutionary nature of social interaction and social structures. Finally, human agency referred to the dynamic and interdependent nature of how people contend with society, culture, and other external influences when interpreting their experiences. Snow provided a strong argument that symbolism is an

implicit element when interpreting lived experiences. Snow questioned the potential for objectivity by individuals recounting their experiences, by extension.

Phenomenology enables research into the essence of a phenomenon (Dowling & Cooney, 2012). The underlying foundations and assumptions of symbolic interactionism align with those of Husserlian phenomenology enabling deeper study (Charon & Hall, 2001; Vagle, 2007). Pragmatic, natural, and behavioristic foundations underpin traditional phenomenological symbolic interactionism traditions appropriate for studying the practical development of professional intercultural relationships in high tempo, demanding environments common in advisory situations.

Although how cognition affects perception and interpretation remains controversial, the role of symbolism represents a common theme in cultural research and phenomenological symbolic interactionism studies (Kramsch, 2013; Mulyana & Zubair, 2015; Oliver, 2012; Snow, 2001). Giorgi (2009) posited that qualitative human research was appropriate for pursing meaning as a research objective. The presumption that each individual interprets phenomena individually based on their composite experiences, cultural values, and mental processes is commonly accepted. Giorgi (2009) emphasized the importance of developing knowledge over adherence to a research design.

Pursuing an understanding of the meaning derived by Afghan counterparts to U.S. advisors' uses of their native languages requires gleaning the essence of rapport development through the eyes of those counterparts who lived the experience. The underpinning assumptions that people interpret their experiences and form perceptions that shape their perspectives of reality support the value of a phenomenological symbolic

interaction study into rapport and native language use (Kramsch, 1998; Giorgi, 2009; Vagle, 2014). Captured perspectives of lived experiences shared by volunteers who worked with U.S. advisors may introduce new insights into how rapport is built.

Participant Selection Logic

Vagle (2014) referred to van Manen when he emphasized the need to explore how experiences were lived rather than envisioned in theory. Selecting appropriate participants experienced in building rapport with U.S. advisors represents a central tenet of purposeful sampling in qualitative research per Patton (2014). Availability and access represented unique challenges in Afghanistan, hence elements of opportunity and snowball sampling strategies were necessary.

Roles are particularly important when studying relationships (Brunner, 2010; Chemers, 1968). Consequently, participants met criteria as Afghan officials with experiences partnering with U.S. advisors. Participants included soldiers, law enforcement officers, and other government officials in ministries who worked in official capacities. Each participant received dedicated and verifiable advice from assigned advisors.

Functional fluency in English was required. U.S. advisory activities remain ongoing in Afghanistan after 15 years of U.S. involvement during the current conflict (Brunner, 2010). Many military officers and officials are fluent in English after years of working with U.S. and NATO advisors.

Participants were physically located in natural settings in Afghanistan and the United States. Six participants were living in Afghanistan at the time of the interviews,

and 9 were living in the United States. Three participants in the Pilot Study lived in Afghanistan, and one lived in the United States. The participants living in the U.S. were still actively engaged with the Afghan community and efforts to improve conditions in Afghanistan. Vagle (2014) explained the value of conducting interviews and observation in naturalistic settings. The volatile security environment in Afghanistan prevented direct access. Use of telephone and Internet based applications like Skype and Facebook messenger chat mitigated access limitations. Increasing interactions between Afghan officials and U.S. government, military, and business counterparts located in the U.S. using Internet applications made this approach viable. Where internet access was not possible, I conducted telephonic interviews.

Opportunity and snowball sampling yielded potential participants located throughout Afghanistan and the United States that would have otherwise remained unknown. Purposeful sampling can enhance quality research synthesis (Herek, 2012). The highly personal nature of relationships imply that individual experiences and perspectives vary regarding how and why rapport developed. Purposeful sampling however, served to help in synthesizing the commonalities between participants' experiences.

This study sample included 15 participants to achieve data saturation (Patton, 2014). Interviews continued until 12 were conducted and analyzed; three additional interviews were then conducted confirming saturation for a total of 15 participants. Conducting semistructured interviews across a diverse sample enhanced the richness of the data in this study.

Potential participants were queried for qualifications as meeting study requirements before interview appointments are made. Two potential participants misconstrued the exact nature of government service; during interviews, it became evident that they had served in Afghanistan as consultants working for the Afghan Government as opposed to working directly for the Government in an official capacity. In those two cases, the interviews were completed, but the interview data were excluded from analysis. In this way, confidentiality was maintained and those two participants were protected from any trauma, discomfort, or potential cultural insult that could have resulted from early termination of the interview.

Instrumentation

Semistructured individual interviews served as the primary instrument for collecting data (Appendix A). Interviews addressed the participants' experiences with the phenomenon from a holistic perspective. To accomplish this, interviews accounted for heterogeneous differences and homogeneous similarities in perspectives (Patton, 2014). Continuity between the individual interviews was achieved using the researcher-developed interview protocol that provided a common foundation to all interviews. A researcher developed script ensured consistency and accuracy of the interview questions. The interview protocol also served to align the individual interviews with the research questions and the pilot test results.

A field test conducted between November 15, 2015 and December 15, 2015 concluded that interview questions listed in Appendix A aligned with the two research questions for this study. The four field test respondents concurred that the primary

interview questions provided a sufficient foundation to acquire data to address the research questions. Two of the field test participants, Drs. Grau and Dew, who are deeply familiar with Afghan culture and conflict zones, determined that the revised interview questions were culturally attuned.

Vagle (2014) and Giorgi (2007) suggested that researchers can mitigate researcher bias and enhance validity by remaining focused on the participants' experiences with the phenomenon during interviews. Keeping the interviews focused on their perceptions of developing rapport, the antecedents of rapport, and the impacts that native language use (by their advisors) meant to them increased validity and reduced bias within the research. The interview protocol served to focus the interviews.

The theoretical and conceptual frameworks for this study served as a guide for developing the interview protocol while accounting for cultural nuances. Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) emphasized that servant leadership was recognized through specific dimensions measured through the Servant Leadership Survey (SLS) including, empowerment, accountability, standing back, humility, authenticity, courage, stewardship, and acceptance. These dimensions align with the guidance for advisors outlined in Army doctrine (U.S. Army, 1990, 2009) and advisor experiences (Ramsey, 2006). The doctrinal factors of understanding, mutual trust, and respect form interdependent aspects that underpin the SLS dimensions. Semistructured interviews helped focus the participants on describing their experiences building rapport with their advisors and highlighting how native language use affected rapport development.

Pilot Study

Pilot studies can lead to improved quality in research methodology by validating specific elements of the proposed design, according to Leon, Davis, and Kraemer (2011). Intercultural research is inherently complex and linguistic barriers can set conditions for miscommunication and misunderstandings. A pilot study focused on validating the semistructured interview protocols mitigated risks to the validity and credibility and lead to a higher quality outcome.

A pilot study may be considered a dummy-run of the larger study, but involves different objectives and is not considered a substitute for a complete research study (Leon, Davis, & Kraemer, 2011; Whitehead, Sully, & Campbell, 2014). This pilot study validated the interview protocols and verified the alignment of the research questions, interview questions, overall research design, and methodology. Whitehead et al., (2014) warned against confusing pilot studies with larger studies focused on determining the feasibility of interventions. It is possible for the pilot study to influence the final research design based on those objectives and the information revealed during the pilot study.

Recruitment took place from a group of former Afghan translators one of whom was working in the United States; the other three former interpreters were living in Afghanistan. These candidates worked with U.S. advisors and are fluent in Afghan dialects and English. Candidates who volunteered to participate in the pilot study received complete instructions and explanations of the purpose of the study. After building rapport with each participant during an introduction and overview period, a 60-minute interview took place based on the interview protocol in Appendix A. Analysis of

the complete interview process confirmed the accuracy and usefulness of the instructions, appropriateness of the interview protocol and the research design.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

Vagle (2014) described the phenomenological data collection strategy in terms of the concepts of bracketing and bridling. Whereas bridling can be considered as an evolutionary step beyond bracketing, both concepts refer to approaches that promote an open-minded attitude for the researcher. Selection of participants and data collection methods focus on answering the research questions in a holistic manner and in context.

As the researcher, I conducted semistructured interviews in English. Some terms occasionally required clarification, but interviews were completed in English. Each interview was transcribed commercially and were generally returned to the respective participant within three days providing each the opportunity to review the comments and provide amendments or clarifications within two workdays, if desired by each participant. Instructions to each participant explained that a lack of a response would be considered a concurrence with the transcription as written. Of 12 interviews conducted, 9 were recorded and transcribed; 3 participants chose not to be recorded. In those 3 cases, I used my notes to construct interview records and asked participants to verify the accuracy of my interview records (Doyle, 2007); two of these participants reviewed and edited or validated the interview record. The third interview record was accepted as written without comment.

The first research question focused on collecting the participants' perspectives on the antecedents to building rapport between advisors and their counterparts. This question

focused on gaining the insights into what contributed to building rapport from the counterparts' perspectives. Participant recruitment and selection began with a list of nominated candidates from former military colleagues and former Afghan translators. This group was supplemented by other Afghans currently living in the U.S. or Afghanistan through snowball recruiting. Snowball recruiting involved participants contacting the individuals they recommended and gaining approval for inclusion before I was either provided contact information (e.g., email address or Facebook identifier); in 3 cases snowball recruits were given my contact information and made contact with me.

Due to access concerns in Afghanistan, the primary method for data collection was interviews conducted through videoconferencing or telephone technologies. Skype or Facebook messenger chat, or telephones were widely available and allowed real time face to face or voice dialogue. Interviews were conducted in the participants' offices or homes and computer applications enabled audio-only recording of the interviews, which was backed up using a recorder.

Interviews between the participants and myself, as the researcher, lasted between 35 and 60 minutes. Participants' schedules governed the frequency of data collection events. Participants' convenience and availability remained a paramount consideration beyond avoiding the possible ethical considerations such as interrupting participants' busy work schedules. Each interview began with an introduction oriented on establishing rapport and framing the context of the advisor-counterpart relationship. Semistructured interview protocols guided open-ended interviews focused on gaining an understanding of the essence of rapport through the lived experiences of the participants. Concluding

each interview was a debriefing statement that thanked participants for their contributions, informed the participants that a transcript was forthcoming for their review with deadlines for responses, and asked permission for subsequent contact in case there was a need for further clarification.

The second research question focused on gaining the participants' perspectives on how their advisors' uses of their native language affected building rapport. Explicit was an assumption that there may be symbolic meanings assigned to the native language use by the counterpart. The interviews oriented on determining if this assumption was supported by the participants lived experiences.

Interviews with each participant were continuous and seamless retaining the context of the phenomenon, except in a few cases when technical difficulties (e.g., internet signal degradation) created brief interruptions. The total duration of each interview did not exceed 60 minutes. I interviewed each participant via Skype, Facebook messenger chat, or telephone call at times most convenient for them. Each interview involved an audio record contingent upon approval of each participant; three participants elected not to be recorded. I confirmed essential points noted during each interview were confirmed at the end of each interview to improve clarity and understanding. Each participant indicated that subsequent contact would be acceptable in case follow up was necessary.

Giorgi (2009) emphasized that the pursuit of knowledge was the paramount. More important than remaining loyal to a particular research methodology, Giorgi posited that determining the essence of the phenomenon was the most important factor in conducting research. As the sole researcher in this study, my focus remained on determining the primary antecedents to building rapport and understanding how native language use contributes to rapport development.

Data Analysis Plan

Formal data analysis began after completion of 12 interviews although I did perform initial hand coding during and after each interview. Consistent themes that emerged from the initial 12 interviews appeared to represent saturation. I conducted 3 additional interviews and confirmed achievement of saturation. No additional themes emerged. Had other themes emerged, the process would have continued until saturation.

Semistructured interviews provided the primary source data. Field notes compiled through observations made during the interviews complimented audio records and transcribed interviews. The resulting data represented a synthesis of interpretations presented as perspectives by counterparts who experienced the rapport building process with their American advisors. Formulating a plan to unravel the foundational elements from the essence of rapport was itself a complex task that required multiple levels of analysis (Smith et al., 2009). Once accomplished, this multi-level analysis addressed the first research question.

Considering the potential symbolism assigned to specific acts or language by the participants added an additional level of analysis beyond traditional interpretive

phenomenology. Interpreting the participants' descriptions of their lived experiences required that I continually and repeatedly went beyond identifying that an act or phenomenon was meaningful. I pursued understanding why a particular act or phenomenon was meaningful (Charon & Hall, 2009; Smith et al., 2009). Answering the second research question placed an additional requirement beyond a phenomenological analysis perspective. I had to go beyond describing a phenomenon, and beyond identifying that a phenomenon or act was important, to develop an understanding of why the participant found the phenomenon meaningful.

To accommodate the complexity of rapport, as a social phenomenon, and the potential symbolisms ascribed to acts by the participants, my analysis plan built on the interpretive analytical process described by Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009). Additional analytic iterations focused on the potential symbolisms related or implied by the participants. Analysis of intrinsically complex interview transcripts and recordings was a multi-step process leading to analysis of the data at multiple levels from many perspectives.

Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) presented six steps for interpretive phenomenological analysis, but implied that the deepest possible levels of interpretation should be the goal of phenomenological researchers. The six steps outlined by Smith, Flowers, and Larkin provided a useful and effective framework for conducting deep, multi-level phenomenological analysis (Cotterill, 2012; Omari, Razeq, & Fooladi, 2015). These six steps also provided sufficient flexibility for researchers to consider the

symbolic aspects of the phenomenon involved in the interactions. These six steps included:

1. Immerse oneself in the original data
2. Annotate the interview records to reveal how participants were thinking
3. Develop the emerging themes
4. Link and cross-link the emergent themes
5. Repeat the process with each interview
6. Identify and clarify shared patterns

The process began with the deep immersion into the data. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) constructed an analytical framework that depends on the researcher developing an intimate familiarity with the data in its original form. The authors posited that researchers can analyze the data in an interview from multiple perspectives by reading and re-reading the transcripts, and by repeatedly listening to the audio recordings of the interviews. Consequently, during this first step, and the second, I focused more on becoming intimately familiar with the data. I also attempted to become aware of the participant's thought process by reflecting on the interview through iterative reviews of the data.

During the initial reviews of the data, preferably in unedited audio formats, notes taken highlighted key indicators of how each participant thought about the experienced phenomenon. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) emphasized that these early stages of the analysis are the most time consuming (p. 83). I focused on subtle queues as well as specific statements made by the participant. Using audio recordings (or textual records

when audio record was not possible) notes highlighted how each participant discussed and addressed the phenomenon. Pauses and vocal intonations provided key indications as to how important, dramatic, or mundane a participant may have considered a particular act or event. Although Smith, Flowers, and Larkin did not specifically address the use of notes for coding, the descriptive, linguistic, and conceptual annotations logically informed the coding process that formally begins in step three of the process.

Coding. Developing emerging themes involved hand coding and analysis of the data. The conceptual and theoretical frameworks for this study informed the coding process through In Vivo and open coding strategies (Miles et al., 2014; Saldana, 2012). Coding the interviews from this study was a demanding and complex process requiring several strategies. A limited number of coding terms originated from the frameworks underpinning this study. Other terms were derived from the actual words or anecdotes conveyed by the participants capturing concepts directly from participants' responses (Stivers, 2015); hand coding recorded many of these in field notes during and immediately after interviewing. Still other codes were the products of inference after immersing myself in the data.

Since participants in this study were members of Afghan indigenous cultures it was important to apply an indigenous lens to the coding process (Ryan & Bernard, 2003; Saldaña, 2012). Indigenous terms may be sprinkled throughout the interview transcripts, even though the participants spoke English. Even though participants were proficient in English, use of indigenous terms or reliance on particular phrases signaled special meaning that did not translate directly into English. Some codes were initially derived in

the form of In Vivo coding from the conceptual and theoretical frameworks Saldana (2012). It was important that as the researcher, I remained open minded to avoid bias during interpretation, analysis, and coding of the data (Smith et al., 2009).

Software. The use of NVivo 11 software supported the coding and analysis processes (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). Smith, Flowers, and Larkin did not address the use of software, leaving those choices to the individual researcher's discretion. Experience using NVivo 10 throughout the doctoral course of study at Walden University clearly demonstrated that this software application provides a robust coding and analysis capability. Some learning was required on my part to accommodate using NVivo 11 since the new release possessed new features. Word and phrase frequency analysis assisted with the coding process, although some interpretation of the NVivo software output was required before finalizing the coding.

NVivo software also assisted with the fourth step in the data analysis process, which involved linking and cross-linking the emergent themes within each interview. This procedural step represented a preliminary effort to relate the emerging themes. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) acknowledged that subsequent work may compel a researcher to return to earlier analysis and revise coding and analysis (p. 96). Linking and cross linking coding required numerous reviews of data coding in a three cases.

Repeating the process for each subsequent interview represents the fifth step in the analysis process according to Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009). The fifth step became increasingly informed as the analysis of each subsequent case proceeded since additional information strengthened the coding set. During this step mitigating bias

became a concern; following the process in a disciplined manner became a major effort. Remaining open minded and following the process through the analysis of each individual interview mitigated potential researcher bias.

Step six, which involves identifying thematic patterns across cases began as I immersed myself in each individual interview. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) suggested developing a master table of themes, which I did in NVivo. While this action was extremely useful during manual analysis and coding, NVivo software streamlined this process. This step in the analysis process served multiple purposes. Besides maintaining a visual depiction of common themes, this step also provided links to specific textual examples that supported the development of the study findings. A graphical representation of the thematic analyses complements the study analysis in Table 2.

Outliers. Outliers represent special cases that appear to be inconsistent with other interview transcripts. Each of the outlier situations require special emphasis in analysis and interpretation (Miles et al., 2014). There is no fixed process for managing outliers. In some cases, indigenous coding or interpretation may resolve the appearance of outliers. At other times, however, outliers may warrant acknowledgement as findings worthy of future study. The outlier case required individual consideration.

It is important to note that each step in the analysis included a special emphasis on identifying potentially meaningful symbolism. Charon and Hall (2001) differentiated between signs and symbols citing that signs may lead to involuntary responses, but symbols lead to the assignment of meaning by participants. While the role of signs was

not absolute in nature, the impact of symbols on how participants interpret their lived experiences makes symbolism relevant to this analysis of how participants understand rapport and the use of their native language by their advisors.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Credibility

Giorgi (2009) disagreed with Husserl's assessment that a fixed procedure was necessary for scientific credibility (p. 12). Husserl emphasized that acceptable procedures for validity underpinned the credibility of qualitative research. Giorgi agreed with the underlying need for credibly to validate the researcher's inferences, but strayed away from the need for rigid processes.

Patton (2014) highlighted that using multiple coders to cross-validate themes and patterns can minimize researcher bias. Vagle (2014) determined that separate participants articulating consistent themes from separate lived experiences also provides a degree of validation consistent with triangulation (p. 66). Vagle goes on to reiterate the value attained by a researcher who becomes deeply immersed in the data. Together these methodologists provided insights that shaped the approach I took to establish credibility in this research.

Patton (2014) explained investigator triangulation refers to using multiple researchers or analysts. Three scholars, Dr. Les Grau, Dr. Michelle Preiksaitis, and Joyce Busch reviewed the coding and validated the theme development. Dr. Grau and Ms. Busch were both familiar with current conditions in Afghanistan and Afghan culture. Additionally, using audio records of the interviews through Skype or Facebook

messenger provided a measure of data triangulation by providing a form of observation data in addition to the transcribed records of the interviews. Together these various methods of triangulation improved the quality of this study and reduced potential researcher biases.

Culture forms a central element in intercultural symbolic interactionism research and all forms of social science research (Charon & Hall, 2009; Kramsch, 2013). Gaining the advantage of culturally attuned perspectives for coding helped to mitigate researcher bias and helped to develop deeper levels of cultural understanding in nuance. Spending significant time immersing myself into the data through multiple readings and reviews of audio recordings of the interviews from multiple perspectives served to increase understanding and enhance credibility. Inferences from themes gleaned from multiple participants' perspectives added to the credibility; interviewing continued until saturation was achieved.

Transferability

Rich, thick descriptions enhances the transferability of this research. Patton (2014) emphasized the importance of fit from a contextual perspective. Patton also referred to the importance of aligning the experiences of the various participants so that their related experiences correspondingly align. My selection of participants, although limited by environmental factors, maximized diversity. Consequently, the thick descriptions of the themes and patterns identified heavily shape the transferability within the limits of this study.

Dependability

Dependability is analogous to reliability according to Patton (2014). Patton emphasized the importance in qualitative research for adherence to systematic inquiry methods (p. 546). Vagle (2014) did not specifically address dependability. Vagle and Charon and Hall (2009) emphasized the need for consistency in both collection and analytical procedures, however. Use of semistructured interview protocols validated during pilot tests improved the systematic procedures used to collect data. Similarly, the use of consistent and systematic analytical protocols lead to consistent analysis of each participant's interview data supported achieving dependability. Notes taken during sequential readings of the data assisted in verifying unswerving adherence to data collection and analysis procedures. Reviewing coding and theme development repeatedly ensured consistency in analysis and improved dependability.

Confirmability

Bias is omnipresent. Per Patton (2014), the terms subjectivity and objectivity served to fuel a philosophical debate beyond a constructive focus on the quality and confirmability of research. Clearly explained procedures for data collection and analysis provide one element of confirmability. There was no compensation offered nor paid for participation in this research. Interview protocols established a framework fully confirmable by future researchers.

Reflexivity assisted in mitigating bias and increasing the confirmability of analysis. The importance of reflexivity increased as I became more immersed in the data. Only through reflection could I identify likely bias when applying subject matter expertise and iteratively studying and reviewing the data.

Ethical Procedures

International research is made more complex by the possible introduction of multiple standards for ethical research and ethical considerations surrounding communication issues. According to the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP), however, this research study was not complicated by multiple government imposed ethical standards (OHRP, 2015). Afghanistan does not possess separate guidelines for the ethical conduct of human research. Therefore, U.S. standards represented the sole standard for this study.

Patton (2014) posited that using protocols protects human subjects in qualitative research which tends to be more flexible and fluid than quantitative studies. Protocols enable accurate interpretation and translation of research and interview questions in multilingual studies. Protocols also facilitate more accurate and complete informed consent, which represents a major ethical concern. Informed consent supported ensuring that participants are not part of vulnerable groups and are safe from harm as a result of the study. All participants spoke fluent English, which helped to ensure informed consent was thoroughly understood and agreed to in this intercultural study.

Patton (2014) also suggested that establishing rapport provides an element of ethical authenticity to research as the researcher and participant establishes a relationship.

Positive rapport can minimize any reluctance or apprehension on the part of participants. There does exist, however, the potential for misinterpretation by participants who may confuse professional rapport with friendship (Duncombe & Jessop, 2002). Glesne (1989) differentiated between professional rapport and friendship. It is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that the purpose of the interviews and the scope of the relationship between researcher and participant remain clear during the study. Maintaining absolute clarity on the professional purpose of my rapport with the participants was a primary concern for me since the Afghan cultures are very relationship oriented.

Direct and indirect contacts made during advisory activities in Afghanistan between 2009 and 2014 provided initial recruits for participation. Subsequent snowball recruiting was managed to alleviate any concerns related to power dynamics or hierarchical relationships. No snowball recruiting involved hierarchical relationships.

Permission to provide me with contact information was gained by recommending participants before they provided contact information. In 3 cases, potential recruits were given my contact information and contacted me; informed consent was then provided either by email or in two cases was read to the participants before interviews began.

Recommendations received for potential participants were pursued separately from those making the recommendations once contact information was received and confirmed. Informed consent made it clear that participation was separate from official capacities, was entirely voluntary, and was entirely confidential. Instructions included guidance to ensure privacy and protection from inadvertent information exposure during the interviews. Power and influence considerations were mitigated in this way.

No compensation of any type was offered for participating in this study. Participation were entirely voluntary. Since this study is not action research, no interventions were involved. Participants received instructions during informed consent that acknowledged the right to terminate participation at any time during the interview processes.

Confidentiality was maintained through data collection, analysis, reporting, and subsequent storage of the data. Transcripts of the interviews will be maintained without direct indication of the identities of the participants. A control instrument linking the identities of the participants and the interview identifiers was maintained separately and not shared. Requests for access to the data transcripts made through the IRB can be supported for up to three years after publication of this study. Data from the interviews will be maintained for five years in accordance with international IRB instructions.

No translations were required since all participants spoke English. Since participation was voluntary and completely outside of any official capacity, no external permissions or authorities were necessary. I verified current Afghan government policies to ensure that this condition remained in effect when recruitment and data collection began. All requirements for permissions and authorities were met.

Summary

Chapter 3 provided the general methodological approach to this phenomenological symbolic interactionism study. This chapter also reviewed the methodologies for recruiting participants, collecting the data and performing analysis.

Chapter 3 also provided sufficient detail to ensure confirmability and demonstrate that this proposed research resulted in a quality study that met scholarly and ethical standards.

International research involves additional considerations. Chapter 3 provided the information that addressed how the study methodology accommodated such considerations as interview communications. Description of the methodology in Chapter 3 provided the context for data collection and analysis. This chapter provided a description of the approach that enable confirmation of this study and sets conditions for understanding the results that will be explained in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Results

I explain the methods of data analysis in Chapter 4. I address how the data contributed to answering the research questions posed in this phenomenological symbolic interactionism study. Data for this study were collected using semistructured interviews over a period of 8 months.

The first part of Chapter 4 includes a review of the purpose, design, and execution of this study. I describe how data were collected and analyzed, including the coding logic, a review of the findings, and issues of trustworthiness. The analysis includes a discussion of the archived recorded and transcribed interviews and representative participant comments. Interviews provided rich content from a broad spectrum of experiences in developing rapport. At the end of Chapter 4, I review my efforts to conduct this research in a trustworthy manner and summarize the results.

Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological symbolic interactionism study was to identify and report what foreign counterparts perceived to be the elements supporting rapport development and to identify, interpret, and report on what symbolic meaning Afghan counterparts ascribed to the rudimentary use of a native language by advisors during rapport development. Previous research focused on how the beliefs of U.S. advisors related to rapport development among foreign and Afghan counterparts (Hajjar, 2014, Zbylut, 2010); my research extended this to the differing perspectives of the Afghan counterparts.

Glesne (1989) and Ho (2011) characterized rapport as a professional relationship distinct from friendship. Cushman (personal communications, 2008, January 20) alluded to the distinction between professional rapport and friendship when he described the complex relationship that evolved between him and Lieutenant General Truang between the early 1960s and the mid 1970s. By interviewing foreign counterparts who possessed experience working with U.S. advisors, I studied how foreign counterparts perceived their advisors' attempts to build rapport and use the native language in the context of building rapport in multiple settings until saturation.

Pilot Study

Walden University's institutional review board provided approval to proceed with data collection on April 21, 2016, under approval number 04-21-16-0365177. The purpose of my pilot study was to validate the collection instrument as recommended by Leon et al. (2011), who found that pilot studies can improve the quality of the overarching study. Intercultural research is inherently complex, and linguistic barriers can introduce miscommunication and misunderstandings. My pilot study focused on validating the data collection instruments, in this case semistructured interview protocols, to mitigate risks to validity and credibility.

Four former Afghan interpreters participated in this pilot study. Each participant engaged in a semistructured interview involving the interview protocol for this study. Participants possessed a variety of educational backgrounds from undergraduate-level interpreters to those with doctorate degrees. English proficiency ranged from functionally adequate for discussing the interview questions to an ability to articulate at the level of a

university professor. My pilot study validated the interview protocol and yielded two insights into how Afghans responded to questions.

First, the term *perception* is central to phenomenological research (Vagle, 2014). Afghans translate the verb *to perceive* as *to realize*. Although this is consistent with English synonyms, it is very specific whereas there may be broader interpretations in American English (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2016). Other interpretations include *to regard* or *to recognize*. Understanding the specific interpretation of this key term supported the accuracy and use of the interview protocol while providing insights into how Afghans would interpret and respond to the interview questions.

There was also a consistent tendency for participants to stray from answering questions about their professional relationships toward effectiveness in anecdotal experiences. The friendly nature of Afghans, from a cultural perspective, seemed to commonly draw the pilot study participants away from a critical discussion of rapport with their counterparts into positive descriptions of Americans in general. Equipped with this insight, supplemental questions during interviews helped to refocus participants on their rapport when necessary.

Responses to interview questions provided data that were analyzed to answer the research questions. Distinct insights into how Afghans commonly interact with U.S. advisors refined my expectations and understanding of how future interviews would transpire. Based on the outcomes of this pilot study, the semistructured interview protocol provided in Appendix A as used unaltered from the original form.; supplemental questions were injected when necessary to clarify perceptions.

Research Setting

Security and economic conditions in Afghanistan continue to deteriorate, which clearly impacted the participants' interactions with their U.S. counterparts to differing degrees over time. Participants noted such impacts when applicable, such as how travel restrictions inhibited interaction with their U.S. counterparts. My pilot study involved four participants who were former interpreters; these participants fell into two distinct categories: one lived in the United States and was free from the immediate impacts of security or economic concerns in Afghanistan, and three still reside in Afghanistan. Despite the dramatic differences in their respective environments, interview results were relatively consistent indicating that participants could dissociate from current conditions and respond to interview questions.

Six participants were physically located in the United States when interviewed, while nine were in Afghanistan and were interviewed by phone or via Internet. It is unclear whether security conditions or other life experiences led some participants to choose not to be recorded. Although four participants chose not to be recorded, 11 allowed audio recording and transcription of their interviews. I emailed transcripts of each interview to respective participants within 2 days to enable transcript review to increase accuracy and enhance credibility (Doyle, 2007); 6 participants provided feedback. Three approved transcripts as written, and three returned edited transcripts.

The diverse nature of participants' experiences provided perspectives ranging from those of police and soldiers with little formal education who developed rapport during combat or combat-like conditions to those who worked in ministerial offices in administrative settings. Regardless of the nature of their work, each participant was interviewed by telephone or via Internet from the relative safety of their homes or offices during nonbusiness hours per their choices. After comparing the responses of participants who currently reside in the United States with those who currently live and work in Afghanistan, I determined that security and economic factors did not appear to influence participants' responses during interviews.

Demographics

All participants were men between the ages of 24 and 60 years. Of the 15 participants, 5 came from Afghan security forces, and the remaining 10 worked in a variety of government offices. I interviewed 3 soldiers from the Afghan National Army and Commandos and two police officers from the Afghan National Police, as well as 10 members of various government offices and ministries. I interviewed 12 participants during the initial study and three additional participants to confirm saturation.

Participants ranged from junior officers within the Army and police forces to upper ranking members of ministries. Two Afghans who held minister-level positions participated, while 2 others held principle advisor positions of ministerial-level rank. Seven participants held positions in a variety of ministries or government offices at the director or senior manager levels.

All participants spoke English to a level of fluency to make the interviews possible; eight participants had attended universities in the United States. Four participants had held positions as either full time or adjunct faculty in Afghanistan or U.S. universities. Three participants had also served as translators or interpreters at various times when not working for the Afghan government.

Data Collection

I verified data saturation after collecting data from 15 participants; initially, I interviewed 12 participants; then, to ensure saturation, I conducted 3 more interviews. I collected data in the form of semistructured interviews including 8 questions listed in Interview Guide in Appendix A. Three interview questions focused on answering Research Question 1: What do foreign counterparts believe to be the antecedents to building effective rapport with their advisors? Five interview questions focused on answering Research Question 2: What symbolic meaning do foreign counterparts ascribe to their advisors' use of their native language and what affect did they perceive it had on rapport development? Data collection took place between August 23, 2016, and January 7, 2017.

I used a single data collection instrument, listed in Appendix A, as the basis of each interview. Depending on the answers provided by each participant, additional exploratory questions were asked, if necessary, to address each question. Each interview took place over telephone or Internet and lasted from 35 to 60 minutes. Fourteen of 15 participants contributed data to answer both research questions; one participant provided data by answering the first three interview questions but explained how his personal

experiences offered nothing toward interview questions 4 through 8, which addressed Research Question 1.

I recorded field notes during each interview. This approach allowed me to annotate points during each interview when participants were especially passionate about a point, or if they struggled with specific terms. Field notes also allowed me to ask specific follow-up questions to gain clarification on main points without interrupting the participant's response. The snowball recruiting and availability of the participants proved to be the primary factors in the frequency and scheduling of the data collection interviews. Afghans are very security conscious and would gain approval from potential participants before recommending them and providing contact information. Interviews took place every 1 to 3 weeks, with exceptions.

The initial plan described in Chapter 3 involved interviews no closer than 2 days. However, there was one instance in which interviews occurred on contiguous days and one other instance in which two interviews took place on the same day 8 hours apart, due to participant availability. Time zone differences between the Eastern United States and Afghanistan varied from 8.5 hours to 9.5 hours during the data collection period, which further complicated scheduling.

Participants were physically residents in the United States or Afghanistan. Five participants resided in the Eastern United States, and three resided in the Western United States; the remaining seven participants resided in Afghanistan. One participant maintained a very busy international travel schedule.

Interviews took place by Internet-enabled media or telephone, as planned. Six participants chose telephonic interviews, and I interviewed the remaining nine by Skype or Facebook Messenger. Six of the 9 participants interviewed by Skype or Facebook preferred to be interviewed in audiovisual mode, while the remainder used voice-only modes. Internet bandwidth limitations made audiovisual interviews impractical in two of the interviews. In two interviews begun via Facebook Messenger and telephone calls, participants experienced intermittent disruptions and forwarded written answers to questions to ensure clarity.

Interviews were audio recorded and subsequently transcribed when the participants consented. Four participants chose not to be recorded. In those cases, handwritten notes were taken. Three of the 4 participants who chose to not be recorded reviewed and verified the accuracy of the manually recorded interview transcripts; one did not respond, indicating acceptance. I wrote field notes during the 11 interviews that were recorded and used them to compliment the interview transcripts. Transcripts of all recorded interviews were forwarded to participants within 2 days to review and amend as they deemed appropriate. An extended power outage delayed timely completion of one interview transcript; I forwarded that transcript 7 days after the interview. Of the 11 participants whose interviews I recorded, six returned transcripts; three provided some edits, and three confirmed the accuracy of the transcripts as written. I accepted the remaining five transcripts as written per the instructions provided in the informed consent and interview introductions.

Data Analysis

I approached the data analysis in two steps: First, I focused on data from each interview by noting concepts and coding them; then I linked results across interviews. The units of analysis were the individual participants. Data were analyzed using the six-step approach created by Smith et al. (2009). Immersing myself in the data took place in several steps. First, I reviewed the audio recording of each interview while reading the transcript, for those participants who consented to record. My field notes included hand coding that I did during each interview. After reviewing my field notes, I read through the transcript again, annotating codes and potential quotations in the margins. In Vivo codes, those adopted from the Army rapport framework and servant leadership theory, or codes adopted from hand coding from my field notes were used when applicable; otherwise, emerging codes were identified and recorded.

I reviewed each transcript multiple times to identify and code key terms, phrases, and themes that emerged. I used NVivo 11 software to query key words used frequently; another reading of transcripts focused on the high-density words. I analyzed each interview following the same process. I reviewed each transcript four to seven times. After I grouped and linked the recurring codes into themes, I cross-linked them into hierarchical relationships. The resultant themes formed the basis of the analysis.

Coding

Miles et al., (2014) and Saldana (2012) described In Vivo codes as those drawn from theoretical or conceptual frameworks. In Vivo codes drawn from the Army Rapport Framework (U.S. Army, 1990; 2009) or the servant leadership theory (Van Dierendonck

and Nuijten, 2011) formed an initial group of codes used. The Army rapport framework (U.S. Army, 1990; 2009) identified *respect, understanding*, and *mutual trust* as the principle elements which contributed to building rapport. Respect, understanding, and trust served as three nodes and themes.

Servant leadership theory (Van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011) identified eight traits that served as foundational aspects of servant leaders. These eight traits included empowerment, accountability, standing-back, humility, authenticity, courage, stewardship, and interpersonal acceptance. These traits formed the remainder of the In Vivo codes used in this study.

I drew emergent codes from my field notes and each interview transcript. I drew some emergent codes from literal terminology used by participants. Recurring terms that emerged included *understanding, professional, culture, respect, genuine, and commitment.* Other codes such as *interaction, reciprocate, and standing back* were derived or assigned inductively based upon descriptions or anecdotes provided by participants. Smith et al., (2009) identified that researchers could improve the quality of inductive analysis by immersing themselves into the data. Yin (2009) supported this conclusion, further identifying that no single line of reasoning can is sufficient for inductive analysis.

Listening to a recorded interview first assisted me to develop a holistic view of each interview and gain an appreciation of the participant's mindset. Giorgi (2009) supported gaining a broad view of the whole story. Referring to transcripts and field notes repeatedly provided insights into how participants perceived their interactions with

U.S. advisors. For example, participants frequently spoke more quickly or raised their voices slightly when they grew passionate about a response. I highlighted such points for future reference in coding.

Role theory provided a valuable insight into the need to account for the wide range of experiences among the different participants. Harnisch (2011) addressed how roles and expectations affect perceptions and relationships. Expectations among the Afghans interviewed, and the working relationships or roles they experienced with their advisors, varied significantly. One participant, for example, acknowledged being too busy to spend much time with advisors, which presented a very different expectation than others who expressed expectation and desire to work closely and often with their advisors.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

When a qualitative researcher analyzes data, providing evidence that the resulting analysis is trustworthy helps to increase the quality of the research. I used the same definitions of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability as I discussed in Chapter 3. I followed the strategies outlined in Chapter 3, which explain further that my study's results are trustworthy. This section analyzes the evidential strength, methodological rigor, and paradigmatic consistency of my study.

Credibility

Although there is broad agreement underpinning the need for credibility in qualitative research, opinions vary regarding how to achieve it (Giorgi, 2009). Vagle (2014) explained that separate participants conveying consistent themes support

credibility akin to triangulation. Patton (2014) espoused that validating themes through multiple coders mitigates researcher bias, hence enhancing credibility.

During interviews, I asked clarifying questions to verify my understanding of central points and emerging themes. I also forwarded transcripts of interviews back to participants, including my transcribed notes for those participants who chose not to be recorded. Those members verified the accuracy and completeness of my notes; in total, six participants returned comments or validated the accuracy of transcripts.

Two scholars, Dr. Lester Grau, and Joyce Busch reviewed my coding; both are familiar with Afghanistan and the topic of this study. Both were consistent in finding my coding and derived themes to be supported by the data upholding the results of my analysis. I also used NVivo 11 software to facilitate coding and improve the consistency of my analysis approach. Using NVivo software made it easier to deconstruct themes to meaningful codes.

Transferability

Transferability allows readers to assess the applicability of this research to their respective environments and experience using their insights. Patton (2014) attached importance of fitting the study within its appropriate context. Transferability helps readers to determine how the study aligns with their environment.

To strengthen transferability, I included criteria for participation that provided context to this research. Clear criteria help readers frame and appreciate the perspectives of the study participants such as roles and responsibilities and their relationships to the

U.S. advisors. Further, I used quotations and vignettes from the interview data, grounding the analysis directly to the data.

Dependability

Consistent and systematic procedures are important for establishing dependability throughout collection and analysis (Charon & Hall, 2009; Elo et al., 2014; Patton, 2014; Vagle, 2014). I first field tested the data collection instrument with scholars who possessed expertise in data collection, intercultural competence and advising. Then, I validated the semistructured interview protocol (Appendix A) during the pilot test. The pilot test broadly validated the semistructured interview protocol. Consistent application of In Vivo codes taken from the theoretical and conceptual foundations of this study and the hand-coded notes that I took during each interview also strengthened consistency in coding and analysis procedures.

Confirmability

Qualitative researchers must try to avoid allowing their personal biases from impacting the results of their studies (citation). Confirmability results when bias does not sway results. Although bias is always present, clearly described procedures for data collection and analysis form one element of confirmability. Patton (2014) acknowledged the relationship between confirmability and objectivity but warned that philosophical debate between the two concepts could go beyond constructive measure. I used a few methods to lessen bias and increase confirmability: first, I did not offer compensation to participants, and next, I only included Afghans who provided official government service and who spoke English. I used semistructured interview protocols (Appendix A) for every interview. In Vivo codes drawn from the theoretical and conceptual foundations of this study were fully explained in the previous coding section.

Study Results

Unraveling the predecessors of rapport and uncovering the role that language played in rapport development from the essence of the professional relationships and the official work effort was a complex task based on the interpretive, analytical process described by Smith et al., (2009) and Vagle (2014). Participants' descriptions of their lived experiences ranged from concise explanations of their perceptions to allegorical examples. One participant described frustration in trying to explain through metaphor to U.S. advisors their need for "…learning how to catch fish." I immersed myself in the data from each participant interview several times to analyze and interpret each participant's contributions.

Thematic Outcomes

Themes emerged that addressed each research question. Interview questions one through three addressed Research Question 1; What do foreign counterparts believe to be the antecedents to building effective rapport with their advisors? Interview questions four through eight addressed Research Question 2: What symbolic meaning do foreign counterparts ascribe to their advisors' uses of their native language and what affect did they perceive it had on rapport development? Themes that arose in the analysis of responses to questions one, two, and three, did recur during analysis addressing Research Question 2. Table 1 depicts the relationships of each research question, interview question, and the resulting themes.

Table 1

Results of the Study

Research Question	Interview Questions	Themes
RQ1: What do foreign counterparts believe to be the antecedents to building effective rapport with their advisors?	1, 2, 3	Respect Understanding Working collaboratively Frequent interactions Genuine Interest Trust
RQ2: What symbolic meaning do foreign counterparts ascribe to their advisors' uses of their native language and what affect did they perceive it had on rapport development?	4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Respect Familiarity or Affinity Commitment

Predecessors to building effective rapport. Responses to the first three interview questions contained in Appendix A, and follow up questions, revealed five clear themes. Demonstrations of respect, by U.S. advisors, for Afghan culture,

developing understanding between counterparts, and working collaboratively together were the most frequently recurring themes related to developing rapport between counterparts. Other cited factors in building effective working relationships included frequent interactions and a demonstration of genuine interest in helping their Afghan counterparts.

Respect. All 15 participants interviewed emphasized the importance of demonstrating respect for Afghan culture. Participants described their lived experiences differently.

Participant 8 commented that: "Sometimes advisors would refer to us (ethnic Afghans) for cultural considerations or cultural relevance. That showed an appreciation or respect for Afghan culture."

Participant 9 described a particularly meaningful measure of respect from his lived experience: "They sort of respected the Afghan culture…I was noting that here in Ramadan, they wouldn't eat in the office. You know while other Afghans were fasting. That really left a good impression on us."

***Understanding*.** Developing understanding was the next most frequently occurring theme. Thirteen of 15 participants referred to the importance of developing mutual understanding with their U.S. advisors. Participants did not differentiate between an advisor understanding them personally from understanding Afghan culture. Representative comments about the importance of developing understanding included the following:

Participant 3 stated, “we developed a professional relationship built on a climate of mutual respect. We built close relationships based on mutual understanding.”

Participant 2 explained that "In Afghanistan much is done by personal relationships. Cultural familiarity is helpful to advisors. Discussion about families and personal lives helped to find a shared passion for rebuilding Afghanistan."

Participant 5 commented that "We had daily conversations,…"

Participant 6 emphasized that "When our advisors came to our social events and invited us to their events we interacted and developed better relationships, like friends.”

Participant 9 expressed strongly that, “Most of the American advisors, or any advisors, they would be sitting in their heavily guarded houses and wouldn’t even come out. They actually, literally, have no idea what is going on in daily life of these people and what they would go through.”

Other recurring themes included frequent interactions, demonstrating a genuine interest in helping their Afghan counterparts, and working together collaboratively. While not entirely exclusive, working together was typically characterized in a way focused on professional collaboration on a project, task, or mission whereas interacting was more closely related to social or interpersonal interactions. Thirteen of 15 participants referred to working together or teamwork as being especially important. Some representative comments about working together included:

Working together. Thirteen of 15 participants referenced teamwork or working together as contributing to building effective professional rapport. Participant 13 conveyed that Afghans typically did not differentiate between personal and professional

relationships before working closely with Americans. The difference between Afghan and American cultural perspectives regarding relationships was significant but narrowed over time while working with U.S. advisors according to respondents.

Participant 2 commented that "We worked through many problems together."

Participant 3 explained that "we worked as a team to achieve common goals. We had the strongest relationships, and I remain in touch with many even now years after we worked together." Participant 3 also commented in a more metaphorical manner that "Shared pain goes a long way."

Participant 8 explained how his U.S. advisor was inclusive and collaborative, "he involved Afghans in the planning process rather than trying to dictate a U.S.-type solution." He added that "Sharing experiences and bringing people together and working closely together," was significant.

Genuine interest. Advisors expressions of genuine interest in the challenges confronting their Afghan counterparts resonated among participants. Ten of 15 participants reported that it was important to them that their advisor expressed genuine interest in them and in the work they performed.

Participant 2 expressed how his advisor, "asked if we had problems. He helped solve problems."

Participant 4 described a positive experience thus: "So many of them [advisors] were in our office every day going over every single thing we needed."

Participant 5 similarly commented that "Our advisors were genuinely interested in helping us and they were really helpful."

Interacting. The opportunity to interact with their U.S. advisors, or the negative impact of being unable to interact with them, also represented a prevalent theme among participants' responses. Nine participants associated the importance of the time spent together and their ability to interact with their advisors to their ability to develop rapport. Lived experiences among Afghan participants ranged from very positive to very negative. Respondents who provided negative responses recounted anecdotes describing the negative impact that short tours of duty and restrictions on travel had on advisors' effectiveness.

Participant 4 conveyed a sense of frustration with a lack of understanding and rapport that resulted from a distinct lack of interaction: "I told them to come to the ministry. They stay at the Embassy; it is like staying in a guest house that is very remote with security. They were only coming once to the ministry twice a week."

Participant 6 commented that "restrictions on travel detracted from their effectiveness." He added that they were limited to "Bi-weekly meetings, email, and phone calls. The travel restrictions limited our ability to interact."

Participant 8 conversely expressed a positive practice with advisors, "Sharing experiences and bringing people together and working closely together."

Participant 11 described rapport building similarly: "…around maybe the first month because there wasn't established everything, so every day they took me to the lunch, and we speak a lot. They ask a lot of question about Afghans. I also ask. We were chatting a lot."

This data suggests that frequent interaction is essential to building effective rapport between counterparts.

Trust. Trust was addressed by only four of participants, making it a minor theme, which differed from expectations drawn from the conceptual framework. Those participants who referred to trust addressed it quite strongly.

Participant M7 noted that "in particular they encouraged the notion of working together they believed in the agenda, we trusted each other." He added, "that trust was at the heart of everything else."

Participant M8 spoke from an intercultural perspective stating, "It demonstrated an appreciation of Afghan culture and context that contributed to building trust."

Symbolic Meaning of native language use. The phrasing from participants varied, but respect, commitment, and a sense of familiarity or amity represented recurring themes of symbolic meaning, most commonly in a cultural context. Kramsch (2013) characterized language as arguably the most significant symbol of a culture and several participants echoed that perspective. Participants broadly emphasized cultural context in discussing the value of advisors who spoke or attempted to speak Dari or Pashto with Afghan counterparts. The finding suggested that participants were sensitive to the difficulty in achieving fluency in either language and to the effort made by advisors in attempting to learn and improve their language skills.

Overall, 14 of 15 participants indicated that speaking some Dari or Pashto, even at the most rudimentary level held symbolic meaning that benefited rapport development. Findings suggested that the effort made to learn and use some Dari or Pashto symbolized

respect, commitment, or some beneficial level of understanding or familiarity for the Afghan people and culture. Ten participants characterized native language use as a symbol of respect. Eight respondents indicated that using even common greetings, phrases, or key terms symbolized an affinity with the counterpart and Afghan people. And, seven participants related language use to commitment.

Respect. Ten participants perceived advisors' uses of Dari or Pashto as a symbol of respect. Kramsch (2013) characterized language as arguably the largest symbol of a given culture. Responses varied regarding terminology or descriptions, but Afghans placed great value on even the most rudimentary use of Dari or Pashto.

Participant 2 explained that "Afghans happy to have somebody talking Dari!" He went on to add, "Greater respect. Very effective for us."

Participant 4: "What they show is that you are respecting their culture. That you understand their culture."

Participant 4 expounded on his perception of native language use: "Respecting the culture, they are respecting the people, the religion exacting hands on their concerns. You know, greeting them with 'Wa salam alekum,' 'how are you…' How else are you getting a sense of respect for their culture, the people, their religion, establishing relationships with local people not only a sense of respect this is--strengthening kind of showing they are very sincere they are very genuine towards to Afghan people."

Participant 6: "I did appreciate them when they greeted me in Persian. It showed that they respected our culture. Language and culture are codependent."

Participant 8: “Using specific Afghan terms like Tashkil or Jerga helped a lot. Using specific terms like that seemed to confer some understanding and respect to Afghan culture. It demonstrated an appreciation of Afghan culture and context that contributed to building trust. It helped to remove any sense of being threatened (culturally). Implied a sense of respect to Afghan values.”

***The sense of affinity or familiarity*.** Eight participants expressed that speaking even a limited amount of Dari or Pashto symbolized cultural affinity. The terminology varied, but consistently respondents expressed that using native greetings or technical terms increased the level of cordiality between counterparts.

Participant 5: “when they spoke some Persian, it opened the door to more.”

Participant 8: “using even a word or two at the beginning or end [of a meeting] seemed to work magic.” “Just using a few words seemed to remove barriers and promote feeling closer.”

Participant 9: “If the advisors speak the local language. It gives a level of comfort between the two to work together.”

Participant 14: “...you should speak the native language or at least try that and so forth, you will now get to know the people. They will open up and then be able to not be as formal.”

***Commitment*.** Afghan respondents placed importance on what they perceived as commitment on the part of their U.S. advisors. Seven of 15 participants stated or alluded to commitment as being significant regarding the effort it took to learn Dari or Pashto. Emphasis was placed on the effort made to continue learning the native languages.

Participant 3: “Yes, it mattered! It served as a signal to invest in the relationship.” He then added: “When they continued to learn the language, it served as a symbol of commitment.” Participant 3 explained: “It strengthened our relationship.”

Participant 5: “The effort they made to continue learning Persian was really meaningful.”

Participant 13 described an anecdotal experience:

> “Hey, what is this in Dari?" I say like, "This is this, this is that." Okay, he’s improving his Dari, and I believe he’s now able to read the characters in Dari, and for example, one time we were in the [Court], there was a magazine named Justice, but Justice in Dari is “adalat.” This adalat was written in Dari alphabet, he said to me, "Hey that is adalat?" I said, "Yes, that is adalat." He’s improving.”

Comparison of Responses to Genuine Interest, Commitment, and Trust

Only four participants referred to trust as an antecedent to rapport, which alluded to a variance from the Army conceptual framework (U.S. Army, 1990; 2009) and prior research (Hajjar, 2014). Table 2 depicts participants’ references to genuine interest, commitment, trust, and time spent together. The near exclusivity of references to commitment and trust coupled with a high degree of association between references to time spent together with genuine interest and commitment is noteworthy.

Table 2

Comparison of Genuine Interest, Commitment, Trust, and Time

Participants	Genuine Interest	Commitment	Trust	Working Together	Time and Interaction
M2			**X**	**X**	
M3	**X**	**X**		**X**	
M4	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**
M5	**X**	**X**			**X**
M6	**X**				**X**
M7	**X**		**X**	**X**	
M8			**X**	**X**	
M9	**X**			**X**	**X**
M11				**X**	**X**
M12				**X**	
M13	**X**	**X**		**X**	**X**
M14	**X**	**X**		**X**	**X**
M15		**X**		**X**	
M16	**X**	**X**		**X**	**X**
M17	**X**			**X**	**X**

Outlier

One participant expressed a dramatically different perspective regarding his advisor's fluency in Dari or Pashto. Whereas other participants associated greater fluency with heightened influence or greater familiarity, participant seven held an opposing perspective. Participant seven expressed the perspective that he viewed foreigners fluent in Dari or Pashto with an eye of suspicion due to Afghanistan's history of being occupied. This perception was unique and contrary to the views expressed by other participants. Hence, it stands out as an outlier.

Alignment With Servant Leadership Theory

Perceptions of participants also expressed appreciation for what Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) categorized as Servant Leadership traits. Participants suggested that

the servant leadership traits of interpersonal acceptance, authenticity, standing back and courage symbolized respect for them and Afghan culture. Table 3 depicts how themes from this study aligned with Servant Leadership traits.

Table 3

Findings' Alignment with Theoretical and Conceptual Models

Model	Model Elements	Themes	Alignment
Army Rapport Framework	Understanding Respect Mutual Trust	Understanding Respect Working collaboratively Frequent interactions Genuine Interest Trust	Understanding Respect Trust
Servant Leadership Theory	Empowerment Accountability Standing-back Humility Authenticity Courage Stewardship Interpersonal Acceptance	Understanding Respect Frequent interactions Working collaboratively Genuine Interest Commitment	Authenticity Acceptance Empowerment Standing-back

A central tenet of servant leadership theory focuses on leaders helping others develop to their potential (Van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011). The basic purpose of advisory efforts centers around helping foreign counterparts develop or improve some capability. The following comments offered by participants suggested that Afghan

counterparts reciprocated demonstrating respect to behaviors associated with servant leadership.

Participant 3: “Bucking the system for each other or taking on their bureaucracies advocating for us developed a great bond between us.”

Participant 5: “Our advisors were genuinely interested in helping us and they were really helpful.”

Participant 8: “He expressed an interest in helping to build a sustainable legal education system. That showed a genuine interest in Afghanistan—it demonstrated respect for Afghanistan and the Afghan people. And, he involved Afghans in the planning process rather than trying to dictate a U.S.-type solution.”

Participant 13: "See we do not really want to be your bosses in Kabul, to give you directions, do that, do not do that. We want you to take the leadership for this project and to do the best for the organization.”

Summary

Answering Research Question 1, findings from this study support that demonstrating respect and developing cultural understanding contribute to building rapport with Afghan counterparts. Interacting frequently with counterparts and working together with them collaboratively, along with demonstrating genuine interest, were also significant factors contributing to building effective rapport. Participants expressed that they viewed restrictions on travel and factors that limited interaction as detrimental to building professional relationships.

Answering Research Question 2, the findings suggest that speaking Dari or Pashto also benefited rapport development. Themes identified indicated that Afghans perceived advisors who spoke even the most rudimentary native terms or phrases within the cultural context as symbols of respect, commitment, or affinity, except for the one outlier participant who viewed language fluency with suspicion. In Chapter 5, I discuss the interpretation of these findings, the potential implications, and considerations for further study into the topic of rapport.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological symbolic interaction study was to identify the principle elements of effective rapport between U.S. advisors and their Afghan counterparts from the Afghans' perspectives. Identifying, interpreting, and reporting on what symbolic meaning Afghan counterparts ascribed to the rudimentary use of a native language by advisors during rapport development was the second purpose of the study. Previous research on rapport development among foreign and Afghan counterparts relied heavily on surveys completed by U.S. advisors (Hajjar, 2014, Zbylut, 2010). Limited research existed on the symbolism assigned to native language use by advisors. My research focused on the Afghan counterparts' perspectives on rapport and the symbolic value of native language use.

Afghan perspectives on rapport largely supported the Army rapport framework, emphasizing the importance of demonstrated respect and understanding. However, Afghans who participated in this study did not emphasize trust in proportion to respect and understanding. Working together and frequent interactions arose logically as essential aspects of building effective rapport. Whereas trust was discussed by 5 participants, demonstrating genuine interest and commitment to the advisory mission, the Afghan counterpart, and Afghan culture emerged as significant themes that supported rapport development. Speaking rudimentary Dari or Pashto, or at least trying to speak some basic words and phrases, contributed to rapport development and demonstrated interest, commitment, and respect for their culture.

Interpretation of Findings

I used the study framework to guide thematic analysis. Participants reported that respect and cultural understanding demonstrated by U.S. advisors while working or socializing together were instrumental in building effective working relationships. Trust, which was the third element of the Army conceptual framework, emerged as a theme but was referred to less often. The importance of interacting and working together frequently represented another common theme among participants, as was the importance to Afghans that their advisors expressed a genuine interest in the Afghan culture and situation.

Participants also expressed that language skills served as a vehicle for demonstrating respect and understanding. Using Dari or Pashto, and the effort made to learn and use native Dari or Pashto even at the most rudimentary levels, were described as symbols of respect, commitment, and affinity by Afghan participants. Several participants expressed that learning Dari or Pashto to a degree of functional fluency was difficult. The symbolic value associated with the effort made to learn rudimentary Dari or Pashto represented an extension of previous research (Brunner, 2010; Hajjar, 2014; Phelps, 2009; O'Conor et al., 2010; Zbylut, 2009).

Research Question 1

Participants described respect and understanding, frequency of interactions, collaborative work, and genuine interest directly and indirectly through allegorical examples during interviews. Some of these themes were mentioned in the context of positive professional relationships, while others were described as aspects that were

missing from their relationships with advisors. Participants alluded to the interdependence between these elements (see U.S. Army, 1990, 2009).

Respect. All participants emphasized that respect was instrumental for U.S. advisors to develop effective rapport with them. Participants characterized the demonstrations of respect by advisors in different ways. Respect was viewed as an instrumental element of effective relationships in intercultural teaching relationships (Salmona et al., 2015). Behaviors ranging from adherence to religious traditions to deferring to their Afghan counterparts in cultural matters showed acceptance of cultural norms; Afghans accepted such behaviors and were perceived as demonstrations of respect (Campbell, 2013; Jenkins, 2012). Zbylut et al., (2009) showed that respect was significant in effective advisory relationships, but were unable to associate the degree of correlation between cultural knowledge and respect. Findings from this study indicated an interdependence between cultural knowledge and respect. This research finding supported the Army conceptual framework position that respect was an essential element of rapport in advisory relationships (Ryan, 2008; U.S. Army, 1990, 2009).

Understanding. Participants expressed that mutual understanding spanned the interpersonal and intercultural domains. Campbell (2013) and Jenkins (2012) posited that intercultural knowledge coupled with critical thinking aided advisors in reconciling differing intercultural worldviews. The ability to recognize and reconcile disparate perspectives enhanced advisors' abilities to develop understanding with their counterparts. Findings from this study supported the role of understanding in the U.S.

Army (1990, 2009) doctrinal framework that characterized understanding as an essential element of professional rapport between U.S. advisors and their Afghan counterparts.

Working collaboratively and frequent interactions. The importance of collaborating and interacting frequently represented definitive aspects of developing rapport. Working together and interacting formed the foundation upon which rapport developed. For example, every participant who referred to trust as foundational to rapport also expressed that working together was important. The responses appear to support other research that associated a situational nature with trust (Richters & Peixoto, 2011; Robertson & Laddaga, 2012). Participants' responses also indicated that trust and commitment relate to a dynamic process of social learning based on an intimate value equation (Ribarsky, 2013; Sol et al., 2012).

Some participants also referred to negative experiences in which they were unable to work closely with their U.S. advisors. Ahmed, Patterson, and Styles (2015) posited that trust takes time to grow and may follow a cost-benefit analysis that supports contractual commitment, affective commitment, or both. Ribarsky (2013) explained the cost-benefit analysis from the perspective of social exchange theory. My findings support those perspectives.

Genuine interest. The expression of genuine interest arose as a theme in both RQ1 and RQ2. The expression of genuine interest transcended the boundaries of working together. Expressions of interest included social activities such as involvement in Afghan social events and invitations to Afghans for U.S. social events. The efforts made by advisors to learn and use Pashto or Dari were characterized as expressions of interest by

Afghan participants. Peer reviewed literature did not address expressions of genuine interest in the context of rapport development. The findings in this study introduce questions regarding the relationship among genuine interest, as perceived by Afghan counterparts; perceived commitment; and their sense of trust in U.S. advisors.

Research Question 2

The study findings indicated that advisors' use of Dari and Pashto held symbolic value for Afghan counterparts. Symbolism ascribed to native language use by advisors benefited the relationships with Afghans and increased their receptiveness, as described in literature (Kram, 1988). This symbolic value helped to bridge the cultural barriers between U.S. advisors and Afghan counterparts, which was consistent with findings by Hickey and Davison (1965) and Hajjar (2014).

Respect. Previous researchers considered language use from the perspective of technical communication based on the views of U.S. advisors (Phelps, 2009; Zbylut et al., 2010). Zbylut et al. (2009) evaluated the value assigned by U.S. advisors to speaking the native language at a rudimentary level as being important, and my study expanded their research. My findings support their conclusions that speaking Dari or Pashto was important, but illuminates that Afghans viewed it as important; advisors' use of Dari or Pashto served as a symbol of respect.

Brunner (2010) highlighted the limitations of much contemporary research based on the U.S.-only data collection samples. My study compliments earlier studies of Afghan advisory activities by gathering perspectives from Afghan participants. Afghan participants supported the view that language skills, even at the most basic levels,

enhanced rapport building. Afghan participants expressed that using Dari or Pashto demonstrated respect for Afghan culture (see Hajjar, 2014; Hickey & Davison, 1965), which was consistent with the assertion by Kramsch (2013) that language represents a symbol of a given culture.

Familiarity or affinity. The symbolic value ascribed by Afghan participants to basic language use by advisors supported previous research. Zbylut et al. (2009) identified basic language use by advisors as important, as judged by former U.S. advisors. Hajjar (2014) also emphasized the importance of developing rapport and highlighted that basic language use was helpful in gaining cooperation. Chua et al. (2012) posited affect-based trust was present in intercultural relationships. This study extends earlier research indicating that Afghans assigned a symbolic value to basic language use that enhances feelings of familiarity, kinship, or affinity that encouraged rapport development.

Commitment. Participants placed symbolic value on the use of Dari and Pashto as well as the efforts made by U.S. advisors to learn or continue learning those languages. Afghan participants described advisors' use of Dari or Pashto as a symbol of commitment. Similarly, participants reported that advisors who made the effort to learn Dari or Pashto demonstrated a commitment to the Afghan people and mission. Recent literature associated commitment with trust in intercultural settings. Ahmed et al. (2015) differentiated between the emotional and cognitive aspects of commitment and trust in the context of intercultural business relationships. Sol et al. (2013) examined commitment and trust in the context of a dynamic social learning process. This study

supports the findings by Sol et al. that commitment and trust are interrelated and supports the bridging of intercultural divides through the dynamic development of effective professional relationships.

Servant Leadership

Servant leadership tenets, as described by Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011), support the primary purpose of advisory activities. Although rapport represents a critical success factor in advisory efforts, there is a paucity of research into how servant leadership impacts advisor efficacy or how the application of servant leadership impacts rapport development between advisors and counterparts. Most contemporary researchers underpinned their studies with leader-member exchange (LMX) theory rather than servant leadership theory emphasizing trust as a critical factor (Phelps, 2009; Zbylut et al., 2009).

Although Chua et al. (2012) found that conversations mediated development of affective trust in intercultural relationships, intercultural metacognition was determined to enable affective trust when short interaction timeframes were introduced. I found trust was expressed less often as an important factor in rapport development than Army doctrine characterized should exist. My findings did not differentiate between affect-based trust and cognition-based trust, however; therefore, I could make no clear interpretation of this distinction.

Participants in this study expressed respect and appreciation for advisor behaviors that align with the servant leadership tenets of authenticity, empowerment, acceptance, and standing-back described by Van Dierendonck and Nuijten. Table 3 in Chapter 4

depicts the alignment between the significant themes from this study and the elements of Army rapport doctrine and servant leadership theory. Findings suggest that a degree of interdependence exists between behaviors that support rapport development and align with servant leadership theory.

Collectively, the findings from this study supported and expanded on the rapport-language integration model depicted in Figure 4 in Chapter 2. That model depicted different contributions of native language use based on levels of fluency. The symbolic value assigned to native language use contributed to perceptions of respect and understanding, and possibly trust. Figure 5 depicts the refined rapport-language integration model.

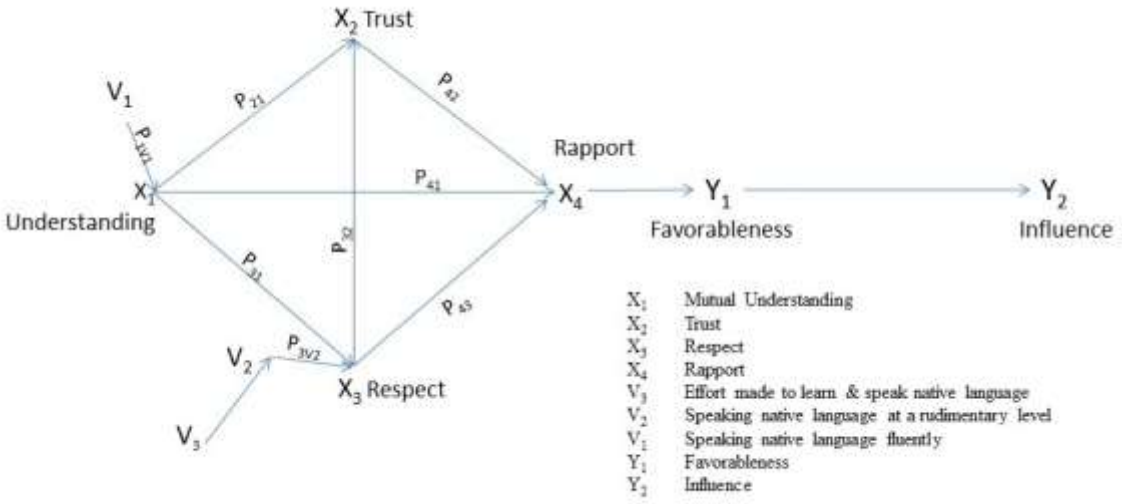

Figure 5. Refined rapport-language integration model. This model depicts the relationship of the antecedents of rapport to the influence developed as a result of speaking or making an effort to learn, a native language during the rapport-building process. V_1 represents language spoken with a high degree of fluency; V_2 represents a rudimentary language skill used during rapport building; V_3 represents the effort made to learn basic language skills. This model presents an assumed framework that speaking a native language even at rudimentary level is perceived as demonstrating respect for the

counterpart's language and culture, which correlates to rapport (X_4) development. Rapport leads to a condition of favorableness (Y_1), which ultimately contributes to influence (Y_2). Derived from research by Brunner, (2010); Chemers, (1968); Ribarsky (2013); Wheeldon and Ahlberg (2012), and Zbylut et al. (2010).

Limitations of the Study

Certain factors involved in the conduct of this study limit aspects of trustworthiness. According to Patton (2014), factors that impact the reliability or transferability of a study may represent limitations. Patton also alluded to the potential limitations assumed when interpreting participants' responses in intercultural research.

Ihtihar and Ahmed (2015) posited that intercultural researchers could reduce risks that may limit trustworthiness by keeping an open mind to researcher bias. Remaining focused on the perspectives of participants limited the impact of potential bias. This study involved a very specific sample of participants.

Context is important to understanding the applicability or limitations of a study. Study participants were current or former Afghan officials who spoke English. Afghan officials included members of police forces, Afghan Army and Special Forces, and Afghan ministries. Some participants resided in the United States working as professors and consultants; others were foreign graduates of U.S. universities. Such extensive experience in the U.S. may have impacted individual perspectives through dynamic learning (Sols et al., 2012).

The roles of U.S. advisors ranged from traditional military advisors in training and combat advisory roles to advisors who acted more as technical consultants or policy advisors. Environmental context should also be considered, given the protracted nature of the advisory effort in Afghanistan. Complexities in the forms of situational dynamics,

diverse education and experience levels, and deteriorating security conditions all affected the dynamic relationships and perspectives of Afghan counterparts. Significant reflection on my part related to these factors aided me in keeping an open mind as described by Patton (2014).

I worked to achieve the highest academic standards. The interview protocol used as a foundation to standardize interviews was reviewed by subject matter experts during the field study and validated during a pilot study involving former interpreters. Transcripts of interviews were sent to the respective participants for member checking, and three scholars reviewed my coding and thematic development to triangulate my analysis. Extensive use of literature in this area strengthened my analysis and findings. These steps contributed to strengthen my method, analysis, and interpretations.

Recommendations

Listed below are recommendations for future research in the field of intercultural rapport. This study approached intercultural rapport development specifically between U.S. advisors and Afghan counterparts from the perspectives of the Afghans. Rapport is a dyadic phenomenon and should be studied from both perspectives to be thoroughly understood (Ahmed et al., 2015). A relative abundance of research focused on U.S. perspectives was partly the motivation behind this study. Advisory efforts remain an important aspect of the U.S. national security strategy and foreign policy (Johnson et al., 2015).

Rapport Research

This study suggested that Army doctrine regarding rapport has merit but may benefit from refinement (U.S. Army, 1990; 2009). Findings in this study support the idea described by Chua et al., (2012) that trust is complex. Knowledge of intercultural rapport development between U.S. advisors and Afghan counterparts may benefit from further research that more deeply considers the emerging understanding of affect-based trust and cognition-based trust as described by Chua, et al.

Sols et al. (2012) found interdependence between commitment and trust. Data depicted in Table 2 in Chapter 4 may imply that the interdependence between expressions of commitment and trust may extend to perceptions of genuine interest as well. Sensitivity by Afghan participants to the importance of spending time together, coupled with the emergence of expressions of genuine interest and commitment as themes introduce questions that require further study to answer. The impact on rapport of relatively short tours of duty for some advisors was not clarified by my study, and thus warrants additional study to understand.

Dyadic rapport research conducted in mixed method to glean insights from counterparts in their words, in their respective languages, supported by quantitative survey data, could generate more comprehensive insights into critical elements of rapport in the context of U.S. advisory efforts. If advisory efforts such as the long-term ministry missions described by Johnson et al. (2015) will remain as elements of national strategy and foreign policy, then parallel research efforts focused on increasing knowledge of rapport as an important factor promise insights of strategic value.

Broader Intercultural Research

This study supports findings from historical and contemporary research regarding respect, understanding, and trust as conceptual elements of rapport in intercultural U.S. advisory efforts (Chemers, 1968; Hajjar, 2014; Hickey & Davison, 1965; Zbylut et al., 2009). Further research into rapport across an increasing array of intercultural advisory scenarios may extend that knowledge further. Similar work by Hofstede led to the development of a model for comparing cultures controlling for roles and time (DeMooij & Hofstede, 2011; Harnisch, 2011; Hofstede, 2011; Ronen & Shenkar, 2013).

Language Research

This study found that native language use involved symbolic value and supported rapport development. Both the use of Dari and Pashto and the effort made to learn or continue learning the languages provided symbolic value. Kramsch (2013) posited that language represents the largest symbol of a given culture. This research revealed symbolic value in native language use, supporting Kramsch's argument, but did not control for the perceived symbolic value of the efforts made by advisors to learn or continue learning the language. *Figure 5,* depicts the refined Rapport-Language Integration Model that includes the addition of a component for the effort made to learn the native language. Future research could extend knowledge by controlling for established language capability and studying the perceived value to rapport development that participants place on advisors' attempts to learn the languages after introduction to their counterparts thereby confirming or refuting the model.

Servant Leadership

Along with additional research into rapport and trust, greater research into servant leadership in an advisory context promises to yield insights into the applicability Servant Leadership Theory for advisors. Mittal and Dorfman (2012) characterized that servant leadership was rooted in a fundamental human drive to bond together and better society, which aligns with rapport and the advisory mission. Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) produced the Servant Leadership Survey (SLS) and evaluated it across two countries, four studies, and 1,571 participants. Adapting the SLS to the advisor-counterpart relationship and applying the survey to evaluate servant leadership as a potential leadership approach for advisory situations may yield valuable and quantifiable insights applicable to leadership training and advisor preparation.

Implications

Positive Social Change

Findings from this study can inform advisor preparation. Accepting the findings provided by Bordin (2011) and Hajjar (2014), the findings and recommendations contained in this study may save lives. For U.S. advisors deploying to Afghanistan, this study provides insights that can assist advisors in developing a more effective rapport with Afghan counterparts. Hajjar associated effective rapport with enhanced personal security in hostile environments.

Knowledge of how Afghans perceived U.S. advisors' behaviors and actions from intercultural and interpersonal perspectives should illuminate productive behaviors for developing rapport at the individual level between counterparts. Positive rapport also

reportedly served to establish long-term relationships that transcended beyond the advisory mission (Cushman, 1972; Cushman, Personal Communications, 2008, January 20). Findings from this study may support future development of enhanced rapport training such as that proposed in Human Dynamic Clamp research (Dumas, de Guzman, Tognoli, & Kelso, 2014). Longer term relationships allude to the potential value of advisory efforts (Obama, 2010; 2015).

Regardless of how Afghans view trust, insights into the value of demonstrating genuine interest and respect from a cultural perspective are useful. Participants' comments on demonstrating respect and interest provide specific behaviors that prospective advisors can use to enhance rapport development. Applying the behaviors referred to by participants may accelerate the time needed to build rapport for future advisors. Findings from this study supported the importance of developing a cultural understanding for advisors working to build rapport (U.S. Army, 1990; 2009). Cultural insights provided by participants' comments should enhance or reinforce advisors' understanding of Afghan cultural perspectives.

Comments from participants regarding the importance of working together and interacting frequently may inform policy. Participants expressed that current tour lengths and travel restrictions due to security concerns detracted from advisors' effectiveness. Afghans described these factors as prohibiting effective rapport development. If advisory activities are to remain a central element of U.S. national security strategy and policy, then policymakers may wish to tailor policies to promote positive rapport development.

Methodological

The methodological approach used in this study of intercultural rapport and native language use in advisory activities was unique to this topic. This qualitative phenomenological symbolic interactionism study collected data solely from English-speaking Afghans. Integrating servant leadership theory, the Army conceptual model for rapport, role theory, and social exchange theory for a holistic foundation, this study aligned the methodology and framework with the inherent complexities associated with advisory activities in Afghanistan. Most other contemporary studies applied quantitative surveys in research grounded in leader-member exchange theory (LMX) to study advisor-counterpart relations (Brunner, 2010; O'Conor et al., 2010; Phelps, 2009; Zbylut et al., 2009). Other studies applied qualitative interviews but avoided applying leadership theory (Bordin, 2011; Hajjar, 2014).

Most recent studies justified using LMX based on the role of trust in LMX and the assumed role of trust in the intercultural rapport between advisors and counterparts. Findings from this study found that trust represented a minor theme, referenced by only one-third of participants. In contrast, the other elements of the Army rapport framework represented dominant themes. This apparent incongruity cannot be explained based on the data collected in this study. Future research should control for time regarding amount and frequency of interactions as well as length of assignments and roles. A deeper understanding of the exact nature of the trust involved and clarification of how genuine interest, commitment, and trust interrelate may offer insights into which leadership theory most closely aligns with advisory activities.

Theoretical

Social exchange theory assumes that a cost-benefit analysis underpins relationships (Ho, 2011; Ribarsky, 2013). The dynamic social learning described by Sols et al. (2012) fits within the scope of social exchange theory. Based on personal cost-benefit analysis of advisors, social exchange theory explains some of the choices made that resulted in limited interactions, for example. The pragmatic decisions made must be considered holistically in the complex environment of Afghanistan. The appropriateness of social exchange theory for studying rapport between U.S. advisors and Afghan counterparts in the current unstable environment also alludes to the need to control for such factors in the study populations for future research

Findings from this study support the assertion that symbols shape how people interpret reality and respond as described in symbolic interaction literature (Blumer, 2011; Charon & Hall, 2009; Mulyana, & Zubair, 2015). The findings reported above supported and extended the integration of language use and rapport development depicted in Figure 4 in Chapter 2. The interdependencies alluded to between understanding, respect, trust, and the involvement of symbolic values ascribed to native language use regarding commitment, interest, and respect combine to inform theories involving rapport. Figure 5 depicts the refined model that captures the element of effort made to learn the rudimentary native language.

Practice

Findings from this study indicated that limited interactions may impact advisor-counterpart relationships, which prior research associated with advisor efficacy (Brunner,

2010; Hickey & Davidson, 1965; Phelps, 2009; Zbylut et al., 2009). These factors implied that policies affecting advisor employment can contribute to advisor efficacy by setting conditions that enhance interaction between advisors and counterparts. Correspondingly, these findings highlight a factor to inform policy makers regarding whether conditions promote effective advisor-counterpart rapport.

Participants clearly expressed appreciation for cultural affinity with advisors. Counterparts who perceived that their advisors demonstrated respect and made the effort to develop understanding described their advisors in respectful and positive terms. These findings indicate that rapport development should be a significant element of advisor preparation in the context of Afghan culture.

Further, findings from this study validated the symbolic value of native language use for rapport building. Language and culture are indeterminably linked (Charon & Hall, 2009; Kramsch, 2013; Mulyana & Zubair, 2015). Participants consistently expressed appreciation and respect for advisors who made the effort to learn the native language during the advisor's tour of duty. Advisor preparation can convey the value of making the effort to continuing to learn native language during their tours of duty.

Conclusions

This study captured what Afghan counterparts considered to be antecedents to building effective professional relationships with their U.S. advisors. Advisors' abilities to demonstrate respect and understanding in a cultural context were paramount. Afghans expressed that it was extremely important for counterparts to work together to build

productive rapport. Demonstrated genuine interest and mutual trust was expressed as important less often, but with great zeal when addressed.

Afghans expressed that they ascribed symbolic value to advisors' use of Pashto or Dari. They also deemed the effort made by advisors to learn or continue learning Pashto or Dari as symbolically important. Afghan participants explained that speaking even rudimentary Pashto or Dari demonstrated respect for the Afghan people and culture, represented a commitment to the mission to assist Afghanistan, and expressed an affinity for the Afghan people making them feel closer and more receptive to collaborating with their U.S. advisors. Findings from this study supported that developing effective rapport is a complex process and that the elements of respect, understanding, and trust are interdependent; advisors' efforts to speak even the most basic Dari or Pashto support and enhance rapport development.

Research findings supported the Army rapport framework and the importance of both role and social exchange theories. Findings also suggest a need for research into servant leadership theory in the context of advisory activities. Finally, this study identifies opportunities for future research to deepen existing knowledge of rapport, advisor preparation, employment, and effectiveness.

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Appendix A: Interview Guide

The intention behind the questions below is to support the discussions with participants from Afghanistan. These questions are divided into primary questions and sub-questions. The primary questions align with the research questions and were asked as outlined below. The sub-questions are intended to keep the discussion moving forward productively, but may not be asked in any particular order depending on the flow of the discussion. The rapport building, primary questions, and sub-questions provide a framework for answering the following two research questions:

Research Questions:

RQ1: What do foreign counterparts believe to be the antecedents to building effective rapport with their advisors?

RQ2: What symbolic meaning do foreign counterparts ascribe to their advisors' uses of their native language and what affect did they percieve it had on rapport development?

Rapport Building

Opening question: Please tell me about your experience in the Afghan (e.g., military, government). Also, what were your personal goals, what have you tried to accomplish? What did you do before the new government took over? How many U.S. advisors did you work with since 2001? Can you differentiate what made some advisors more effective, and what made some advisors less effective? Let's focus on one advisor. What was most the most important thing to you about your advisor?

Primary Questions:

Consultations with Doctors Lilburn Hoehn, Anna Simons, and Andrea Dew, in the form of field testing the interview and research questions listed in Chapter 3, resulted in minor changes. Overall, all three professors supported the position that the proposed interview questions aligned with the research questions in this study. Each qualitative research expert suggested minor wording changes intended to clarify the meaning of the interview questions (Personal Communications, Simons; Dew, 2015). Dr. Hoehn also recommended the inclusion of Question 6, a closed-ended question, for the purpose of setting conditions for Question 7 and eliminating bias associated with assuming a relationship between language use and rapport (Personal Communications, Hoehn, 2015).

The following questions address research question one:

Q1: How do you believe that you related to your U.S. Advisor?

Q2: What did you perceive to be the methods used by your advisor to build a professional relationship with you?

Q3: What are some of the things your advisor said or did that were meaningful to you?

The following questions address research question two:

Q4: How did you perceive your advisor's use of your native language?

Q5: What aspects of your advisor's use of your language do you believe were the most meaningful (e.g., Dari, Pushto, Tajik)?

Q6: Do you believe your advisor's use of your native language had an effect on your relationship?

Q7: If your advisor's use of your native language affected your relationship, how did it impact your perception of your advisor?

Q8: How did your advisor's level of fluency in your language affect your relationship, or did it affect your relationship?

Appendix B: Word Cloud

Figure 6. NVivo word cloud depicting word densities from interview transcripts.

Appendix C: Sample Invitation Email

Dear _____

You are invited to take part in a research study about professional relationships between U.S. advisors and their Afghan counterparts as well as understanding the impact that speaking your native language may have had on building rapport. This is a voluntary study. The researcher is inviting current and former Afghan officials, soldiers, and police who speak English, with personal experience working with U.S. advisors, to be in the study. I obtained your name/contact info via _____.

My name is Sean Ryan and I am currently a doctoral student at Walden University. This research is entirely academic in nature. You will not need to identify who served as an advisor with you; in fact, you will be asked to leave your advisor's identity anonymous.

The purpose of this study is to identify the primary elements that contribute to building effective rapport between U.S. advisors and their Afghan counterparts. Additionally, this study will attempt to identify what, if any, meaning that Afghans place on U.S. advisors' uses of their counterparts' native language.

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to describe your perceptions and beliefs about what contributed to rapport, in terms of a professional relationship, between you and your U.S. advisor, and your beliefs, perceptions, and assumptions about your advisor's use of your native language.

If you agree to be in this study:

- You will be asked to participate in interviews that will be conducted in person, by Skype, or some other video teleconferencing method, or by telephone;
    - Interviews will last 60 minutes or less;
- You may be asked to participate in a second follow up interview, only if additional information is needed to clarify specific points.
- You will be given the opportunity to check the resulting written transcript of your interview to help ensure that I, as the researcher, correctly interpreted your comments.

Here are some sample questions:

- How do you believe that you related to your U.S. Advisor?
- What did you perceive to be the methods used by your advisor to build a professional relationship with you?
- What are some of the things your advisor said or did that were meaningful to you?
- How did you perceive your advisor's use of your native language?
- What aspects of your advisor's use of your language do you believe were the most meaningful?

- Do you believe your advisor's use of your native language had an effect on your relationship? If so, how?

If you agree to participate in this research study, please respond to this email so that I may send you more information and coordinate a convenient time for our interview. If you choose not to participate in this research, I will not bother you further. You may reach me by email at sean.ryan@waldenu.edu, or by telephone at +001-703-855-7724.

I appreciate your consideration.

Very respectfully,

Sean Ryan