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## **Intercultural Communication: Theory and Practice**

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# INTRODUCTION

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## **TOO MANY WALLS AND NOT ENOUGH BRIDGES: THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION STUDIES**

**Tatiana Larina<sup>1</sup> and Olga Leontovich<sup>2</sup>**

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Alongside with globalization tendencies, the world still displays a lot of cultural differences, which separate people and create communication problems. Both scholars and teachers are now searching for guidance in the rapidly changing political, cultural, and educational environment. Over the last 30 years intercultural communication has attracted a lot of attention and has become an important object of interdisciplinary study, teaching, training, and practical activities. This interest is not surprising, as nowadays many people's professional or private lives bring them into contact with individuals from other cultures. Continuing worldwide travel, migration, business, education, sports, etc. result in increasing intercultural encounters. New technologies have made them accessible in daily practices. Therefore, it is critically important to grasp the implications of the existing intercultural communication theories and possible ways of applying them to real life.

The aims of the present issue are manifold: to reflect the scope of theoretical inquiry in the field of intercultural communication in Russia and abroad; to acquaint the Russian reader with Western approaches; to search for ways of teaching the subject to second language learners, as well as to specialists engaged in international relations; and to stimulate new ideas and possible cooperation between Russian and foreign scholars.

Communication in general and intercultural communication in particular is organically connected with pragmatics. To understand 'what is meant by what is said,' we

need to know the context, as it helps to assign the meaning to words. Scholars distinguish between different types of context: actual situational context and prior context. As Kecskes notes, “prior context is based on our prior experience, so it develops through the regularity of recurrent and similar situations, which we tend to identify with given contexts” (Kecskes, 2014: 215). He points out that through the interplay of prior context and actual situational context, individual and social factors of communication are intertwined [ibid.:133].

Communication is embedded in culture, which serves as its context and is based on the prior experience of a community. In intercultural relations culture is the most important extralinguistic factor shaping its members’ communicative style and behaviour [Larina 2015]. The distinct features of each culture determine how the speakers express their thoughts: clearly or with ambiguity, in a concise manner or descriptively, freely express their emotions or restrain themselves, observe distance in communication or ignore it, etc. [Larina 2015: 200]. What is characteristic of one culture can often be unacceptable from the point of view of the other.

Specialists and researchers in the field of intercultural communication have collected a lot of data proving that language proficiency alone does not guarantee understanding between people from different cultural backgrounds [Thomas 1983, Ter-Minasyan 2000, House 2003, Besemeres and Wierzbicka 2007; Leontovich 2005, 2011; Spencer-Oatey & Franklin 2009, Samovar et al. 2013; Leontovich and Yakusheva 2013, Kecskes 2014, Jandt, 2015]. As Kate Fox puts it, “your English may be impeccable, but your behavioural ‘grammar’ will be full of glaring errors” [Fox: 2005: 61]. Numerous problems stem from the fact that people behave according to their specific social and linguistic norms and their perception of *politeness* or *impoliteness*, which vary across cultures [Leech 1983, 2014; Matsumoto 1989, Wierzbicka 1991/2013, Sifianou 1992, Marquez Reiter 2000, Scollon and Scollon 2001, Pizziconi 2003, Watts 2003, Hickey and Stewart 2005, Leech 2007, 2014; Larina 2008, 2009, 2013; Culpeper 2011; Visson 2013, etc.]. The same verbal or non-verbal act seen as polite in one culture may be perceived as inappropriate or even rude in another one. As a result, people often misinterpret communicative intentions of foreign interlocutors and create stereotypes about polite and impolite nations which impede understanding and social harmony.

Studies also show that culturally conditioned differences in communication are not random but systematic and are defined by the type of culture, structure of society, its values, and other factors which impact communicative behavior and form culture-specific communicative styles. Intercultural Communication as a theoretical and practical discipline provides a second-language student with a systematic view of communication accumulating all the relevant data from other fields, such as history, culture studies, sociology, ethnology, psychology, literature, linguistics, etc., and paving the way for a conscious learning process.

While putting together this issue, we have come across reasons to contemplate and challenge a number of different theoretical standpoints. Scholars working in the field of Intercultural Communication are often criticized for a high level of generalization; they allegedly ignore the fact that persons and not cultures are participants of an interaction and possess their own individual manner of speech and behaviour. In re-

ality, this fact is not ignored: while focusing on the characteristics of culture-specific behaviours, we acknowledge the existence of individual and group differences and peculiarities typical of various social strata, with their own canons of communication. Nevertheless, it is possible to demarcate certain communicative dominants which distinguish the communicative behaviour of one ethnic group from another. The words of Kate Fox [Fox 2005] reaffirm this opinion. Pointing out that a “nation” is surely “a pretty artificial construct”, she writes:

*The trouble is that virtually all nations have a number of regions, each of which invariably regards itself as different from ... all others. This applies in France, Italy, the USA, Russia, Mexico, Spain, Scotland, Australia—and more or less anywhere else you care to mention. People from St Petersburg talk about Muscovites as though they were members of a different species; East-coast and Mid-western Americans might as well be from different planets, ditto Tuscans and Neapolitans, Northern and Southern Mexicans, etc.; even cities such as Melbourne and Sydney see themselves as having radically different characters — and let’s not start on Edinburgh and Glasgow.... In all of these cases, however, the people of these admittedly highly individual regions and towns nevertheless have enough in common to make them recognizably Italian, American, Russian, Scottish, etc. [Fox 2005: 21].*

The same can be said about individual differences. Every speaker combines universal, culture-specific and individual features. Intercultural Communication as a discipline is mainly focused on characteristics distinguishing one nation or ethnic group from another and thus shaping a peculiar communicative style. Without generalizations, any comparative study of languages and cultures would be impossible. This stance is a way to grasp the relationship between subjective experience and its communicability across cultures.

Nowadays Intercultural Communication is a multidisciplinary study of factors which unite or separate representatives of different cultures, the latter being understood as a broad, multifaceted phenomena, ‘the ways in which one group or society of humans live that are different from the ways in which other groups live’ [Guirdham 1999: 48]. It is important to emphasise that language is an essential part of culture for at least two main reasons: 1) the other elements, such as worldview, can only be transmitted through language and 2) language itself helps to mould the mentality of its speakers [Ibid: 50].

Intercultural Communication negotiates and incorporates the insights of many research areas, theoretical approaches, and scholarly ideas. The issue is structured along the following lines: 1) theory of communication, 2) social, cultural and interpersonal communication practices, and 3) intercultural communication teaching/training.

The first section of the issue is focused on the theoretical aspects of communication in general and intercultural communication in particular.

**Steven Beebe’s** paper elaborates on how to adapt messages to other interlocutors. Proceeding from Aristotle’s idea that rhetoric should be used to change or reinforce attitudes, beliefs, values and/or human behaviour, he suggests that a communication message should: (1) be understood, (2) achieve the intended effect, and, finally,

(3) be ethical. The Structure-Interaction Theory, which represents the core of his approach, proceeds from the assumption that effective and appropriate human communication can be placed on a continuum of its two basic constituents: Structure and Interaction. While structure is the inherent way in which a message is organized, interaction deals with the mode of sharing information as a give-and-take process. The proposed theory is intended to seek order in the chaotic world of meanings, which constitute the sphere and mode of human existence, and discusses interactions in the context of interpersonal, group, public, and electronically mediated communication.

**Donal Carbaugh** seeks to draw attention to the actual way intercultural communication as a social practice is carried out among participants. His perspective is to a certain extent a response to the wide-ranging models used to measure intercultural data via different dimensional models. Carbaugh's position on the question warrants special attention because it gives voice to communicators, rather than abstract figures and calculations. He engages the attention of the audience through a concise, readable presentation of factors grouped along three main lines: (1) the main constituent features of intercultural communication; (2) the essential modes in inquiry for his research; (3) the qualities in the types of insights relative to the first two groups. By framing his research within the context of critical analysis, Carbaugh's intention is to find out whose interests are being served in the process of communication. He believes that this approach advances better insights into the cultural peculiarities of social interactions.

**Svetlana Ter-Minasova's** article is based on the dichotomy between universal and culturally specific dimensions of international communication, which, on the one hand, create grounds for globalization, and, on the other, provide for the sovereignty of particular cultures. She argues that contradictions stimulate human development and trace them along the following lines: contradictions between technical versus human factors; contradiction between the concepts of equality and diversity; and contradictions in the professional sphere of foreign language teaching.

**Olga Leontovich's** paper discusses the reasons, types, and effects of cognitive dissonance emerging in the course of intercultural communication. Cognitive dissonance is viewed as a discrepancy between the ways of categorizing and conceptualizing reality through the prism of different languages and cultures. By showing the mechanisms of the phenomenon, the research highlights possible ways of harmonizing the mindsets of communicators interacting with representatives of an alien culture and overcoming communication breakdowns. These findings may lead to their practical application and help interpreters, translators, and intercultural communication specialists design and employ possible strategies to identify reasons for cognitive dissonance and find ways to bridge intercultural differences.

The impact of culture on language is addressed by **Anna Gladkova** who undertakes a contrastive analysis of Russian and English grammatical structures from a cross-cultural perspective. The article discusses how cultural information is embedded at the level of grammar, which is inseparable from semantics and pragmatics. The paper provides numerous examples illustrating the cultural significance of grammar viewed from the Ethnosyntax perspective. These investigations can be of particular importance to other areas of linguistics, including language teaching, as they can equip

cultural outsiders with more effective and successful tools of communication with representatives of a particular culture.

**The second section** of the issue sheds light on the social and personal communication practices, with further emphasis on the interplay of culture, language and communication.

The paper by **Arto Mustajoki** and **Ekaterina Protassova** examines the impact of Finnish views about Russia and Russians on the cross-cultural interactions between the two nations. Through a multi-layered study of the historical connections between them, the authors investigate the sources of their mutual perceptions and the dynamics of the relationship, including the immediate past and present political, economic and cultural processes. The authors' move to read across the cultures includes the discussion of the reciprocal influence of the two languages, prevailing values, consumer practices, as well as controversies and misunderstandings. They emphasize the role of linguistic and cultural competence in building effective cross-cultural communication between the two neighbouring countries.

Emotions constitute another important sphere of intercultural studies. It is not surprising: although human emotional endowment is largely innate and universal, people's emotional lives are shaped to a considerable extent by their culture [Wierzbicka 1999: 24]. The article by **Jean-Marc Dewaele** and **Israa Qaddourah** devoted to the language choice in expressing anger among Arab-English Londoners confirms this statement. The study replicates an earlier investigation by Dewaele dealing with the communication of anger among a large heterogeneous group of long-time multilinguals from all over the world (2013). The aim of the present paper is to determine whether similar processes can be observed in a relatively homogeneous linguistic and cultural group, namely 110 English-speaking Arabs living in London (UK). The analysis of quantitative and qualitative data shows that the factors influencing the choice of language for expressing anger include: the degree of socialisation, frequency of use of English, context, age, gender, education, religious beliefs, as well as cultural and ideological origins.

**John Parrish-Sprowl's** article draws the reader's attention to the problems of intercultural communication faced by the disabled who comprise 10% of the world population and are increasingly being mainstreamed both within their own cultures and in cross-cultural exchanges. In addition to the problems affecting all the persons involved in intercultural contacts, biases against people with disabilities existing in particular communities often result in insensitive, cruel, or discriminatory attitudes. Parrish-Sprowl believes that in order to develop appropriate communication skills it is expedient to use the approach called Communication Complex based on neuroscience research. This metatheory takes into account brain activity and other body experiences, the reflexive nature of conversation, as well as communication resources and practices. According to the author, communication has to be viewed as a "co-constructing process rather than simply a vehicle to convey a message from one person to another". The paper provides a set of recommendations and skills necessary for engaging people with disabilities in effective intercultural communication.

Three articles of the issue are devoted to the problem of politeness which is another significant field of research of intercultural pragmatics and communication. Linguistic politeness is an essential element of interactions in different settings.

While the world is becoming more culturally complex, the emergence and wide use of new media produce new challenges. **Zohreh R. Eslami** and **Wei-Hong Ko** examine how students actively manage facework in their interactions with faculty members when submitting their assignments through emails. Their exploratory study contradicts the opinion that computer-mediated communication is a medium which is not beneficial for establishing interpersonal connections. It proves that in their email communication students manage to attend to relational goals through the employment of openings, small talk and closing strategies. Drawing on the findings of politeness research, this paper seeks to build a model for analysing a 'non-face-threatening' speech act and illustrate that facework can account for the use of linguistic strategies that maintain a harmonious relationship between the interlocutors.

**Chantal Claudel** analyses ways of expressing apologies and thanks in French and Japanese personal emails. The results of her study show that the number of different ready-to-use rituals is more important in Japanese rather than French emails. The diversity of formulae in Japanese is an indication of the importance of the relationship and of the need to act carefully in different kinds of computer-mediated interactions. The use of apologies and thanks in emails shows that neither of the two communities can be regarded as more or less (im)polite, but that the set expressions available in Japanese is more diversified than in French. The analysis reveals another interesting difference: while in Japanese attention to the addressee leads to the use of apologies, in French it apparently results in the use of thanks. This is another confirmation of the fact that the notion of *politeness* in French and Japanese is not entirely identical, even if some behaviours are shared or comparable.

**Oxsana Issers** and **Sandra Salvorson** have examined eleven intercultural textbooks in order to observe similarities and differences in Russian and American proprieties. The content analysis of the books and the use of a 29-item questionnaire allowed them to conclude that the similarities in the expression of proprieties outnumber the differences. The latter demonstrate that: a) Russians are less willing than Americans to speak about their ethnicity in public; b) in social situations Russians are more polite than Americans; c) Russians tend to speak their minds in public situations more often than Americans; d) Russians display more honesty in expressing their personal opinions than their American counterparts.

**The third section** of the issue addresses the problem of intercultural competence development with a particular focus on translation. **Robin Cranmer** and **Kaisa Koskinen's** papers constitute a highly successful attempt to bridge the divide between research and teaching of intercultural communication. They relate about a European Union project 'Promoting Intercultural Competence in Translators' (PICT 2012) conducted among translation teachers and students in seven European countries and devoted to the development of translators' intercultural competence.

Robin Cranmer's article examines how the teaching of translation at university level can come to include the systematic development of intercultural skills, presents the methodology and outcomes of PICT 2012, outlines its aims, context, and participants. It further explains the key theoretical principles which are embodied in a 'good practice

guide' at its conclusion. The three key outputs resulting from the project are a 'curriculum framework' (syllabus), teaching materials and assessment materials. By way of conclusion, Cranmer discusses perspectives, needs and limits of building intercultural competence of translators.

Kaisa Koskinen's paper seeks to further extend the findings to the analysis of superdiversity — the increased linguistic, ethnic and cultural hybridity of modern societies. Proceeding from the assumption that the knowledge of cultural facts cannot be equated with intercultural knowledge, she challenges the value of translators' invisibility and promotes the necessity of developing "their skills of empathy, compassion and flexible decision-making," their ability "to make informed and moral choices" in difficult situations.

We are grateful to all the contributors for their collaboration, remarkable creativity, attention to detail, and the high quality of their carefully crafted and thoroughly researched scholarly works. We would also like to encourage our readers to express their opinions about the ideas discussed in the issue and to share their observations and experiences dealing with intercultural communication.

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# THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

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## STRUCTURE-INTERACTION THEORY: CONCEPTUAL, CONTEXTUAL AND STRATEGIC INFLUENCES ON HUMAN COMMUNICATION

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This paper addresses Structure-Interaction Theory (SIT), a theoretical framework that both describes communication messages as well as assists in making predictions about how human communication can be improved based on listener preferences for message structure or interaction. Communication messages may be characterized as existing on a continuum of structure-interaction. Communication *structure* is the inherent way information in a message is organized. A highly structured message is one in which the message is strategically organized using a planned arrangement of symbols to create meaning. Communication *interaction* is a way of viewing a message with give-and-take, less sustained “notes,” more change in note sequence and briefer notes. SIT seeks to provide a framework to assist communicators in appropriately adapting a message for maximum effectiveness. Although Structure-Interaction Theory newly articulated here, it is anchored in both classic ways of describing communication, such as rhetoric and dialectic (Aristotle, 1959), as well as more contemporary communication theories (Salem, 2012; Littlejohn & Foss, 2008). Specifically, the paper provides an overview of the theory and its conceptual assumptions, identifies how the theory can help explain and predict communication in several communication contexts (interpersonal, group, public communication), and suggests how SIT may help identify strategies to enhance human development.

Structure-Interaction Theory is based on an assumption that a human communication message which is understood, achieves the intended effect of the communicator, and is ethical, requires an appropriate balance of two things: structure and interaction. Communication structure is the inherent way a message is constructed to provide a sustained direction to present information to another person. In linking structure and interaction to Aristotle’s description of messages, rhetoric is a more structured, sustained speech or planned message. Dialectic is characterized by a more spontaneous give and take interaction of messages and response to messages. SIT posits that all communication can be placed on a continuum of structure-interaction. The paper identifies applications of SIT to several communication situations and presents communication strategies that can enhance human development. The paper also notes how SIT can be used to develop message strategies to adapt to audience preferences for structure and interaction based on culture and audience expectations. Considering the needs, interests, values (including cultural values) of the audience, is the prime determinant of the degree of structure or interaction that should be evident in a communication episode.

Appropriately applied, SIT may help both describe the nature of messages (as structured or interactive) as well as assist in making predictions as to how applications of the structure-interaction message continuum may enhance communication effectiveness.

**Key words:** Structure-interaction theory (SIT), communication messages, communication context, communication strategies, rhetoric, dialectic.

There are fundamental principles of human communication that unite all human interaction. I have suggested that there are five fundamental principles of human communication that operate in all cultures and all communication contexts—mediated or unmediated (Beebe, Beebe & Ivy, 2016):

1. Be aware of your communication and your communication with others.
2. Effectively use and interpret verbal messages.
3. Effectively use and interpret nonverbal messages.
4. Listen and thoughtfully respond to others.
5. Appropriately adapt messages to others.

I suggest that all cultures and all people would find these principles useful. Certainly there are cultural differences in the way we use and interpret verbal and nonverbal messages and in the way we adapt and even in listening style; but all cultures value the effective use and interpretation of verbal and nonverbal messages. All communication requires some level of awareness for communication to be effective. In addition, listening and adapting are important principles for all human interaction. This paper elaborates on principle five, how to adapt messages to others. Specifically, I discuss how to adapt message structure and message interaction based on a variety of factors including culture, audience expectations and individual personality traits.

“Rhetoric is the counterpart of dialectic” (Aristotle, 1959). This opening sentence from Aristotle’s seminal work, *Rhetoric*, foreshadowed a pervasive way of conceptualizing human communication. In contrasting rhetoric with dialectic, Aristotle identified fundamental ways of describing the form and function of human communication messages—the way information is organized to create a message and subsequent meaning. Rhetoric, according to Aristotle (1959), is the discovery of the available means of persuasion in a given case. To “use” rhetoric is to carefully construct a planned, intentional, pre-mediated, organized message that seeks to persuade (change or reinforce attitudes, beliefs, values and/or behavior). Although Aristotle did not define *dialectic* as crisply as he defined *rhetoric*, for Aristotle dialectic is the Socratic method of using questions, answers, debate, and dialogue to discover the truth in a given situation. Dialectical forms and functions of communication are most typically found in courtrooms in which witnesses, experts, attorneys, a jury and a judge or judges seek to discover what is true and what is false. Dialectical expression may also occur in conversations between two or more people to express a range of ideas and emotions. Group communication often exhibits considerable give-and-take truth-searching dialectical exchanges.

In comparing and contrasting rhetoric and dialectic as a fundamental way of describing communication genres, Aristotle provided a seminal communication taxonomy of message organization. The word counterpart (*antistrophus*) in Aristotle’s taxonomy,

according to Kennedy (1980; Anderson, 2007), can also mean “correlative”, “coordinate”, or “converse”. Communication may be described based on both its function (to persuade, inform, entertain) and form (whether brief or sustained, organized or disorganized). Rhetoric and dialectic are two distinct ways of communicating with differing goals, strategies, methods and forms. Rhetoric, based on Aristotle’s (1959) treatise, is characterized as more of a sustained, organized speech presented to persuade. Dialectic is a more interactive, question and answer communication format that certainly may have persuasive intentions, but is often designed to uncover what is and is not true. More succinctly, dialectic is the search for truth; rhetoric is employed when one believes the truth has been found. Rhetoric is a more structured message; dialectic is a more interactive message.

The purpose of this paper is to describe Structure-Interaction Theory (SIT), a cogent theoretical framework useful for both explaining communication messages as well as assisting in making predictions about how human communication can be improved (both in terms of its effectiveness and appropriateness). SIT seeks to inform communication strategies that can assist with human development and enhance the quality of communication. The theory helps both describe communication messages, as well as suggests the development of communication strategies which may enhance communication effectiveness and appropriateness. Structure-Interaction Theory is anchored in both classic communication paradigms (Aristotle, 1959) as well as more contemporary communication theories (Littlejohn & Foss, 2008; Salem, 2012). Specifically, the paper provides an overview of SIT and its conceptual assumptions, identifies how the theory may be applied to communication in several communication contexts, and finally suggests how SIT may help inform strategies to enhance human communication.

### **CONCEPTUAL UNDERPINNINGS OF STRUCTURE-INTERACTION THEORY**

At its essence, communication is the process of acting on information (Dance & Larson, 1967). Someone creates a message and another person acts or responds to the message. A message (comprised of information) does not become communication until someone or something reacts or responds to the message. The proverbial tree that falls in the forest does not create meaningful sound until someone hears and interprets it. Similarly, encoding a message, creating information (the reduction of uncertainty) either intentionally or unintentionally, does not constitute *communication* until there is a response to the message; the response may be conscious (such as being aware of listening to a message) or unconscious (such as simply having the hammer, anvil and stirrup in the ear drums vibrate) even though there is no conscious awareness of the meaning of the message. Machines and animals communicate — they act on information. Human communication is concerned with meaning, symbols and sense making; it is the *process of making sense out of the world and sharing that sense with others by creating meaning through the use of verbal and nonverbal messages* (Beebe, Beebe & Ivy, 2016). To be effective communication should achieve three criteria; a communication message should: (1) be understood, (2) achieve the intended effect, and (3) be ethical.

The meaning that results from responding to information creates ongoing connections or relationships between other people. Simply stated, messages (information) create meaning (sense making) that results in relationships (mutual connections).

Structure-Interaction Theory is based on an assumption that effective and appropriate human communication (that achieves the three criteria stated above) needs a balance of two things: Structure and interaction. Communication *structure* is the inherent way information in a message is organized. A highly structured message is one in which the message is strategically organized using a planned arrangement of symbols to create meaning. A highly structured message typically is a more sustained message that contains fewer interruptions than an interactive message. Using a music analogy, music can be described in terms of the rhythm, pitch, sequence, and duration of the notes that constitute the music. A structured message is one that includes more sustained notes and evidences fewer changes in the note patterns, pitch and rhythm. A structured message embodies less change or variation in message organization.

Structuration theory, originally developed by Giddens (1984), provides a theoretical framework for describing how people develop social structures in societies, organizations and groups. The essence of structuration theory is that people use the rules and resources within a human system to provide order and structure. The structures that are iteratively created are based on the rules and resources of the past and the present. According to researchers (Giddens, 1984; Poole, Seibold & McPhee, 1996) the process of developing a structure is a natural and normal aspect of human groups, large or small. We use the structure of a message to help make sense of the message.

In contrast with the development of structure, communication *interaction* is a way of viewing a message with give-and-take, less sustained “notes”, more change in note sequence and briefer notes. In linking structure and interaction to Aristotle’s description of messages, rhetoric is a more structured, sustained or planned message. Dialectic is characterized by the give-and-take interaction of messages and responses to messages. SIT suggests that all communication messages can be placed on a continuum of structure-interaction.

Highly structured messages are analogous to Aristotle’s definition of rhetoric. A structured message is usually planned, sustained and seeks to accomplish an intentional rhetorical goal. In contrast, interactive messages are usually shorter and are contextually synchronous with the messages both before and after the message presented. To continue the music metaphor, classical music is analogous to structure; jazz is analogous to interaction.

SIT is anchored in several theoretical frameworks and perspectives. Russian philosopher and educator Mikhail Bakhtin’s conceptualization of forces that influence our life trajectory provides one foundation to SIT. Bakhtin (1930) described everyday reality as prosaic; our lives consist of sleeping, talking, eating, listening — these seemingly mundane aspects of living constitute the prosaic nature of living. Within the context of the prosaic nature of life emerge decisions and actions that result in changes to the prosaic. We live life; events and actions influence how life is lived. According to Bakhtin, two fundamental forces that result in change or lack of change are centripetal forces

and centrifugal forces. *Centripetal forces* are those that impose order (structure) on the general chaos of life. Using an analogy from physics, centripetal forces are similar to gravity. Gravity creates order out of chaos by anchoring and centering our actions; gravity creates a structure that brings stability and coherence to the prosaic, everyday actions of living. In contrast, *centrifugal forces* (interaction) are analogous to the rotation of the earth; this movement exerts a counter force to the pull of the centripetal or gravitational force. These are forces that result in movement, action and interaction with others. In describing these two forces on actions and decisions, Bakhtin was implicitly describing the nature of structure and interaction that results from these two forces. SIT presumes that there are similar forces that influence the nature, sequence and organization of human communication; centripetal forces influence the coherent structure of messages; centrifugal forces result in movement, punctuation and give and take responses that result in interaction.

Yet another way of describing the fundamental nature of communication structure and interaction may be found in perspectives emanating from scientific hypothesis. Scientist and educator Raymo (2008) has observed that the nature of scientific inquiry can be sorted into two often simultaneous quests: We seek answers to questions that reveal *universal truths* and we also strive to explain and predict phenomena in individual, *particular situations*. Scientific inquiry, by observing and measuring “what is”, is designed to answer both kinds of questions—first, those that provide universal axioms (principles that provide structure) to help make sense of the chaos of life and, second, those answers that seek to explain and predict specific instances in a given situation (in a given interactive moment in time). Scientific inquiry seeks answers to these explanations and predictions *at the same time*. Again, these two elements of inquiry, universal (structure) and particular (interaction), suggest a quest to seek both a predictable, universal structure while helping to make sense of the chaotic, interactive, multisensory nature of life. SIT draws upon both of these anchoring questions — those that provide universal answers — the structure of a message, and those that seek explain specific instances — the interactive nature of messages.

Another way of viewing communication from a structure-interaction perspective is to consider the fundamental aspect of communication. As Salem (2012) has noted in his insightful analysis highlighting the process-nature of communication, *Complexity*, the most fundamental aspect of communication involves identifying similarity and differences. As Salem (2012) described it, “...there is a tension between similar and different in the enactment of communication” (p. 49). Similarity and difference in human communication form the basis of what Bateson (1958) described as balancing symmetrical and complementary patterns of communication. The symmetrical and complementary nature of communication and the nature of relationships is yet another way of describing the structuring-interactive nature of communication messages. Similarity in communication results in predictability and more communication symmetry; the communication patterns or structure of messages mirror each other. Communication differences result in change and ultimately to entropic chaos (interaction). Messages of high structure are messages that are similar and more symmetrical (mirrored) in that

one is able to predict what will occur in the message. Messages of difference involve messages in which predictability is low — also an element of interactive messages; messages compete or complement which results in a complementary relationship. So structured messages include greater predictability—there are fewer differences and therefore we are able to more accurately predict the overall structure or sequence of a message. Interactive messages include more differences and those messages have less predictability because of the differences inherent in an interactive message.

The structured and interactive nature of communication and the messages that result from the information is evident in a variety of modes of human expression; structure and interaction occur not only in verbal communication but also in art as well as in music. In describing the art of Henri Matisse, Flam (2013) noted that “The world is conceived as a continuum in which objects and people are seen as being both stable and dynamic...” (p. 17). When describing Matisse’s works of art he noted, “... the energy and meanings implicit in things are fluid and individual parts have meaning only in relation to all the others” (p. 17). Meaning, then, results when humans interpret the structure and interaction of communication messages, whether in a sonnet, a symphony or a swirl of color in a Matisse painting.

### **STRUCTURE-INTERACTION THEORY APPLIED TO COMMUNICATION CONTEXTS**

A communication context is the overall situation in which the communication occurs including the number of people involved in a given communication, the norms (what normally occurs), rules (followable prescriptions) or expectations (predictions) of communication within a given situation, and the goal and function of communication within a given communication setting. Context also includes the physical environment in which the communication occurs. Classic communication contexts include interpersonal communication, group communication, public communication, and electronic and print mediated communication. There is a considerable body of research that has investigated the nature and function of communication within these contexts.

The structured or unstructured nature of a communication message is influenced by the message’s goal and is especially adaptive to the receiver of the message. The structure of a given message influences the meaning a receiver creates within a given communication context. The resulting meaning, in turn, is a significant factor in the development of human relationships — the ongoing connections that occur because of communication. In the interpersonal communication context there is often meaning generated about the nature of the relationship. In group communication contexts, although relationships occur because of the need to merely associate with others (primary groups), most secondary groups exist to achieve a specific task or function. Public communication messages establish a relationship between speaker and audience as rhetors adjust ideas to people and people to ideas (Bryant, 1953). In the increasingly prevalent electronic mediated communication context, relationships are developed as suggested by social information processing theory (Tidwell and Walther, 2002), but task functions have priority over relational development, especially in business and other orga-

nizational settings. Interpersonal, group, public and electronically-mediated communication is discussed to illustrate applications of SIT to a variety of different communication contexts.

### **Interpersonal Communication**

Interpersonal communication is a distinctive, transactional form of human communication involving mutual influence usually for the purpose of managing relationships (Beebe, Beebe and Ivy, 2016). Relationships consist of the connections we make with another person through communication; relationships may be fleeting or ongoing. As defined by Salem (2012) a relationship is “The emergent set of shared, cooriented, or compatible perceptions actors have about each other with each other” (p. 230). SIT may be used to describe interpersonal communication from several existing theoretical frameworks.

Philosopher Martin Buber influenced the discussion of interpersonal relationships when he described communication as consisting of two different qualities of relationships: an “I-It” relationship or an “I-Thou” relationship (Buber, 1958). An “I-It” relationship is more impersonal in which the other person is perceived as an “It” rather than as a unique, authentic person. “I-It” relationships occur with more structured, formulaic communication messages. In contrast, “I-Thou” relationships treat the other person as an authentic, unique individual. “I-Thou” relationships grow from interactive communication rather than static, structured messages. Such a relationship stems from dialogue rather than monologue. Or, viewed from an SIT perspective, an “I-Thou” relationship is characterized by increased interaction rather than structured messages.

A related construct to Buber’s (1958) description of relationships on a continuum of “I-Thou” to “I-It” is viewing interpersonal relationships in terms of monologue or dialogue. Monologic relationships are those in which messages are more structured; there are longer periods of talk. Dialogic relationships, on the other hand, are characterized by more interactive talk; messages are listened to and responded to (Stewart, 2013). In a dialogic communication there is a greater sense of being other-oriented. To be other-oriented is to be aware of the thoughts, needs, experiences, personality, emotions, motives, desires, culture and goals of the other person. But it does not mean a person abandons his or her sense of integrity or ethics. To be other-oriented is to listen, thoughtfully respond, and appropriately adapt messages (Beebe, Beebe and Redmond, 2017).

Yet an additional theoretical perspective, anchored in the work of Mikhail Bakhtin (1930), views relationship development as the management of tensions that pull us in two directions simultaneously. Relational Dialectic Theory (Baxter, 1988; Baxter & Montgomery, 1997) seeks to describe the nature of these simultaneous tensions that operate in all relationships. According to Baxter (1988) and Baxter and Montgomery (1997), three predominant dialectical tensions include: (1) connectedness versus autonomy — the desire to both connect and be interdependent with another person and a desire to remain autonomous and independent; (2) Predictability versus novelty (certainty versus uncertainty); and (3) openness versus closedness. SIT suggests that the two directions are pressures for structure and opposing forces of interaction. Message structure and interaction is a framework for viewing the nature of interactive

connectedness versus more structured autonomy. Structured messages are more predictable whereas novel messages are inherently more interactive. Openness is more interactive in describing message structure whereas closedness is more structured. Thus, SIT may serve as a way of describing the dialectical tensions that evolved from Bakhtin's original characterizations of centripetal forces and centrifugal forces that shape the prosaic, everyday communication in interpersonal relationships.

### **Group Communication**

Group communication is the communication that occurs among a small group of people who share a common purpose, who feel a sense of belonging to the group, and who exert influence on one another (Beebe & Masterson, 2015). Communication with others in small groups, given the number of people involved in the conversation, is often fraught with uncertainty. Although research has found group communication may (but not always) occur in predictable phases (Fisher, 1970), talk in small groups may also occur in a variety of less predictable forms described variously as punctuated equilibrium (Gersick, 1989) and multisequence models (Poole, 1983). To help group members manage the messiness of group discussion, a group needs a certain amount of structure to keep the discussion focused. Group structure, consistent with SIT, includes the agenda and other structuring techniques, rules and procedures to help a group stay focused on the task. A group also needs the energy that comes from interaction. Interaction is the give-and-take conversation that occurs when people collaborate (Beebe & Masterson, 2015).

Group researchers have found that groups which have no planned structure or agenda have more difficulty accomplishing the task (Kerr & Tindale, 2004). Specifically, without structure, groups (Sunwolf & Seibold, 1999) are characterized by these communication attributes:

- ◆ The group will take more time to deliberate.
- ◆ Group members are more likely to prematurely focus on solutions.
- ◆ Group members will hop from one idea to the next.
- ◆ The Group is more likely to be controlled by a dominating group member.
- ◆ Groups are likely to experience more unmanaged conflict.

A predominate research conclusion about group performance and structure is this: *Any method of structuring group problem solving and decision making is better than no method at all* (Beebe & Masters, 2015; White, 2007). Groups need a certain degree of structure because members have relatively short attention spans and because uncertainty results both from the relationships among group members and from group members' varied definition of the task. Researchers have found that groups shift topics about once a minute (Berg, 1967; also see Poole, 1983) unless there is structure or facilitation. Thus, groups benefit from an agenda and other structuring methods and techniques that keep the discussion focused on the task.

In addition to structure, groups need a counterbalance of synergistic interaction, talk, and dialogue. Too much structure and not enough interaction results in a group that becomes out of balance. An overly structured group conversation would be one that involves one person dominating the discussion and an over-reliance of techniques that squelch



conversation and group collaboration. An overly interactive group discussion would be characterized by frequent topic shifts, group members not listening, increased interruptions, and several members speaking at once. Research supports the value of appropriate amounts of interaction in group deliberations. Appropriate amounts of group interaction support these outcomes (for a summary see Beebe & Masterson, 2015):

- ◆ High quality contributions early in the group's discussion improve group performance.
- ◆ The more individuals share their information with others early in the group's history the better the overall group performance.
- ◆ Group members should understand the information presented for improved group performance.

For maximum group performance a group needs structure to stay on task as well as facilitation (interaction) to accomplish the goal of the group (Pavitt, Philipp & Johnson, 2004). One research team found that group members who first had a collaborative discussion before making an individual decision were more likely to make a decision that benefited the entire group (Hopthrow & Hulbert, 2005). SIT can be used to help explain why some groups are more successful than others. Successful groups have an appropriate balance of structure and interaction; ineffective groups have either too much structure that limits collaboration, or too much interaction that results in disjointed, unconnected conversation that is not focused on accomplishing the group's task.

### **Public Speaking**

Public speaking is the process of presenting a thoughtful message to an audience, small or large (Beebe & Beebe, 2015). Aristotle's wise and cogent observation that "Rhetoric is the counterpart of dialectic" provides the foundational taxonomy of the public communication context and presupposes the importance of relying on both structure and interaction to seek and present credible messages to an audience. SIT suggests that at times either the speaker or audience may prefer a more structured message. At other times, a more interactive dialogue is more appropriate and effective in achieving the communication goals of speaker or listeners. Public speaking texts note both the structured and interactive nature of public communication. As Beebe and Beebe (2015) observed in their introductory public speaking text:

The skill of public speaking builds upon your normal, everyday *interactions* with others. In fact, as you begin to study and practice public speaking, you will discover that it has much in common with conversation, a form of communication in which you engage in every day. Like conversation, public speaking requires you to focus and verbalize your thoughts.

Yet in addition to the interactive nature of communication, public speaking involves a more sustained, prepared and structured message. Specifically, public speaking:

- ◆ Takes more preparation than conversation.
- ◆ Has a more formal syntax than conversation.
- ◆ Assumes more clearly defined roles of speaker and listener.

Each of these observations is predicated on the assumption that public speaking is more structured than impromptu conversation (Beebe & Beebe, 2015). So both in-

teractive and structured communication is needed for effective public communication. In some situations, a highly structured, sustained message is needed to achieve the goals of the communication. High structure is needed when: (1) the speaker has a clear rhetorical goal, and (2) the audience expects and needs ample information to manage uncertainty.

### **Electronically Mediated Communication**

In some respects, all communication is “mediated”: all communication involves some channel that carries the encoded message to a receiver. In face-to-face communication contexts sound and light waves mediate the message. Electronic mediated communication (EMC) consists of any communication that is carried out using an electronically mediated channel; a channel other than those used in face-to-face communication connects the message from sender to receiver. Research suggests that EMC is pervasive; in 2012 over a billion people were using Facebook and 70% of people connected to the Internet in the U.S. used Facebook (Stewart, 2013, p. 85). Differences between face-to-face and electronic communication include: (1) time, (2) varying degrees of anonymity, (3) potential for deception, (4) nonverbal messages, (5) written messages, and (6) distance (Amichai-Hamburger, 2005).

The more synchronous our interaction (messages that occur in real time) as compared with asynchronous messages (a message not seen or heard at the same time the message is sent) the more the electronic mediated message emulates the feeling of social presence. Social presence is the sense that we act and think as if we were involved in an unmediated, face-to-face conversation.

Some EMC messages may need more structure if selected cues, such as nonverbal cues, are not available to the receiver. Cues-filtered-Out theory, an early theory of EMC, suggests that emotional expression is severely restricted when we communicate using only text messages. (Sproull & Kiesler, 1986). The theory predicts that because of the lack of nonverbal cues people are *less* likely to use text-based EMC to manage conflict in an interpersonal communication situation that is more complicated such as managing relationships. An additional theory of EMC, called Media Richness Theory, suggests that the richness of a communication channel is based upon four criteria: (1) the amount of feedback that the communicators receive, (2) the number of cues the channel conveys, (3) the variety of language that communicators use, and (4) the potential for expressing emotions and feelings (Trevino, Daft & Lengel, 1990). Based on these four criteria, researchers have developed a continuum of communication channels from rich to lean. Face-to-face is the most communication rich channel. A poster or impersonal memo is media lean. Media rich channels are those in which there is considerable potential for interaction. Media lean channels are those characterized by little interaction and high structure. The overall prediction of the appropriateness of a mediated channel is the degree of structure or interaction the channel permits or encourages. Specifically, media rich communication is likely to call for greater interaction and less structure; media lean messages are likely to result in less interaction and more structure.

When the communicator wishes to discourage feedback by the communicator and interaction then a more structured message in a more media-lean channel is preferred (Tidwell & Walther, 2002). When feedback and responses to messages are encouraged a more interactive, media-rich channel is selected. Thus, the preference for the channel of a communication is related to the amount of structure or interaction expected from the receiver of the message.

Social Information-Processing Theory suggests that people do communicate relational and emotional messages via electronically mediated channels, but that it takes longer to express messages and develop relationships when electronically mediated. Whereas the Cues-filtered-Out Theory suggests that there are no or significantly diminished nonverbal/emotional/relational cues in an EMC, Social Information-Processing Theory suggests that the social and relational cues (primarily nonverbal cues) are evident in ECM but that it takes more time for the cues to be decoded and interpreted. The social and relational cues exist but are subtler. Computer-mediated exchanges in comparison with face-to-face exchanges typically involve asking more direct questions that result in people revealing more, not less information about themselves when online.

### **Implications of Structure-Interaction Theory for Developing Communication Strategies**

Structure-Interaction Theory describes the nature of communication message organization varying on a continuum from highly structured, organized and predictable to less structured, less predictable and more interactive. The theory is not only descriptive of communication message but can facilitate prescriptions for enhanced communication effectiveness and appropriateness.

The fundamental prescription stemming from SIT is this: *The appropriate degree of message structure and interaction is influenced by the nature, values, culture and expectations of the receiver of the communication message.* In supporting a receiver-centric approach to communication Aristotle (1959) suggested: “For of the three elements in speechmaking—speaker, subject, and person addressed---it is the last one, the hearer, that determines the speech’s end and object”. Thus, the “person addressed” (audience or listener) is the prime determinant of the appropriate degree of message organization as structured or interactive.

In analyzing an audience to assess the degree of structure or interaction to incorporate in a message one should be mindful of three general observations about a listener: (1) similarities; (2) differences, and (3) based on the analysis of similarities and differences, the identification of common ground with listeners. An audience’s preference for structure or interaction is but one strategy among many to consider. The appropriate degree of message structure and interaction is rooted, in part, in the cultural expectations of listeners.

The degree of similarity and difference among audience member characteristics (as also noted earlier by Salem, 2012) is a factor in considering the degree of message structure or interaction that audiences would prefer. Audience demographic uniformity and similarity would predict a preference and expectation for greater message structure.

Greater uniformity among audience members would suggest less need to manage listener uncertainty thus greater message organizational structure. Increased structure would suggest increased predictability. Audiences with greater variation in demographic characteristics would value increased message interaction.

Larger, homogenous audiences would suggest a preference and expectation for message structure. In public speaking contexts audience members have less expectation of participating in the interactive “conversation” than in interpersonal situations in which the number of people involved in the communication is smaller. Smaller groups or dyadic communication would suggest a preference for greater interaction.

Displaying visual text, such as using PowerPoint during a public presentation, is a way of reinforcing the structure of a message. The degree of message redundancy expected during oral presentations (such as the often prescribed, “Tell us what you are going to tell us; tell us; tell us what you told us) is a way of increasing message structure. Oral communication in more formal communication context which is indicative of a larger audience, requires greater redundancy (structure) to enhance its effectiveness. Oral communication in less formal situations which involve fewer people would require less structure and more interaction.

### **Culture**

One of the key elements of audience or listener is the cultural expectations and values of the communication receiver. Culture is the learned system of knowledge, behaviors, attitudes, beliefs, values and norms that are shared by a group of people. A common culture is one in which there are more shared similarities among a group of people than there are differences. Specifically, SIT may be used to help explain and predict communication effectiveness and appropriateness depending on the cultural context (high or low) and values.

Cultural context, as described by Hall (1976), refers to high and low context message preferences. Cultural values, as described by Hofstede (1991) in his classic taxonomy of cultural values, include: (1) individualism and collectivism, (2) masculine and feminine values, (3) tolerance for uncertainty, (4) power distance, and (5) orientation to time.

### **Cultural Context**

Preference for the influence of context is a receiver/listener/audience cultural variable that influences preferences for high and low structured or interactive messages. In high-context cultures people rely heavily on implicit, nonverbal cues to interpret the meaning of messages (Hall, 1976).

In low-context cultures there is greater reliance on the words that are spoken and the explicit message content when interpreting encoded messages. Greater use of redundancy, including the use of message “sign posts” to communication message structure, developing explicit outline of verbal messages, message previews, message summaries, message transitions and other methods of adding to message structure would enhance clarity and meaning. SIT would suggest that people from low-context cultures (who value verbal messages) would prefer greater structure when seeking to interpret

messages of others. Additionally, someone from a low context culture may seek to reduce uncertainty by asking questions and seeking additional information through conversation. Individuals with a low context orientation, however, are more likely to rely more on words to manage their uncertainty.

In high-context cultures the interaction and meaning occur with emphasis on the nonverbal messages; so verbal interaction is less important than in low context cultures. Images and other nonverbal message elements would be valued by listeners who rely more heavily on more subtle, implicit strategies to organize messages. Individuals from high context cultures usually prefer less verbal interaction and are more comfortable with the ultimate form of message structure—silence.

#### Individualism and Collectivism

The relative importance of cultural values as described by Hofstede (1991) is another cultural variable that influences in how humans interpret messages. One of the most predominate cultural values is the preference for individualism or collectivism. People from a culture with strong individualism values tend to place greater emphasis on individual accomplishment than do people from collectivistic cultures (Hofstede, 1991).

SIT would predict that collectivist cultures would have greater preference for structured messages—messages that have similar, common, predictable structures. Individualistic cultures would prefer more interactive, unique messages—interaction adapted to the individual rather than structure designed to appeal to a collective group of listeners.

#### Masculine-Feminine Cultural Dimension

In masculine cultures people tend to value more traditional roles for both men and women; there is also a high value placed on achievement, assertiveness, heroism and material wealth. SIT would suggest greater preference for message structure for masculine cultures that emphasize the content or instrumental nature of communication. People from feminine cultures tend to value caring for the less fortunate, greater sensitivity toward others and an overall enhanced quality of life (Hofstede, 1991). More feminine, relationally-oriented cultures would resonate with more interactive messages that would facilitate the development of relationships.

#### Tolerance for Uncertainty

Cultures in which people value certainty more than uncertainty are more likely to prefer interactive, dialectic communication than a sustained, non-interactive monologue; they want to predict the future by reducing uncertainty through the use of questions. People who have a greater tolerance for uncertainty may not expect answers to questions and therefore may be comfortable with more message structure. Interactive, spontaneous messages are likely to be preferred in situations in which there is a need to know answers to the question of “what happens next?” Greater tolerance for uncertainty, characterized by such sentiments as “just go with the flow” and “it will sort itself out” may result in communicators asking fewer questions. Consequently communicators would expect more message structure.

### Power Distribution

According to Hofstede (1991) some cultures prefer an equal, or a decentralized distribution of power, whereas other cultures prefer and are more comfortable with concentrated, centralized power structures. More centralized distributions of power would predict a preference for messages with greater structure. Decentralized power distributions would suggest a preference for greater interactive messages to negotiate power and manage uncertainty. Where power is concentrated in more centralized structures the messages would be expected to be more structured and less interactive. More distributed power would result in the need for more give-and-take, interactive messages.

### Time Orientation

Time orientation falls on a continuum between long-term and short-term time values. People with a long-term orientation to time place greater emphasis on what will happen in the future; they value perseverance and thrift. With an emphasis on endurance and a value for predictability, long-term time cultural orientations may likely result in communicator preferences for enhanced message structure. Short-term time orientations would predict a general preference for briefer more ephemeral interaction.

### Conclusion

These initial ideas about the role and conclusion influence of culture and preferences for structured or interactive messages are speculative. Additional research is needed to examine the validity and reliability of these prescriptions and strategies. SIT is offered as a general framework to assist in both describing the nature of communication in specific contexts as well as helping to predict the receiver preference for structure or interaction in communication messages. Listener preference for structure or interaction is based on expectations according to communication context and culture.

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## ТЕОРИЯ СТРУКТУРНОГО ВЗАИМОДЕЙСТВИЯ: КОНЦЕПТУАЛЬНЫЕ, КОНТЕКСТУАЛЬНЫЕ И СТРАТЕГИЧЕСКИЕ ОПРЕДЕЛЯЮЩИЕ КОММУНИКАЦИИ

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В статье описывается Теория структурного взаимодействия (ТСВ), в рамках которой рассматриваются коммуникативные сообщения и предлагаются способы улучшения коммуникации, основанные на выборе наиболее предпочтительной для реципиента структуры сообщения или способа взаимодействия. Хотя Теория структурного взаимодействия является новой, она уходит корнями в такие классические науки, описывающие коммуникацию, как риторика и диалектика (Аристотель, 1959), а также современные теории коммуникации (Салем, 2012; Литтлджон, Фосс 2008). В статье даются основные положения Теории структурного взаимодействия, показано, как она может помочь объяснить и предсказать ход коммуникации в разных контекстах (в межличностной, групповой и общественной коммуникации) и определить стратегии, нацеленные на улучшение общения (что обсуждалось на конференции Российской коммуникативной ассоциации).

Согласно Теории структурного взаимодействия, для того, чтобы сообщение было понято и достигло цели говорящего, необходим баланс двух составляющих: структуры и взаимодействия. Структура коммуникации — неотъемлемый элемент, участвующий в донесении информации до собеседника. Согласно описанию Аристотеля, в структуре связей и взаимодействия риторика является наиболее структурированной и четкой моделью передачи сообщения. Диалектика характеризуется более спонтанным обменом сообщениями. Согласно ТСВ, вся коммуникация может быть рассмотрена в рамках культурного взаимодействия. Данная работа иллюстрирует применение ТСВ к некоторым коммуникативным ситуациям и предлагает стратегии улучшения общения. В частности, рассматриваются возможности развития сообщений в соответствии с предпочтениями аудитории, основанными на коммуникативных ожиданиях и культурной специфике. Структура взаимодействия должна определяться запросами, интересами, ценностями (включая культурные ценности) аудитории, которые влияют на тип коммуникации.

**Ключевые слова:** Теория структурного взаимодействия (ТСВ), коммуникативные сообщения, коммуникативный контекст, коммуникативные стратегии, риторика, диалектика.



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# INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AS A SITUATED, CULTURALLY COMPLEX, INTERACTIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

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The field of intercultural communication includes a variety of productive theoretical approaches as well as different methodological commitments. Some studies are built on the basis of self-report measures, aggregate tendencies, and/or resulting scores within and across national populations. This article focuses on a different kind of empirical study that is based upon careful observations of actual intercultural interactions and interpretations which honor the participants' views of those interactions. The article first diagrams the process of intercultural communication as a situated, cultural accomplishment. Next, distinct and complementary modes of analyses for phases of such study are presented. Finally, specific goals and eventual insights are discussed.

**Key words:** intercultural communication, interactions, interpretations, social and cultural interactions.

## INTRODUCTION

I want to address some underdeveloped features in the study of intercultural communication. My exposition here, of “underdeveloped features”, stands alongside other programs of work which are different; many explore statistically-based scores of populations along abstract dimensions and then compare them cross-culturally. My purpose is different; it is to draw attention to intercultural communication as it is actually getting done among participants, rather than compare aggregate scores reported via self-report measures. I seek to keep in view what participants in intercultural communication actually do, what they believe is getting done as they do it, as it is achieved in actual scenes of social interaction.

My exposition, then, has as one contrastive backdrop well-known studies such as those in the Hofstedian tradition which are based upon ratings of “national cultures” such as “how the less powerful expect power to be distributed; how integrated individuals are in groups; the distribution of roles between genders; the degree of tolerance of ambiguity; and a society’s orientation to the future. Based upon a sample from a national group, one can compute a mean score for each dimension and thereby establish a snapshot of that nation’s culture, with that nation’s score on each dimension, relative to other nations, being rather stable, [at least as] Hofstede argues”. I have summarized such studies elsewhere along with their critical assessments (Carbaugh, 2007, p. 21; based upon Geert Hofstede, 2001).

Studies that use quantitative measures of social phenomena as these are important as they provide a view of central tendencies within and across populations of people. Geert Hofstede (2001), as one prominent example, provides an instrument which can rank national populations along such measures. One is “individualism” with two na-

tional scores relative to that dimension being 91 for the United States and 20 for China. As scores, then, we see a tendency in the US to rank individualism much higher than it is ranked in China. A second measure is of “a long term orientation” with China’s tendency or ranking being 118 with the US being 29. Combining the two, together, yields general ratings in the United States, relative to China, being toward short-term interests of individuals, and with China, relative to the US, as focused on the longer term with a collective orientation. These are measures of important aspects of internal human cognition, or mental programming, as it presumably pertains to national populations.

If we were to add Russia’s scores to the above dimensions, we find this nation’s score on individualism to be 39, closer to China at 20 than to the US at 91. On long term orientation, Russia’s score is 81, a bit closer to China’s national tendency at 118 than the US’s at 29. The scores suggest something general according to Hofstede; that in Russia and China, relative to the US, the consciousness of the “we” is emphasized over the mindfulness of the “I” with more interdependence being presumed among society’s members; on the other measure, China and Russia strive in one’s thinking to maintain more of a link to the past, than the US, when looking toward the future.

The measures, again according to Hofstede, are measures of a population-wide “mental program” and as such are located — from the view of the theoretical model — inside people as a shared cognitive template. Culture is, in this sense, the social programming of a national mind. As a result, the measures provide a reading, so to speak, of that national mind, generally speaking. It is important to recognize that according to Hofstede and others, the measures are NOT measures of social action, of conduct in context, or of what people actually do when they are together with others. In this sense, the measures are not about intercultural communication as a social practice, but are about comparisons of aggregate scores of human populations that are abstract and located within national minds.

In fact, studies of what people do together, especially in intercultural interactions are, by comparison, more rare and difficult to find. Put differently, Hofstede’s approach and studies are widely cited and implemented. Studies of actual intercultural interactions are less so.

Why is this? Studies of actual intercultural interactions paint the intercultural picture with a different brush. If I were to load my language about the matter, I would say the Hofstede brush offers strokes along a few familiar dimensions about typical generic tendencies, while those of intercultural interactions bring into view vividly situated interactional dynamics which may offer deep insights. It is this, the latter sort of picture about studies of intercultural communication I want to hold in view. And it is a general approach to them, a systematic theory and rigorous methodology I advocate (see Carbaugh, 1990; Carbaugh, 2007). In the process, I think we can develop better knowledge about such studies IF they are situated in the details of social life, explored as interactional achievements, and interpreted as tied deeply to cultural traditions which are being activated in those very achievements.

Some years ago, I published an article which anticipated future studies of intercultural communication that would be designed with regard to, what I called there, “the C factor” (1993, pp. 110—111). My plea then, as it is now, was for scholars of

communication “to design studies that are *cultural* and *comparative* with special attention to *contexts of intercultural contacts*” (p. 111) [italics in the original]. In the meantime, many studies of this kind have been created (e.g., Hall, 1994; Wierzbicka, 2010; Witteborn, 2010) and I have added my own (e.g., Carbaugh, 2005). But these are not easy studies to design or to conduct.

Part of the difficulty is the range of features which need to be carefully distinguished in such study; this is due to the variety of qualities that are actually involved in the phenomena of interest, namely, intercultural interaction. What I want to offer here is a sketch of those qualities, in that phenomenon and some of the features needing attention when it is being studied.

As I delve into these matters, let me provide a larger frame around my exposition. The spirit of the framework derives from the programmatic enterprise initiated by Dell Hymes (1972) and is offered as an inquiring one, open-minded, investigative; one that wonders, in the case in view here, how an intercultural interaction gets done as it occurs. The frame for this sort of investigation does not start and stop with an observer’s abstract dimensions like individualism and future orientation, although one MIGHT find those matters to be active in the concrete details of a particular interaction. One does ask what social interaction is indeed getting done, and how do participants in such an interaction find it; what form and meaning do participants experience as active within it; what critical assessment do they make of it? This is where we are headed as we think through the following qualities and features of intercultural communication.

## OVERVIEW

The exposition is in three main parts: first, I diagram the process of intercultural communication with special attention to its main features; second, I discuss some essential modes in inquiry for its study; then, I discuss some of qualities in the types of insights offered, relative to the others introduced above (i.e., those based upon quantitative scores and others based solely on conversational structure without its cultural features).

## THEORETICAL ELEMENTS: INTERCULTURAL INTERACTION AS SOCIAL AND CULTURAL

Readers of this article are undoubtedly aware, based upon personal experiences of the kind of phenomenon we call “intercultural interaction”. In it, we find ourselves interacting with others in ways we might find puzzling, or might find later was not quite what we thought it was. A few years ago, a new acquaintance from China was spending a sabbatical year in our Department of Communication. After meeting for a first time, we met again and I received the following cheery remark, “have you eaten yet?” Upon hearing this, I wasn’t sure if my interlocutor was worried I had not been fed, was hungry herself, was overly attentive to my needs, or something else. A communicative act had been performed by her in social interaction, its form and meaning not quite known by me at the time. Eventually, I realized her words, and thus our interaction was a well-known and simple form of greeting — a Chinese version translated by her into English — of which I was unaccustomed to hearing in the US. (I note that given the sort of difficulty her utterance raised in my understanding and in coordinat-

ing our subsequent interaction, knowing her nation's score on individualism and future orientation was of little practical help.)

So what sort of study might complement those others and provide different, if complementary insights?

I think such study needs to be done through careful explorations that give detailed attention to actual, real-world examples of intercultural interactions. Attending to these moments of social life demonstrates the toe-hold of different cultural realities in actual social interaction; it demonstrates further how, for a moment at least, that interaction at that moment — that is, its meanings and significance — is not being shared by participants. Understanding how that sort of process occurs lends insight into such moments, as well as the general cultural practices that produce them. And with the benefit of those insights, better future practices can be forged. Or at least that is the hope.

Identifying intercultural encounters as such requires, first, an ability to notice that such moments indeed have occurred. (There can be much resistance to identifying moments as such.) Such a “noticing” stands between two human impulses: On the one end, it is natural and periodically beneficial for any of us to believe that basically all people (or all structures of conversation) are alike; at the other, it is natural and periodically beneficial to believe that each single individual (or each conversation) is different from all others. Both beliefs in a collective humanity and individual dignity or uniqueness, respectively, are important. Each honors important qualities about the universal features and unique experiences immanent in the human condition.

However, when we study intercultural interactions in the way being advanced here, we work between these, noticing a moment when individuals are doing something together, socially, yet as they are co-enacting that shared moment, it turns out, in effect, they are not interacting within the realm of the shared or shareable; the form, meanings and significance of the interaction varies to a degree, with the variance being recognized by them (or not); this is due to the cultural realities that are presumably active according to participants in that very moment. Understanding how this happens is a great challenge. (The latter unrecognized variances are especially interesting to study; I have called them “invisible misunderstandings” in my 2005 book, *Cultures in Conversation*.)

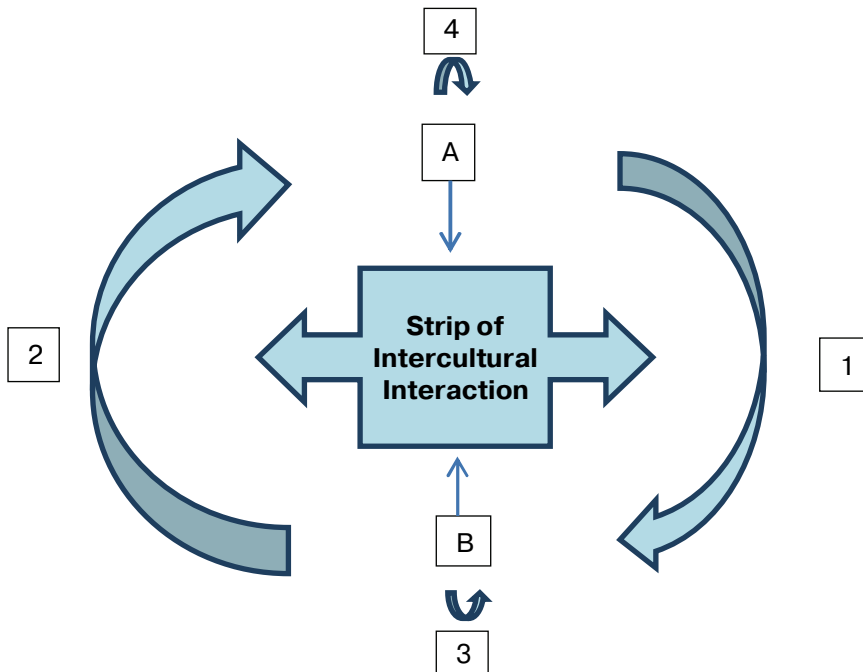
A way of conceptualizing this process can be understood with the concepts of coordination and coherence. In the above example, I was able to coordinate my social interaction with my Chinese interlocutor, but I did so with little coherence or shared meaning about what I and we were doing. This sort of dynamic, coordination without coherence, is behind some if not many intercultural situations which are sometimes cast as: “when in Rome do as the Romans do.” In such moments, one can go along by coordinating one's actions, but at the same time not quite understanding or knowing fully what one is doing. Through careful study of such interactions, one can elevate the degree of coherence in such acts and events, deepening the knowledge about the range of meanings being attached to such interaction.

In the brief example introduced above, the utterance, “have you eaten yet” [trans. From the Chinese, “Ni chi le ma”], made when greeting another, is, from a Chinese view, a well-known token of acknowledgment which is used today and was prominently

spoken most often during “Mao’s-China.” In its way, the saying is linked to historical conditions when people were concerned about food and whether family and friends literally had enough to eat. Active in such a saying is a feature of Chinese face-concerns (“mien tze”) where one wants to show care for another, with social duties or obligations being incurred in the process (e.g., see Chen, 1991). This snippet of Chinese social history may not be, and likely is not known or shared by non-Chinese interlocutors, and when not, its utterance as a “caring greeting” may go unrecognized as such. In fact, it may be heard alternately as an inappropriate or odd question for information — from the US view. The utterance, then, in the form of a question about one’s eating, is significantly different among participants as a form, with different meanings and symbolic significance being active from the view of these two traditions. While this example is relatively simple, others pertaining to decision-making, problem-solving, international conflict, inter-religious dialogue, and so on can occur similarly as different historically-based practices and cultural premises can be active — knowingly or not — at the same time.

So, how to organize studies which attend to such dynamics? The following is a diagram which seeks to introduce some central elements in such study of intercultural interactions.

Note first, the starting place in the middle of the diagram, a strip of actual intercultural interaction.



Basic Elements in the Study of Intercultural Interactions

- Key:  
Central Box: Actual Intercultural Interaction  
A, B: Cultural Views of the Interaction  
1, 2: Intercultural Dynamics  
3, 4: Reflexivity

**Actual intercultural interaction:** The central box refers to a real event of intercultural communication, a sequence of communicative acts that has happened. Analyses work best when they are based upon that social interaction and it has been transcribed in an exacting and detailed way. Various transcription systems are available for this sort of recording with several examples including inter-lingual dynamics appearing in the articles cited above. The point is to create a publicly consultable and accurate record of the event-for purposes of analyses -which carefully describes actually what was said, including nonverbal features of the event if that is possible. Some special kinds of analyses can utilize audio-visual recordings of events as primary data and this can work quite well. Earlier studies I have conducted of Russian and American intercultural interactions were based upon recordings of actual intercultural encounters (Carbaugh, 1993, 2005, pp. 55—81). Watching these together with Russian participants, and colleagues provided invaluable insights to the interactional dynamics under study.

What is not as helpful are loose paraphrases of the event, or distant, individual post hoc recollections, as these tend to slip into areas A and B of the diagram, which I will discuss next.

**Cultural views of that interaction:** Parts A and B of the diagram identify two different cultural perspectives about at least some part of the intercultural interaction under study. In our example above, we find the utterance, “have you eaten yet?” is hearable as a question from the view of everyday usage of English (A), but is hearable as a token of greeting from a Chinese view (B). Each, in turn, has its particular, and different meanings as such, rooted in historically-based cultural forms and routines of English and Chinese, respectively. A careful study of intercultural communication can bring each of these in to view in deep and revealing ways. Cultural propositions and premises can be formulated for each, a point we turn to below after examining the rest of the features of the diagrammed process.

**Intercultural Dynamics:** What impressions are created among participants? Parts 1 and 2 of the diagram identify how, if at all, each cultural reality positions the other. This can focus on impressions one creates about the other, for example, how the Chinese participant views the American’s comments (2), and vice versa (1). This can also focus on interaction details as each casts what the other is doing in particular ways, for example, the American wondered at one point, why is the Chinese participant asking that question? The American “wondering” might be apparent in nonverbal reactions or subsequent interactional details. The purpose here is to bring into view the cultural shaping of the interaction as it positions not only the view the participant has of herself and her actions (in the above paragraph focused on A and B), but also how this positions the other’s (this paragraph with 1 and 2).

**Reflexivity:** The above analyses can lead, via an understanding of different cultural bases of social interactions, to new or deeper insights about one’s own cultural preferences. One begins reflecting upon what one has said, and can start remarking differently upon it. In short, we can say more, more deeply about our sayings. This introduces reflexivity, with 3 and 4 in the diagram, as each cultural perspective about communication can learn something anew about itself. We have written in detail about

this aspect — discursive reflexivity — of intercultural communication (see Carbaugh and Hastings, 1992; Carbaugh, Nuciforo, Molina-Markham, and van Over, 2011). Adding a reflexive element to the study of intercultural communication (1) provides an explicit opportunity for developing theoretical insights, often because our theories hold residual and unreflective features of cultural views, and (2) offers the potential for practical advancement of intercultural dialogue, sometimes due to intercultural miscues being hidden from participants' views (A and B) of the interaction at hand. New insights, creative movement is made possible.

### **DISTINCT MODES OF ANALYSIS**

The above diagram, if fully exploited, requires several distinct modes of analysis. Each is hidden in the above discussion but made explicit in this section. The point is to move systematically and rigorously through specific stages of analyses of intercultural communication.

**Descriptive Analysis:** Descriptive analyses provide convincing evidence in response to the question: what actually occurred? A recording and/or a transcription of an intercultural event provides evidence that the social interaction was not made-up or inaccurately recalled. Note that an event, as such, can be inspected by others so they can see it in as close to its original form as is possible.

I use the concept, “analysis”, here advisedly. I want to draw attention to the fact that a descriptive record is something produced through recording, inspection, writing or sometimes drawing. This process is itself an analytical one. One can discover, when consulting one's record of an intercultural interaction, that there is something actually there (from the view of A) that was missed (from the view of B). I have found this myself in my own recorded nonverbal cues and in others such as a significant word choice or “lip smack” or “brow movement” that I missed. Insights as these are important in the interaction from at least one cultural view and are easily missed from another. This can be a humbling realization which can lead in the best of cases to further reflexive insights, theoretically and practically, as discussed above.

**Interpretive Analyses:** Interpretive analyses provide culturally appropriate insights to the question: what does that interactional word or cue or act or event mean? At times, interpretive analyses supply meanings that are similar for all participants; at others, the meaning goes deep for some but is missed by others; also possible is the way the same act or word choice can go deeply and differently in different cultural directions. In the first study of Russian-American intercultural communication I conducted in the 1980s, I puzzled over Russian responses to questions about sexual practices as these were formulated by an American interviewer. While the descriptive record was extremely challenging to produce even with the audio-visual recordings I had, it was the eventual interpretive analysis of that interaction which, according to Russian and American readers of the report, provided quite satisfying insights (see Carbaugh, 1993, 2005). In other words, it is the combination of careful descriptive analyses, with interpretive analyses, that can create such vivid portraits of intercultural interactions.

Interpretive analyses seek to make explicit cultural knowledge that is typically taken-for-granted. Several layers of this type of analyses need to be mentioned. One

is that implicit and often unspoken knowledge is being made explicit. If one is not Russian, how does one know the Russian meta-cultural commentary related to “sex” — or any other matter — if it is not made explicit? Similarly, when a Finn speaks English and comments on Finnish “shyness,” how does one know the active Finnish meanings (i.e., of the Finnish “*ujo*”) unless one knows Finnish? Interpretive analyses make that sort of knowledge explicit. I must add that cultural members may be poor reporters of this knowledge, precisely because it “goes without saying”! So, the cultural analyst has demanding work to do relative to this task. In the end, all participants may benefit from making the implicit cultural knowledge explicit.

Several concepts are used for interpretive analyses in the research tradition I am reporting here. One is “cultural proposition” which an analyst formulates using key terms from the cultural vocabulary of a participant (such as Chinese, Finnish, Russian, US sayings); another is “cultural premise” which an analyst formulates to express a significant belief (that something exists), or a value (that something is preferred) that is relevant to the intercultural interaction being studied; also, and eventually, an analyst might formulate a “communication code”, a system of beliefs and values pertaining to participants and their communication practices. (For further explication of the conceptual and methodological approach see Carbaugh, 2007; Carbaugh and Boromisza-Habashi, 2015; Carbaugh and Cerulli, 2013; Philipsen, Coutu, and Cavarrubias, 2002).

**Comparative, Cross-cultural Analyses:** Comparative analyses respond to the question: In what ways is the social interactional achievement similar, and different, to participants? Specific analyses in response to this question can address (1) the nature of the communicative act and whether it is being done, for example, as a greeting or a request for information, (2) the sequence of acts, whether and how the sequence under study is a cultural form; (3) the style of the act and its relevance to the context; and (4) the meanings, the cultural significance and importance of the acts, event, or style. Comparative and cross-cultural analyses as these contribute to knowledge in two general ways, identifying what is culturally distinct to each communication system as well as what is common across them.

**Critical Assessment:** As intercultural communication occurs, it is possible that the interactional dynamics create advantages for some participants just as they create disadvantages for others. The question is raised: whose interests are being served and how so? This sort of question is responded to through a mode of critical analysis, seeking to make clear a practice of concern, its interpretive features, the ways it works to advantage some and not others. In the process, if an evaluation of the practice is warranted, the standard of judgment being used in order to make that evaluation is to be made explicit. This procedure has been discussed in detail elsewhere (Carbaugh, 1990) with ethnographic field reports of intercultural communication implementing such analyses (Carbaugh, 2005; Covarrubias, 2008; Witteborn, 2010).

## GOALS AND INSIGHTS

The study of intercultural communication has largely appeared through statistical manipulations of aggregate scores across human populations. Another kind of study can complement those as it seeks to explore actual instances of intercultural interactions.



Explorations as these focus on this phenomenon as socially situated, culturally complex, and an interactional achievement. The goal of such study is to understand better what people actually do when they are engaged in intercultural interactions. A better understanding can be developed about communication acts, events, and styles, cultural views of each, as well as how meanings about each can go in different cultural directions. Advanced are better insights into the cultural features in these social interactions including the cultural integrity each may have relative to its particular form and meaning.

A robust theory and methodology is needed for such study. While sketched here, it has been helpful in producing studies which can be placed alongside others, offering insights about actual interactional dynamics as these penetrate cultural worlds. A forthcoming volume (e.g., see the chapter by Klyukanov and Leontovich, in press) of such studies from around the world demonstrates the heuristic value in such cross-cultural work, theoretically, and the promise it holds, practically, for enhancing the conduct among people in their actual intercultural encounters.

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## **МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНАЯ КОММУНИКАЦИЯ КАК ПРОДУКТ СИТУАТИВНОГО КОМПЛЕКСНОГО ВЗАИМОДЕЙСТВИЯ**

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Сфера межкультурной коммуникации включает в себя как разнообразные продуктивные теоретические, так и методологические подходы. Некоторые исследования основаны на данных самооценки, общих тенденциях и/или изучении данных внутри национальных общностей и между ними. В данной статье основное внимание уделено разным видам эмпирических исследований, основанных на наблюдении реального межкультурного взаимодействия и его интерпретации с точки зрения участников. В начале статьи рассматривается процесс межкультурного общения как результат ситуативного столкновения культур. Далее представлены четкие и взаимодополняющие методы анализа для каждой стадии исследования. В конце работы определяются специфические цели и перспективы исследования.

**Ключевые слова:** межкультурная коммуникация, интерпретации, социокультурные интеракции.

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# CONTRADICTIONS OF INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION IN THE ERA OF GLOBALIZATION: OBSTACLES OR DRIVING FORCES?

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Contradictions are supposed to be the basis of human development process. The paper deals with the contradictions and paradoxes in a most important sphere of human activity: international communication. Different kinds of contradictions are to be discussed: general ones shared internationally, i.e. concerning every nation, language and culture as well as those which are specific to present-day Russia.

**Key words:** contradictions, globalization, equality, diversity, traditions, innovations, teacher-student relations.

Nowadays, we all happen to be fortunate witnesses — and users! — of unimaginably great inventions in the sphere of communication which have given birth to the era of globalization in the history of mankind. The eternal dream of mankind to live in peace and friendship with all the nations on the planet — sorry, in the Global Village! — is about to come true. But... Philosophers have been trying to convince us that the progress of mankind is a dialectical process based on the unity and conflict of contradictions.

These contradictions can be presented in two large categories or classes: 1) **general** ones, concerning the whole mankind, 2) **special** ones concerning some limited groups of people, for example, those who are united professionally.

In this paper I am going to mention the contradictions of the first — general — category and to dwell upon the second — our professional ones.

## **GENERAL CONTRADICTIONS IN THE EPOCH OF GLOBALIZATION**

General contradictions in the epoch of globalization may be summed up in the following way:

### **1. Contradictions between technical versus human factors.**

Indeed, modern high technology has already conquered both space and time, has solved the problems of distance separating people, and virtually has done its very best to bring people together.

Technical progress provides mankind with an ever-increasing variety of more and more powerful devices and forms of communication: tele-conferences, tele-bridges,

mobile phones, interactive boards, Skype, and — first and foremost — His or Her Majesty — the Internet!

Our planet has shrunk to the size of “a global village”, we can live in peace, doing everything together. But no! On the way to this global happy life a “small obstacle” has turned up — a human factor.

Indeed, “the human factor” presents a number of problems hampering the idea of international communication.

The happy global life in the global village is impossible without a global language which, undoubtedly, implies English. However, choosing one language as global or international implies giving up, rejection, and even *d e a t h* of national languages. And this is a sacrifice that no nation is ready to give [1].

No wonder, the reaction of the rest of the world has been contradictory. Instead of being overjoyed by the opportunities of international communication presented by new technology and a happy global life as its consequence most nations have a great reluctance to the idea of replacing their national languages with English. More than that. Even the nations that practically stopped using their own language like the Irish, for example, and have been using English as a means of communication (paradoxically, the language of their rivals and enemies) are now reviving indigenous languages or, rather, *l a n - g u a g e s a n d c u l t u r e s*, the latter being reflected and at the same time moulded by languages [2].

Thus, the most formidable obstacles on the way to intercultural communication and a happy life in “the global village” are national: languages and cultures.

## **2. Contradictions between the Internet and the development of international communication.**

The ever-increasing spread of the Internet has the most powerful influence on the development of international communication and it is again very contradictory both in its essence and its results.

Indeed, on the one hand, the Internet leads to a “global village”, a cosmopolitan society, a world wide web (www), an international Internet family where peculiarities of national mentality, ideology, culture, etc. are mixed, diluted, dissolved and may cease to exist.

In the Internet the International reigns supreme over the National.

The opposite trend of the Internet lies in its interactivity, its openness and popularity, its democracy. Unlike mass media which flood their recipients/clients with all kinds of message/impact-oriented information, the Internet involves all its users in communication, enables them to share their opinions and ideas with other participants of communication, and to discover like-minded people all over the world.

In other words, the individual person is the object of mass media activities and both the subject and the object of Internet communication.

### **3. Contradiction between the concepts of equality and diversity.**

This is a basic human contradiction: equality versus diversity (individuality). People are created equal, they want to enjoy equal rights but they also want to keep their individuality which implies diversity. The same refers to nations.

The Soviet Union can serve as an example. Indeed, the USSR was a great historical experiment — an attempt to equality. It was successful in many ways: the gap between the rich and the poor was minimized; equal rights to free education, health service and other important social spheres were provided. However, all these achievements in equality led to an obvious lack of diversity: levelling people, ignoring their individuality, their individual needs, problems, likes and dislikes. “We” almost entirely ousted “I”.

Thus, people and nations strive for somewhat contradictory concepts: equality and diversity. This is **contradiction № 3** in the course of the paper but **rather № 1** in its significance.

## **CONTRADICTIONS IN OUR PROFESSIONAL SPHERE: FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING**

### **1. A contradiction between traditions and innovations inherent in most spheres of human activity.**

A most obvious and vivid example is the tradition of *perfectionism* which implies something good and proper: to do one’s job thoroughly and give deep knowledge of the subject in question. It went very well with the motto of Soviet times: “Soviet means excellent”.

The idea to teach everything in full splendour was, actually, quite good in theory but impossible to be implemented. This nation-wide practice of trying to teach everything resulted most frequently (at secondary schools and all the innumerable specialized higher education institutions) in learning next to nothing [3].

Now in a different Russia, under new circumstances, theoretically (or idealistically) speaking, the good tradition is hampering the FL teaching progress. Indeed, from force of this — outdated — tradition teachers of foreign languages continue to emphasize grammatical — and phonetic — accuracy.

It is a delicate point which needs more explanation. We can strive for perfection, and the more we know about English grammar and phonetics the better. However, the perfect knowledge of these aspects is unreachable and *unnecessary*. A foreign accent and some inaccuracy in grammar — as long as it does not stop or mislead communication — are quite normal, acceptable and expectable. “There is nothing more suspicious than a foreigner who speaks your language the way you do” Dr. J.D. O’Connor, University College London, Lectures on English phonetics, 1973—1974.

Thus, nowadays — in the era of mass open international communication — overdoing this tradition of perfectionism deprives FL students of fluency and hampers developing communicative competence of students at all levels.

## 2. A financial conflict FL teachers are confronted with.

The financial conflict is provoked by a striking difference in salaries between state and private schools, on the one hand, and between teachers of English and teachers of other foreign languages, on the other hand.

## 3. A psychological contradiction between the volume of knowledge required from the FL teacher and that of the actual subject — the foreign language under study, the most pivotal problem of foreign language learning and teaching (FLLT).

Indeed, the discipline of foreign language teaching has the most complicated and frightening object of studies — an immense, unbounded world including both the outer and inner worlds of human beings reflected by their languages. These worlds are foreign, strange, alien and scary. It is like entering the jungle full of dangers. In this situation both teacher and student feel strained, tense, uncertain (if the teacher is non-native. Native speaking teachers have different weak points).

The position of a foreign language teacher is more difficult than that of a student because of the traditional position of a teacher as the boss who is supposed to know everything.

## 4. Teacher — Student Relations.

Traditionally, in Russia teacher — student relations have always been severe, rigid and distant. They have been based on the idea that the Teacher is the all-knowing God and Tsar while the Student is a humble believer and a slave.

This situation is abnormal and dangerous for the following reasons: **first**, because learning a foreign language, like no other subject, requires a special psychological approach, the atmosphere of relaxation, trust, even love and faith, **second**, because the era of intercultural communication revealed a purely Russian present-day problem: **a conflict of cultures between teachers and students** born in very different countries and diametrically opposed ideologies [4].

This kind of a clash of cultures is very dangerous because it is invisible, almost incomprehensible. A conflict of cultures here is worse than that between different nations. It is more dangerous than the latter because it is well-hidden: the conflicting communities use the same language and belong to the same nation. However, as has already been mentioned, they were born and **educated** in different countries — the USSR and Russian Federation — with different ideologies, value systems, etc.

Consequently, our very urgent task nowadays is to bridge the gap between the teacher and the student. To do this teachers must learn to be patient and caring for students, they must see students as personalities in their own right.

It was an eye-opening experience on my first visit to Britain more than 40 years ago. In London University I discovered that there were only two “marks” or comments given to students: “good” and... “to think about”. It became a symbol, a new — unheard of before! — kind of teacher-student relations, and its principle was: give support, do not frighten away!

Using our well-know metaphor teaching can be confined to either “light up the torch” or “fill in the vessel”. My appeal to all teachers is: “Do not put out the torch”, because then no one will be able “to fill in the vessel”.

Let us be humane to our students! (*humane* defined in dictionaries as: *showing-kindness, care and sympathy*).

The success of a teacher is based upon two Loves: Love for the subject of teaching and Love for the student.

A very recent comment, confirming this, came from a schoolboy, a participant of the on-line course on “Language, Culture and Intercultural Communication” who wrote:

*I wish school teachers were speaking about their subjects with the same kind of love! It was quite insulting to hear from my mum that I am an excellent student with an empty head. It was in the 5th form. Now that I am already in the 8th form it has become evident to me that school gives knowledge only on paper. That is why courses of this kind are so vitally important.*

The Russian version for the Russian audience:

*Если бы в школе учителя говорили с такой же любовью к предметам! Очень оскорбительно было слышать в 5 классе, от мамы, что я отличник с пустой головой. Теперь, к 8-му, самому стало очевидно, что школа знания дает только на бумаге и поэтому подобного рода курсы жизненно необходимы.*

This comment not only emphasizes the aspect of Love in teaching and learning but also reminds us of a very important additional factor that plays a great part in the system of education — **the parents!** Education of parents must become a must (an inseparable part of) in secondary school education.

An answer to the question in the title is clear: contradictions are both obstacles and driving forces ensuring the progress of mankind. Indeed, people have to think and work harder and harder in order to overcome obstacles on the way to a happy, peaceful life on the planet of Earth. Philosophers have been quite right with their dialectical approach to human problems.

The future of mankind depends largely on its ability to communicate.

As far as ensuring multilingual and multicultural forms of international communication (electronic or non-electronic) is concerned, a most effective and creative solution to the problem is to emphasize the part of Foreign Language Learning and Teaching, to develop language teaching strategies, to improve language teaching methods and techniques.

Again, Russia can offer its unique experience in attempting to overcome the contradictions and problems of Foreign Language Teaching under the circumstances of decades of complete isolation from the world where these languages have been naturally used as means of communication.

Thus, foreign language teachers must be regarded as missionaries bringing peace, tolerance and international cooperation to the world through the possibility of international communication.

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## ПРОТИВОРЕЧИЯ МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНОЙ КОММУНИКАЦИИ В ЭПОХУ ГЛОБАЛИЗАЦИИ: ПРЕПЯТСТВИЯ ИЛИ ДВИЖУЩИЕ СИЛЫ?

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Предполагается, что противоречия составляют основу для человеческого развития. В работе освещаются противоречия и парадоксы в самой важной сфере человеческой деятельности — межкультурной коммуникации. Обсуждаются разные виды противоречий: общие, разделяемые во всем мире, то есть имеющие отношение к любому народу, языку и культуре, и характерные для современной России.

**Ключевые слова:** противоречия, глобализация, равенство, разнообразие, традиции, инновации, взаимоотношения учителя и ученика.



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# COGNITIVE DISSONANCE FROM AN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION PERSPECTIVE

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The aim of the paper is to investigate the reasons, types, and effects of cognitive dissonance with regard to intercultural communication. Cognitive dissonance can be caused by the discrepancy between the ways of categorizing and conceptualizing reality through the prism of different languages and cultures. The harmonization of mindsets and the way out of cognitive dissonance are based on the mechanisms of understanding and interaction with representatives of an alien culture in order to overcome communication breakdowns. A high level of intercultural competence requires the ability to identify the reasons for cognitive dissonance and ways to bridge intercultural differences. Interpreters, translators, and intercultural communication specialists should take the possibility of cognitive dissonance into account in their professional activities.

**Key words:** cognitive dissonance, intercultural communication, linguistic competence, verbal communication, non-verbal communication, understanding.

## INTRODUCTION

Scholars define cognitive dissonance as an inner conflict, which occurs because of the discrepancy between two “cognitions”: the old, habitual — and new beliefs contradicting the system of our convictions and values. The aim of this paper is to investigate the reasons, types, and effects of cognitive dissonance with regard to intercultural communication.

The term “cognitive dissonance” was introduced into academic discourse in 1956 by the US scholar Leon Festinger who consequently did a detailed study of this phenomenon in the context of social psychology and wrote the book *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance* (Festinger, 1957). However, O.P. Bibik (2004) asserts that the idea of cognitive dissonance theory goes back to F. Heider’s publications from the 1940s and that even before that, in 1922, the Russian philosopher and psychologist I.I. Lapshin used the term “dissonance” in connection with formal sensations of intellectual order in his book *Philosophy of Invention and Invention in Philosophy*. In particular, he wrote: “Such formal sensations first of all include the feeling of freedom from one’s inner contradiction (*Widerspruchslosigkeit*). The logical contradiction is perceived as a dissonance which should be resolved. Thus, for twelve years Kant could not find peace in order to eliminate the ‘scandalous’ conflict with his own mind” (qtd. in: Bibik, 2004).

The essence of the phenomenon described by L. Festinger and other psychologists is as follows: when, during the cognition process, individuals come across new knowledge which does not agree with the beliefs they hold, they experience an inner conflict, hence the name “cognitive dissonance”. In such situations people feel psychological tension and make efforts to reduce the inconsistency between the two ideas or beliefs

(Festinger, 1957). They try to come to terms with themselves to resolve the inner conflict. The harmonization can be achieved by different means: an attempt to explain the inexplicable (Prasad, 1950), minimize regret connected with irrevocable choices (Knox, Inkster, 1968), justify their own behaviour which goes against their own principles (Mills, 1958), align their perception of other individuals with their own actions towards them (Mussen et. al., 1979, c. 403; Tavris, Elliot, 2008, p. 28—29), etc.

Our observations show that recently the term “cognitive dissonance” has been often used in a non-terminological sense in political, religious, ecological, and other types of discourse as a speculative way to argue the opponent’s point of view — a claim that the other persons’ opinion is unjustified and points to their inadequate perception of reality, e.g.: *the cognitive dissonance of maidan, panic and cognitive dissonance in the Kremlin, the dangers of Obama’s cognitive dissonance*, etc.

In linguistics the study of cognitive dissonance is focused on the ways of its reflection in discourse. In T.V. Drozdova’s work *Cognitive Dissonance as a Linguistic Issue* it is regarded as the result of “inconsistency between the code used and the cognitive and interactional programs of interacting individuals” (Drozdova, 2011: 147). The author indicates that cognitive dissonance can occur on different levels of verbal expression: semantic, cognitive, and pragmatic. It can emerge due to the discordance between the communicators’ conceptual systems, difference in the interpretation of the same conceptual content, and their distribution in the hierarchy of individual perceptions. The author gives special attention to the divergence of background knowledge, implicit meanings, violation in the order of speech interaction, as well as extralinguistic factors, such as gender, age, status, level of intellect, profession, ethnicity, etc. [Ibid].

V.I. Tarmaeva connects the achievement of cognitive harmony as a mechanism of text interpretation with overcoming cognitive dissonance, which occurs when the semantics of a word or a phrase is insufficient (Tarmaeva, 2012: 4—5).

E.A. Veber (2004) distinguishes three spheres, which can generate cognitive dissonance: 1) the sphere of interpersonal relations (‘subject — subject’ type based on the conflict of interests); 2) the sphere of a person and his/her environment (gnoseological, or ‘subject — object’ type); 3) the sphere of the regulation of people’s activity related to the cultural values they are creating (axiological type). The author believes that the search for retrieving consistency as a way out of cognitive dissonance can serve as a proof of an individual’s communicative competence. According to Veber who focuses her attention on diplomatic discourse, the verbal means reducing cognitive dissonance include: strategies causing deliberate equivocation and uncertainty; use of euphemisms; political correctness; pseudomination; shift of emphasis; silence; and avoidance of response. Non-verbal means are gestures, as well as some provisions of diplomatic protocol and etiquette (Veber, 2004).

## DISCUSSION

We will further see how the ideas discussed above can be applied to the analysis of cognitive dissonance from the perspective of intercultural communication. Contacts between representatives of different cultures imply a clash between their worldviews,

which makes cognitive dissonance quite foreseeable. As a starting point, we deem it necessary to make two important remarks.

1. Cognitive dissonance and misunderstanding (or insufficient understanding) of a foreign language and culture are closely connected, but should not be equated. If misunderstanding can result from a lack of knowledge, cognitive dissonance is caused by a clash between incongruent information blocks, points of view, opinions, assumptions and, in many cases, the awareness of a communication breakdown. Individuals experience a mental block when they cannot comprehend the essence of their interlocutors' speech, their behaviour, or assessment of the situation. This can bring about not only short-term communication problems, but also more significant consequences, moral and ideological contradictions, biases and different types of intercultural conflicts. Therefore, the ability to recognize situations of cognitive dissonance, identify their origins, and find ways to overcome them acquires special significance.

2. The worldview largely depends on the way reality is conceptualized and categorized in a certain culture. The mapping of the world is not the same as the world itself. Therefore, a competent approach to intercultural communication implies that people should not be judgmental about other cultures and should avoid such qualifiers as “correct — incorrect”, “clever — stupid”, “right — wrong”, or “(not) as it is in real life”. For example, what is right: to believe that tomatoes are vegetables, as Russians do, or regard them as fruit, as they do in the UK? To celebrate New Year's day on the first of January as in Europe, or according to the solar calendar as in China?

Below we discuss the reasons, which can cause cognitive dissonance, as well as possible ways of harmonizing communication and restoring inner consonance. We will proceed from T.V. Drozdova's classification described above (Drozdova, 2011) and analyse those reasons on three levels: semantic, cognitive, and pragmatic.

The **semantic level** can be investigated on the material of both verbal and non-verbal communication.

As we indicated above, one of the reasons for cognitive dissonance is insufficient knowledge of a foreign language, in particular misunderstanding of polysemy, homonymy, puns, etc. The translation of the English sentence: *I must change* into Russian as: «мне надо перемениться» (I must change myself) instead of «мне надо переодеться» (I need to change my clothes) causes a breakdown in communication. Sometimes the comprehension of a whole situation depends on the understanding of a single phrase.

V.Z. Dem'jankov analyses cognitive dissonance in connection with texts with double meaning (ambiguity) and distinguishes the following modules of their understanding as an instrument for achieving consonance: 1) language proficiency; 2) development and verification of hypotheses about the meaning of the whole text; 3) processing the information; 4) reconstruction of the speaker's intentions; 5) identification of the discrepancy between the listener's inner world and the model world of discourse; 6) comparison of the relationship between the inner world and the model world; 7) establishment of a balance between the model world and the direct perception of reality (by the person who interprets it); 8) the relationship between understanding and the listener's other actions; 9) choice and change of the mode of understanding (Dem'jankov, 2011: 34—39).

The cognitive dissonance mechanism caused by the differences between British and American English is similar to the one described above. In his *British/American Language Dictionary* N. Moss (1991) provides a number of situations, which can be used to show how a communication breakdown happens because of a different perception of objects through the prism of language, e.g.:

**dormitory** — *Am. hostel, Br. room where people sleep. An American college teacher was speaking to a British teacher and remarked that at his college, male and female undergraduates now sleep in the same dormitory. “Ye gods!” said the Englishman;*

**pants** {*сokp. om pantaloons*} — *I heard an American student at Cambridge University telling some English friends how he climbed over a locked gate to get into a laboratory building and tore his pants, and one of them asked, “But how could you tear your pants without tearing your trousers?”;*

**wash up** — *in American English to wash oneself, not the dishes. Philip French recalled in a New Statesman article that he once suggested to his American hostess that he help her wash up, and was met with a startled look.*

Sometimes misunderstandings of this kind can have serious consequences, including high-level political problems. One example is the situation described by W. Churchill in his memoirs about World War II: “The British wanted to raise an urgent matter <...> and told the Americans they wished to ‘table it’ (that is, bring it to the table). But to the Americans, tabling something meant putting it aside. ‘A long and even acrimonious argument ensued,’ Churchill wrote, ‘before both parties realised that they were agreed on the merits and wanted the same thing’” (qtd. in: O’Conner, Kellerman).

Cognitive dissonance can be also caused by differences in non-verbal communication. We carried out a small experiment in several groups of Russian university students showing them a slide with an image of an African tribe chief dressed in a leopard skin, with a spire and an ivory necklace. We further asked them a question: “Do you think this is an educated person?” The majority of the students replied either: “No, I don't think so” or “Educated by the standards of his tribe.” In reality, the commentary to the photo of the tribe chief in the magazine said that he had received a good education in one of the prestigious UK universities. This information amazed the student due to the cognitive dissonance between the chief's appearance and their idea about what an educated person should look like.

During Nikita Khrushchev's visit to the USA in 1959 his favourite gesture — hands clasped above his head meaning: “peace,” “friendship” — became the reason for cognitive dissonance in Americans because they perceived it as a gesture of victory. In association with the phrase “We'll bury you” it did not contribute to the Soviet leader's popularity.

Another illustration is from the experience of a Russian student who was invited to have dinner in the Sri Lanka Embassy in Moscow. She had a culture shock when all the distinguished guests except the Ambassador's wife started eating with their hands. It was an example of cognitive dissonance produced by the contradiction between the student's idea of good manners and Sri Lanka traditions.

Possible sources of dissonance on the **cognitive level** may be objects unknown to representatives of a particular culture, their functions, categorization and conceptu-

alization. In his book *In Search of a Sad Baby* V. Aksyonov gives an example from the time when people in the Soviet Union were not yet familiar with avocado: in a Kiev family that immigrated to the US there was a myth about a miraculous avocado nut. When they bought the fruit in a supermarket they peeled it, threw the pulp away, and broke the stone with a hammer to eat the “nut” (Aksyonov, 2000).

Today, due to the globalization processes, we are already used to different ethnic cuisines. However, in order to avoid the clients’ cognitive dissonance, restaurants adapt the taste and look of foreign dishes to the local culinary traditions. Europeans find it difficult to come to terms with the idea that the inhabitants of many Asian countries consider grasshoppers, cockroaches, doves, turtles, frogs, and worms to be delicacies. This is also a manifestation of cognitive dissonance — an idea about what is edible and inedible, which in the context of a different culture “turns upside down”.

For Europeans emotions are concentrated in the heart and soul, and for them the source of cognitive dissonance is the fact that for the Chinese those organs are also complemented by intestines and liver, which is proved by the existence of such idioms as: *to pull the intestines, hang the stomach* — to be anguished at smth. (= to eat one’s heart out); *one hundred knots on soft intestines / soft intestines in small pieces* — lots of anxieties and troubles; *heart and intestines made of iron and stone* — ruthless, cruel (= heart of stone); *the gall is shaking, the heart is frozen* — to be scared to death (= to have one’s heart in one’s mouth); *has neither heart nor liver* — shameless, mean, base, etc.

On the **pragmatic level** cognitive dissonance can be produced by intercultural differences in individuals’ self-perception or their perception by others. One example is the difference in the understanding of beauty. The British scholar V. Swami carried out a research during which respondents from Europe and South Africa were shown a number of silhouettes of female figures and asked to choose the one they liked best. The majority of Europeans chose the same slim figure, whereas respondents from South Africa pointed out a heavier one. V. Swami further provides data proving that respondents from African countries demonstrate a more positive attitude to heavy figures than those from the UK, Malaysia, China, and India (Swami, 2006, pp. 42, 45). It is possible to predict that when people relocate to a different country, those who consider themselves attractive by the standards of their own culture will not necessarily match the local standards of beauty, and this can evoke feelings of perplexity, vexation, or offence.

Such differences can also occur on the level of status, psychological or social identity. E.g. Russian women are used to gender asymmetry and therefore feel ill at ease in the US, where gender differences are smoothed out and men do not feel obliged to open doors for women, help them with their coats, pour them wine at the table, etc. Unfulfilled expectations can cause cognitive dissonance.

A similar effect is produced by differences in rituals, norms of behavior, convictions, values, and political correctness. An American fainted when in Kazakhstan he, as an honorable guest, was offered a ram head and was expected to pick out the eyes and eat them. Situations like this can result in embarrassment or even an identity crisis, accompanied by amazement, indignation, or frustration.

Cognitive dissonance can produce two types of conflict: interpersonal (the interlocutors do not understand each other) and intrapersonal (“I don’t understand what’s going on”). An individual involved in an interpersonal conflict has to modify one’s own verbal and non-verbal behavior, communicative strategies and tactics in order to achieve contact with an interlocutor. People who find themselves in a different culture have to compromise in order to survive in a new community, achieve their communicative aims, and effectively interact with the locals. When doing so they do not necessarily believe that this behavior is “correct” or share the same convictions. For example, when following the norms of political correctness at work they may still be biased against representatives of a different race, religion, sexual orientation, etc.

It is more difficult to cope with the intrapersonal conflict, when individuals have to come to terms with themselves. During long stays in a foreign country they cannot help getting into difficult or absurd situations when they ask themselves: “Why should I eat this if I don’t like it?”, “Why am I doing things which contradict my beliefs?” However, in order to effectively function in an alien setting, they have to match their beliefs with those accepted in the community and probably, to a certain extent, change themselves. The ways of self-persuasion are closely connected with the mechanisms of understanding: 1) filtering information — the choice of what coincides with the person’s own convictions, supports and re-inforces them; 2) simplifying information, frequently not along the lines of what is most relevant, but rather what is most favourable for sustaining the already existing biases; 3) association (often erroneous) of unfamiliar objects or phenomena with those from their home country; 4) combining and restructuring information on the basis of logical operations common in their native culture; 5) accentuating the facts and arguments which mainly correspond to their views; 6) filling in blanks with information from their own culture; 7) interpretation of other people’s behavior according to their own beliefs and axiological norms.

Examples include the correction of one’s own mindset due to the unattainability of ones’ desires or wishful thinking about the irreversible choices which have already been made (e.g. when immigrants fail in their careers, live in modest apartments in poor areas, have almost no friends, but are still trying to convince themselves that they are lucky to live abroad and be envied by those left behind in their country of origin). Such psychological moves often prove to be a kind of self-deceit, which does not help to achieve success in an intercultural setting. For a deeper understanding of intercultural differences, it is necessary to address locals for help and explanations. People who stay in an alien setting for an extended period of time can overcome cognitive dissonance gradually, by means of trial and error, asking relatives and friends for help. Those who come to a foreign country for a short time cannot afford such a luxury — they have to cope with their problems quickly, which can be achieved by a negotiation process with the natives, “reading” the signs of misunderstanding, reformulating statements and questions, and other forms of feedback.

A high level of intercultural competence presupposes: 1) readiness for intercultural differences and, consequently, a lower possibility of cognitive dissonance; 2) inclination for self-analysis, desire to find out the reason for communication breakdowns; 3) ability to identify verbal, non-verbal, behavioral, axiological and other reasons for cognitive

dissonance; 4) awareness of the role of feedback and readiness to use it if necessary; 5) ability to do information search concerning intercultural communication problems in order to find out the sources of cognitive dissonance and ways to overcome it; 6) achievement of consonance with the interlocutor or with oneself by means of interpersonal and intrapersonal communication.

## CONCLUSIONS

1. The specific character of cognitive dissonance occurring in intercultural communication is caused by the discrepancy between the ways of categorizing and conceptualizing reality through the prism of different languages and cultures.

2. The harmonization of mindsets and the way out of cognitive dissonance is based on the mechanisms of understanding and interaction with representatives of an alien culture in order to overcome communication breakdowns.

3. A high level of intercultural competence requires the ability to identify the reasons for cognitive dissonance and ways to bridge intercultural differences.

4. The possibility of cognitive dissonance should be taken into account by interpreters, translators, and intercultural communication specialists.

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## **КОГНИТИВНЫЙ ДИССОНАНС С ПОЗИЦИЙ МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНОГО ОБЩЕНИЯ**

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В статье рассматриваются причины, виды и проявления когнитивного диссонанса применительно к межкультурной коммуникации. Возникновение когнитивного диссонанса может быть обусловлено различиями в концептуализации и категоризации действительности через призму различных языков и культур. Гармонизация противоречащих друг другу установок и выход из состояния когнитивного диссонанса базируется на механизмах понимания и взаимодействия с носителями лингвокультуры для преодоления коммуникативных сбоев. Высокий уровень межкультурной компетенции предполагает способность идентифицировать причину когнитивного диссонанса и знание способов выхода из него. Закономерности возникновения когнитивного диссонанса должны учитываться в работе переводчиков и иных специалистов в области межкультурной коммуникации.

**Ключевые слова:** когнитивный диссонанс, межкультурная коммуникация, лингвистическая компетенция, вербальная коммуникация, невербальная коммуникация, понимание.



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## GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURES IN CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISONS

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The article discusses how cultural information is embedded at the level of grammar and it treats grammar as inseparable from semantics and pragmatics. The study is done within the approach known as ethnosyntax. The article provides examples of cultural meaning embedded at the level of syntax relying on examples from Russian and English. In particular, it demonstrates variation in impersonal constructions in Russian and causative constructions in English. It then discusses variation in the use of grammatical structures due to the influence of cultural factors on the basis of ways of wording 'requests' in English and Russian. The linguistic examples in the discussion are sources from the Russian National Corpus for Russian and Collins Wordbanks Online for English. The article argues for the importance of culture-sensitive linguistic studies in language teaching.

**Key words:** ethnosyntax, Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM), Russian, English, requests, impersonal constructions, causative constructions.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The article demonstrates how cultural information can be embedded at the level of grammar and it treats grammar as inseparable from semantics and pragmatics. The study is done within the approach known as ethnosyntax.

Ethnosyntax is an approach to studying grammar as a vehicle of culture. The term 'ethnosyntax' was introduced by Wierzbicka (1979) to reflect a new perspective on grammatical studies with a particular focus on cultural meaning. She advocated the view that grammatical constructions are not semantically arbitrary and their meanings are related to broader cultural understandings.

Two senses of ethnosyntax can be distinguished — a 'narrow' and a 'broad' one (Enfield 2002; Goddard 2002). Ethnosyntax in a 'narrow' sense aims to locate and articulate cultural understandings that are embedded in the meanings of particular grammatical structures. Ethnosyntax in a broad sense studies how pragmatic and cultural rules affect the use of grammatical structures. Ethnosyntax in this sense overlaps with some studies in the area of pragmatics, such as ethnopragmatics (Goddard 2002, 2006) and ethnography of speaking (e.g., Gumperz & Hymes 1972). The following discussion provides examples of studies in ethnosyntax in its broad and narrow senses.

The accumulated experience of studies into Ethnosyntax allowed researchers to formulate methodological requirements to this kind of linguistic investigations. There is a degree of unanimity among scholars that research into cultural element of grammatical constructions involves the analysis of their meaning (e.g., Wierzbicka 1979, 1988, 2002; Enfield 2002; Goddard 2002; Simpson 2002). As emphasised by Wierzbicka (1979), a key to decoding cultural meanings embedded in grammatical structures lies in a semantic approach to studying grammar. Conducting an ethnosyntactic analysis involves identifying a construction in question, investigating its meaning, and establishing connections

between this meaning and some wider shared cultural assumptions or understandings (Wierzbicka 1979, 1988; Goddard 2002; Simpson 2002: 291—2). Some scholars also argue for the importance of a comparative cross-linguistic and cross-cultural analysis of grammatical constructions and associated cultural understandings (Simpson 2002; Enfield 2002).

A significant view in Ethnosyntax is that cultural specificity of grammatical structures needs to be studied with a culture-neutral methodology to avoid a lingua- and ethnocentric bias in research (e.g., Wierzbicka 1979, 1988, 2002; Goddard 2002). Such metalanguage can be found in the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM). NSM comprises 65 empirically identified universal meanings (along with a limited number of more complex meanings known as semantic molecules) which combine with each other in certain ways to form a mini-language. This metalanguage lies at the core of every language (e.g., Goddard and Wierzbicka eds. 2002, 2014). NSM is applied in semantic studies of words and grammatical constructions to formulate explications, as well as in studies of cultural and pragmatic factors underlying language use to formulate cultural scripts. Several of examples provided in this article represent studies which rely on the use of NSM as a methodological tool.

This article is structured as follows. Section two provides examples of cultural meaning embedded at the level of syntax relying on examples from Russian and English. Section three illustrates variation in the use of grammatical structures due to the influence of cultural factors on the basis of ways of wording 'requests' in English and Russian. Section four concludes. The linguistic examples in the discussion are sources from the Russian National Corpus for Russian and Collins Wordbanks Online for English.

## 2. CULTURAL MEANING AT THE LEVEL OF SYNTAX

### 2.1. Impersonal constructions in Russian and the cultural themes of 'irrationality' and 'unpredictability'

Russian is rich with impersonal constructions. Malchukov and Ogawa (2011: 20) define impersonal constructions as “constructions lacking a referential subject”. In this article we will consider Russian constructions of the type where the notional subject lacks typical subject properties. They are also called “dative reflexive” constructions because the nominal subject occurs in the Dative case and the verb is in the reflexive form. We will consider two types of constructions — with mental verbs and with other intransitive verbs.

The first construction combines a dative human subject and a mental verb in the third person neuter reflexive form. Some mental state verbs occur in this construction — *xotet'sja* 'to want itself', *dumat'sja* 'to think itself', *verit'sja* 'to believe itself', *pomnit'sja* 'to remember itself' (examples are from the Russian National Corpus):

(1) *Kogda ja v pervye popal na stanciju, mne ne verilos', čto ja smogu vynesti zdes' i nedelju.*

'When I first came to the station I-DAT didn't believe-REF that I would be able to stay there for even a week.'

(2) *Pokidat' stolicu emu ne xotelos', no on ponimal: moskovskoj konkurencii emu ne vyderžat'.*

'He-DAT didn't want-REF to leave the capital, but he understood that he couldn't withstand the competition in Moscow.'

(3) *Mne dumaetsja, takie materialy budut interesny dlja čitatelej vašego žurnala.*

'I-DAT think-REF that such material would be interesting for the readers of your journal.'

(4) *Mne jasno pomnitsja letnee utro i skameečka na dorožke, iduščej ot kalitki k terrase.*

'I-DAT clearly remember-REF the summer morning and the bench on the path leading from the gate to the terrace.'

Speakers of Russian also have an option of using nominative constructions with the verb in the active voice, such as *ja dumaju* 'I think', *on xočet* 'he wants', *ja pomnju* 'I remember'. However, in certain contexts it is preferred to use dative constructions. Overall, dative constructions are less frequent than nominal constructions, but their use is still quite significant. For example, according to the Russian National Corpus data, the form *on xočet* 'he. NOM. SG want.3SG. PRES' is about 3 times more frequent than the form *emu xočetsja* 'he. DAT. SG. want. REF. PRES' (10,824 uses vs. 3,293 uses) and the form *ja xoču* 'I. NOM. SG want.1SG. PRES' is about 4 times more frequent than *mne xočetsja* 'I. DAT. SG want. REF. PRES' (21,318 uses vs. 5,366 uses).

According to Goddard (2003: 416), this structure "implies that for some unknown reason the mental event simply 'happens' inside us" and it suggests "a spontaneous and involuntary" mental state. The choice of the dative construction over the nominative one suggests the denial of responsibility over the action and at the same time submission to it. The reflexive form of the verb, the absence of the nominative subject and the presentation of the experiencer in the Dative case as a recipient of the state contribute these semantic elements to the structure.

In contemporary English there is no exact equivalent of such construction. English has a clear preference towards 'active' constructions, such as *I want, I believe, I think*, etc. The closest equivalent of the Russian construction would be the expressions *It seems to me* and *It occurs to me*. However, their frequency is significantly lower than the frequency of the active construction. For example, in a 550 million word Collins Wordbanks Online corpus there are 232,607 occurrences of *I think* and only 2,245 occurrences of *it seems to me* and 133 occurrences of *it occurs to me* (that is, respectively, 103 and 1749 times less). In the past, English also employed dative constructions, such as *methinks* (e.g., Bromhead 2009), but they fell out of use.

The meaning of the Russian construction is represented in universal human concepts as follows (after Goddard 2003: 417):

[A] *Mne xočetsja/veritsja* (lit. 'it doesn't want/believe itself to me')  
 something happens inside me  
 because of this, I want/believe this  
 I don't know why

[B] *Mne ne xočetsja/veritsja* (lit. 'it doesn't want/believe itself to me')  
 something happens inside me  
 because of this, I cannot not want/believe this  
 I don't know why

Besides mental acts, numerous other verbs can occur in impersonal dative constructions in Russian. There is a range of verbs that are used in impersonal constructions either in negation or with evaluative adverbs. Below are some examples of such construction in negation:

(5) [...] *Prosto im čego-to ne spitsja.*

‘They-DAT simply don’t sleep-REF.’

(6) *Nado otsypat’sja, a kak-to ne spitsja.*

‘I need to sleep, but I-DAT somewhat don’t sleep-REF.’

(7) *Človeka po-svoemu neordinarnogo, ee tomila “oxota k peremene mest” — ej počemu-to ne rabotalos’ v odnom i tom že teatre.*

‘As a rather unusual person, she was driven by the desire for change; for some reason she-DAT didn’t work-REF in one and the same theatre.’

(8) *Tolstoj pisal pis’ma, pisal dnevnik, no nad čem-to drugim v te nedeli počti ne rabotalos’.*

‘Tolstoy wrote letters and the diary but he-DAT didn’t work-REF on anything else in those weeks for some reason.’

This construction can also be used with adverbs of manner:

(9) *Emu ploxo rabotalos’ v étot den’.*

‘He-DAT worked-REF badly that day.’

(10) *Nam interesno rabotalos’ s togdašnim zamestitelem direktora [...].*

‘We-DAT worked-REF with the deputy director of that time with enthusiasm.’

(11) — *A doma vam ploxo žilos’?* — *Ja ne skazal by, čto ploxo, udovletvoritel’no.*

‘— Did you-DAT live-REF badly at home? — I wouldn’t say badly, but satisfactory.’

(12) *Ot nego vseгда isxodila kakaja-to radost’ [...]. S nim legko žilos’.*

‘He always radiated joy. It was easy to live-REF with him.’

The construction with negation expresses inexplicable state when something that one wants or needs to do does not happen. It mainly occurs with verbs expressing an action one wants or is expected to do at a particular time (*spat’* ‘sleep’, *rabotat’* ‘work’, *pet’* ‘sing’). The ‘inexplicable’ attitude embedded in this construction is supported by a common use of indefinite pronominal adverbs *počemu-to* ‘for some reason’, *kak-to* ‘some-what’, *čto-to* ‘for some reason/somewhat’. Its explication is as follows (after Wierzbicka 1992: 425—426):

[C] *Mne ne spitsja/rabotaetsja* (‘to me it doesn’t sleep/work’)

I want to do something Y

because of this, I am doing it

at the same time I feel something because I think like this:

I can’t do it

I don’t know why

it is not because I don’t want to do it

The construction using evaluative adverbs is explicated as follows:

[D] *Mne xorošo/ploxo/interesno živetsja/rabotaetsja* ‘to me it well/badly/interestingly lives/works’

I am doing something now

it happens in some way, not in another way

I don’t know why it is like this

it’s not because I want it to be like this

These constructions embed in their meaning the ideas of ‘not being in control’ and ‘irrationality’. More impersonal constructions in Russian reflect similar ideas or even something akin to ‘fatalism’ (Wierzbicka 1992; Goddard 2003). These ideas penetrate Russian lexicon at different levels. At the level of lexicon they are evident in the words *sud’ba* ‘fate’, *rok* ‘fate’, *avos* ‘perhaps/maybe’, among which *sud’ba* is most culturally significant. *Sud’ba* refers to an imaginary force which determines the course of a person’s life and to which a person must submit. These ideas also have been shown to be integrated in the meaning of some Russian emotion terms (Wierzbicka 1999) as well as temporal terms and constructions (Apresjan 2012; Gladkova 2012). At the level of syntax it appears in impersonal constructions discussed in this article as well as in some passive constructions.

There is considerable variation in impersonal constructions across languages (Malchukov and Ogawa 2012). Their meanings can be studied and compared across languages using the same set of linguistic universals embedded in NSM.

## **2.2. Causal constructions in English and the cultural ideas of ‘personal autonomy’ and ‘non-imposition’**

As an illustration of how cultural meaning can be conveyed at the level of syntax in English, we will consider a link between constructions with the verb *let* and cultural ideas of ‘personal autonomy’ and ‘non-imposition’ on the basis of Wierzbicka’s (2002) study.

The existence of a large number of constructions with the verbs *make*, *have*, and *let* in English allows Wierzbicka (1988, 2002) to argue for the cultural salience of the domain of causal relations in modern English. She shows that for each verb it is possible to distinguish several semantic invariants of constructions, all characterized by a slight difference in meaning. On the basis of a detailed semantic analysis she proposes the following classification of constructions with the verb *let* and formulates a semantic prototype for each of the constructions:

- Let* of ‘permission’ (*She let him go to the party*)
- Let* of ‘non-interruption’ (*She let him sleep*)
- Let* of ‘apparent indifference’ (*She let him cry*)
- Let* of ‘non-prevention’ (*She let him fall*)
- Let* of ‘tolerance’ (*Let her be!*)
- Let* of ‘shared information’ (*Let me know what happened*)
- Let* of ‘offering to perform a service’ (*Let me open the door for you*)
- Let* of ‘suggestion’ (*Let’s do Z!*)
- Let* of ‘cooperative dialogue’ (*Let me conclude by saying ...*)
- Let* of cooperative interaction (*Let me talk to him*)
- Let* of cooperative thinking (*Let me think...*)

Wierzbicka compares the English constructions with similar constructions in German and Russian, showing that these languages have less semantically diverse causative constructions and that some of the English constructions do not have idiomatic equivalents in either German or Russian.

Wierzbicka puts forward a hypothesis explaining cultural roots of this elaboration in English:

[...] as democracy developed in a large-scale modern society — first of all, in America [...] — a new style of human relations evolved, to accommodate the need for both an increased scale of interpersonal interactions and a new footing on which these interactions were to be conducted [...]. The new managerial type of society, too, needed an increased scale of interpersonal causations: for the society to function smoothly and efficiently, lots of people had to be, roughly speaking, told what they were to do. This had to happen, however, in the context of a democracy, where people might be willing to take ‘directions’ or to follow ‘instructions’ but not to obey ‘orders’ or ‘commands’. (Wierzbicka 2002, p. 166)

She argues that the idea that ‘it is not good to impose and force other people to do certain things’ is a cultural idea shared by English speakers and that it finds its realisation in language. Wierzbicka (2006: 52) formulates this cultural rule as follows:

[E] [people think like this:]  
no one can say to another person:  
“I want you to do this  
you have to do it because of this”

[F] [people think like this:]  
no one can say to another person:  
“I don’t want you to do this  
you can’t do it because of this”

She comments on these scripts as follows: “These scripts don’t say that people can do anything they want to do or that there can be no rules legitimately preventing people from doing what they want to do. Rather, they say that it cannot be another person’s expression of will that prevents me from doing what I want to do or forces me to do what I don’t want to do” (Wierzbicka 2006: 52).

### **3. GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURES AND CULTURAL INFLUENCE ON THEIR USE**

In this section we provide an illustration of variation in the use of grammatical structures due to the influence of cultural factors. As a case study we will consider ways of wording ‘requests’ in English and Russian. Requests are a type of speech acts. As a part of the speech act theory, Austin (1962) distinguished between statements (that is utterances that may be assigned a truth value) and performatives (that is utterances that perform some actions whose successful completion rests on felicity conditions). Searle (1979) proposed a further classification of performatives and, according to his classification, requests (along with commands) belong to the group of directives.

It is important to note that the word ‘request’ is used as a technical label and it is erroneous to equate all speech of this type in different languages with the English word *request*. While other languages might have a term close to ‘request’ it might not necessarily fully overlap in meaning with the English term. For examples, the closest term in Russian is *pros’ba*. According to Zalizniak (2005: 283—284), the Russian word differs

from its English equivalent and implies the idea of inequality between the speaker and the hearer; the hearer is perceived as someone being above the speaker in status. At the same time, Zalizniak argues, *pros'ba* implies an establishment of some sort of a relationship between two people in that the speaker expects the hearer to do something for him or her out of good attitude towards the speaker. Therefore, the Russian word *pros'ba* presupposes a certain intrusion into a private sphere of the hearer not only in the way that certain actions are expected from him or her, but also some feelings. The difference between the Russian and English terms well highlights the danger of ethnocentrism in linguistic analysis when terms of one language are used to analyse speech practices in another language.

We will use the term 'request' as a label due to existing conventions, but it should be borne in mind that the aspects of meaning of the English terms are not meant to represent the semantic and pragmatic reality of other languages. 'Request' as a technical term stands for a speech act in which the speaker expresses his or her want for the hearer to do something. At the same time, it is not obvious to both the speaker and the hearer that the hearer will perform this act under normal circumstances (cf. Searle 1969).

In this section, on the basis of English and Russian we will demonstrate how different languages employ different grammatical structures to express requests and how this choice is consistent with broader cultural ideas and understandings.

In English, there is a variety of ways to express 'request'. One of the ways, often considered as most common, is to use an interrogative or interrogative-cum-conditional form, as in the following examples from Collins Wordbanks Online (cf. Wierzbicka 2003[1991]: 32):

- (13) *Will you give mother and father my love?*
- (14) *Look, will you please stop it!*
- (15) *Will you tell the court, please.*
- (16) *Would you mind moving on, please?*
- (17) *Captain Paterson, would you please come with me.*
- (18) *Would you be so kind as escort Commandant Warner to the First Sister's quarters?*
- (19) *Please would you come with me.*
- (20) *Would you mind telling me what you're doing here?*
- (21) *Would you care to join me for a drink?*
- (22) *Why don't you do one of your funny voices and cheer the kid up?*
- (23) *Could you be a little more specific?*
- (24) *Could you give me some guidance please?*
- (25) *Can you get in the front please?*
- (26) *Can you pass me a towel?*

The use of an imperative form is also a possible way of wording a request (e.g., *Shut up!*), but using a bare infinitive form is considered rude and the imperative is often 'softened' by the use of modifiers, that is words like *please, just, dear*:

- (27) *Hang on a minute, please.*
- (28) *Pass my monocle, dear boy, I'll need a view of this.*
- (29) *Just be on your guard.*

In English requests are also expressed by tag questions:

- (30) *Meet him here, will you?*
- (31) *Cut it out would you please.*
- (32) *You couldn't possibly come back, could you?*
- (33) *You couldn't give me his name, could you?*
- (34) *You can explain, can you?*

Other ways to express requests is to employ speaker-oriented utterances which contain an indirect question:

- (35) *Actually I wonder if you could excuse me for a moment.*
- (36) *Yes, but I wonder if you can tell me something else.*
- (37) *I wondered if you'd care to meet me for a drink or something.*

One could employ declarative utterances expressing a hypothetical wish of the speaker:

- (38) *I would like to ask you to sing one for me.*

Utterances where the speaker expresses his or her gratitude to the hearer in case the request is performed are also possible:

- (39) *I'd appreciate it if you'd be careful with her.*
- (40) *I would appreciate it if you made no mention of my existence.*

Bowe and Martin (2009: 20) report on a survey of middle managers in business in the eastern area of Melbourne conducted in 1995. The aim was to find out which of the following forms are most commonly used in requests:

- (a) *Pass the salt (please).*
- (b) *Can you pass the salt?*
- (c) *Can you reach the salt?*
- (d) *Would you mind passing the salt?*
- (e) *I would appreciate if you would pass the salt.*
- (f) *Would you pass the salt?*

Their findings suggest that the most frequently used request forms were variants of (b) and (f) with the addition of the word *please*, that is forms like *Can you pass the salt please* and *Would you please pass the salt*.

Russian also employs a variety of linguistic structures to express request, but their choice and distribution differs from English. The most commonly used structure is that of imperative (Larina 2009, 2013). The following examples are taken from the Russian National Corpus:

- (41) *Rasskažite, kak èto proizošlo.*  
'Tell, how it happened.'
- (42) *Prideš', pozvoni.*  
'(When you) come, call.'
- (43) *Devuška, skazite, novyx pravil uličnogo dviženija net?*  
'Girl, say, are there new road rules?'
- (44) *Peredaj sal'fetu.*  
'Pass the napkin.'



- (45) *Daj kakoe-nibud' bljudečko?*  
 'Give any saucer?'

Unlike in English, this structure is considered neutral and not rude. However, it can also be 'softened' by the use of the following devices: the word *požalujsta* 'please' (example 55), the use of diminutive forms in the forms of address (names or kin terms) (examples 56, 57) and the use of minimisers or diminutive forms (examples 58, 59):

- (46) *Skažite požalujsta, a cvety č'i?*  
 'Tell, please, whose are the flowers?'  
 (47) *Babul', otkroj, èto ja.*  
 'Grandma-DIM, open, it's me.'  
 (48) *Lenočka, skaži tete, v kakom ty klasse?*  
 Lena-DIM, tell aunty what grade you are in?  
 (49) *Čerez časik podojdite.*  
 'Come in an hour-DIM.'  
 (50) *Daj-ka mne žurnal'čik, ja gljanu.*  
 'Give-INT me the magazine-DIM, I'll have a look.'

Requests in the form of imperatives can also be intensified by the use of intensifying particles, 'double' (or even 'triple') imperative and repetition:

- (51) *Nu pozovi-ka ego.*  
 'Well, call-INT him.'  
 (52) *Slušaj, starik. Sgonjaj na Smolenku, a?*  
 'Listen, old man. Drive to Smolenka, ah?'  
 (53) *Slušaj, bud' drugom, pomogi matanaliz sdat'.*  
 'Listen, be a friend, help me to pass Mathematical Analysis.'  
 (54) *Rasskazyvaj-rasskazyvaj.*  
 'Tell, tell.'

The use of a 'double imperative' in requests is characteristic of a 'camaraderie' attitude (Larina 2009; Gladkova 2013a and b).

Interrogative forms are also possible in the expression of requests in Russian, but their scope and frequency is much smaller than it is in English. Examples (13—26), if translated into Russian, would simply not be possible as an expression of request. In Russian the interrogative forms are used in the future (as in 55). Moreover, the use of negation can be regarded as a more polite form because it implies a possibility of a negative response:

- (55) *Vy ne podskazhite, pjatnovyvoditel' "Boss" u vas est'?*  
 'Won't you tell if you have "Boss" stain remover?'

Like English, Russian also uses speaker-oriented utterances in question and statement forms.

Larina (2009) conducted a study in which Russian and English native speakers performed a discourse completion task to several 'request' situations. According to this data, Russians speakers use imperative 3 times more often than English speakers while English speakers use interrogative forms 4 times more often than Russians speakers (Larina 2009: 450).

From the point of view of Ethnosyntax, the difference in preference towards different grammatical structures in the expression of ‘request’ can be explained by prevalence of different cultural values. Wierzbicka (2006) relates a common use of whimperatives for wording requests, the cultural rules of using *thank you* and the avoidance of phrases like *you must* in suggestions in English, with the prevalence of the value of ‘personal autonomy’. (See the discussion of cultural scripts [E] and [F] in the previous section.)

In Russian ‘personal autonomy’ and ‘privacy’ are not regarded as important cultural values. In fact, Russian does not have a word that fully corresponds to the English word *privacy*. Therefore, the idea of ‘distancing’ in a speech act like ‘request’ is not realised in Russian to the same degree as it is in English. In certain forms of Russian requests, particularly when diminutive forms are used, it is the idea of ‘expressing good feelings’ becomes dominant.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

Language is highly sensitive to cultural and societal processes. Grammatically elaborated areas of a language commonly embed meanings or ideas that are particularly salient in the collective psyche of a people. Knowledge of these meanings or ideas can equip cultural outsiders with more effective and successful tools of communication with the representatives of the culture.

This article has provided some examples of studies illustrating cultural significance of grammar within the Ethnosyntax approach. These investigations can be of particular importance to other areas of linguistics, including language teaching. The proposed formulae can be applied in language teaching to explain meanings and use of grammatical constructions. Moreover, appellation to broader cultural rules can explain to learners why there exists variation in grammatical constructions across languages. The use of universal human concepts makes it possible to translate these formulae into any language without any change in meaning.

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## **ГРАММАТИЧЕСКИЕ СТРУКТУРЫ В МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНЫХ СРАВНЕНИЯХ**

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На материале русского и английского языков в статье обсуждается вопрос о том, как культурная информация передается на уровне грамматики. В данном случае грамматика рассматривается в неразрывной связи с семантикой и прагматикой. Исследование проведено в рамках этносинтаксиса. В работе анализируются безличные конструкции в русском языке и конструкции причины в английском. Также на примере речевого акта «просьба» в английском и русском языках рассматриваются различия в употреблении грамматических структур, вызванные культурными факторами. В качестве источника примеров используются Национальный корпус русского языка и Коллинз Вордбанк Онлайн. В статье подчеркивается практическая важность лингвистических исследований, выявляющих культурный компонент значения, для преподавания иностранных языков.

**Ключевые слова:** этносинтаксис, Естественный Семантический Метаязык (ЕСМ), русский язык, английский язык, просьба, безличные конструкции, конструкции причины.

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# SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION PRACTICES

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## THE FINNISH-RUSSIAN RELATIONSHIPS: THE INTERPLAY OF ECONOMICS, HISTORY, PSYCHOLOGY AND LANGUAGE

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On the territories adjacent to the core Russia, the Russian language has had for centuries an established position as a language of culture, trade, war, statehood, and education. The theoretical framework of the study reflects the field of cross-cultural communication, with special reference to Finnish-Russian intercultural encounters. There is a certain set of prejudices connected with Russia that date back centuries and are periodically revived. Recent events have reinforced some of them, and have enhanced the demand for experts on Russia and everything connected with it. The language is undoubtedly considered the key to understanding what is happening with Finland's Eastern neighbour. The article aims to present the current discussions in the media, their meanings and functions.

**Key words:** Finnish-Russian relationships, language and intercultural competence, cross-border ties, neighbouring countries, historical borrowings.

### INTRODUCTION

Relationships with neighbouring countries are seldom straightforward (e.g., the Czechs and the Slovaks, the French and the Germans). Asymmetry in a relationship with a large neighbouring country may well be a big problem (e.g., Ireland, Portugal, the Netherlands, Greece and their big eastern neighbours). There are obvious reasons why the relationship between Finland and Russia has been problematic. As far as the Finns are concerned, Russian 'otherness' is evident in factors such as language (another language family, another alphabet) and religion (Lutheran vs. Orthodox); in values such as attitudes towards equality (Scandinavian democracy vs. the desire for a powerful leader, materialism vs. spiritualism, individualism vs. collectivism and legality vs. justice);

in mentality (rational vs. emotional thinking, a future orientation vs. an orientation to the present); and in ideology (small improvements vs. the desire for and a belief in immediate change, and the active role of individuals vs. reliance on others in solving problems). It is hard to change stereotypes because they make people's lives easier.

Some basic elements of 'Western' living have reached Russia in recent years with regard to housing, food, clothing, transport, schooling and education, urban and rural living, and rules of behaviour. Russians coming to Finland and Finns going to Russia have found out more about the northern climate with its clear seasonal differences and the similarity of some elixirs of life such as vodka, the sauna (*banya*) and the *dacha* (cf. Alapuro et al. 2012).

In this article, we take some examples of the Finnish views about Russia and Russians and show how researchers, businesspersons, writers and ordinary people approach the subject that reaches far beyond the themes we are dealing with. The process of the national and cultural identity formation was taking place when Finland and Russia were one country, and the dissolution of the Russian Empire had the greatest impact on both of them. The later events shaped the relationships between these neighbouring countries. Quite a lot of efforts to make the intercultural communication (cf. Jandt 2012, Bonvillain 2013) run smoothly have to be completed before common understanding can be achieved. In recent times, ordinary people have a much bigger role in this process.

#### **WHERE THE MUTUAL INTEREST COMES FROM?**

*Neighbours* are usually understood as people who live near each other. Whether they have good or bad relations, they sometimes need to communicate. The same applies to neighbouring countries: their linguistic policy must take into account the fact that they have to discuss and agree upon certain things. This is why Finland has a unique history of Russian studies. The EU asks its citizens to learn the languages of their neighbours and of their own minorities, and Russian is historically and geographically such a language in Finland.

The number of Finns speaking Russian is remarkably small. It is hard to find another country in the world where learning the language of a big neighbour is so rare. It is clear from Finland's past and current history that psychological factors have had a bigger impact on the Finns' interest in learning Russian than rational considerations and state-level guidance: compare the ban on learning Russian in the 1920s with the state-level rhetorical support in the 2000s, for example. The 'otherness' of Russians as far as the Finns are concerned includes aspects such as language, religion, values and mentality (Sternin 1998—2007).

Archaeologists, historians and linguists have attested the presence of Russians on the territory of Finland, and of Finns on the territory of Russia in the past (Helanterä, Tynkkynen 2002). The experience of intercultural communication was collected during thousands of years, and still it is qualified as something remarkable and strange (as is reflected in the businessmen guide to Russian everyday culture *VOT TAK!* 2013).

Interestingly, the name of the former capital of Finland, Turku, derives from the Russian word *torg* ‘market’, whereas that of the Russian capital Moscow may derive from the Finnish word meaning ‘river’. The close relationships can be traced back to the 10th century. Nevertheless, Finns tend to forget the influence of Russian(ness) on their own culture, despite the substantial Russian impact on Finnish literature and arts (e.g., Meijas-Ojajärvi 2010).

One of the sources of arguments for the reciprocal influence is language. Finnish and Russian languages have borrowed words from each other. There are some 300 hundred Russian loanwords in the Finnish standard language adopted in different époques, such as *savotta* ‘logging site’ (< Rus. *zavod* ‘works, mill’), *lusikka* ‘spoon’ (< *lozhka*), *raamattu* ‘Bible’ (< *gramota* ‘literacy, writings’), *ikkuna* ‘window’ (< *okno*), *putka* ‘jail, shed’ (< *budka* ‘cabin, cage’) and *siisti* ‘tidy, clean’ (< *chisty*). The number of loanwords is much higher in Eastern Finnish dialects. There are also many surprising similarities in Finnish and Russian grammar. From the borrowing of words thousands of years ago to contemporary Russian-Finnish pidgins, from the first Russian dictionaries to inscriptions and advertising in the modern linguistic landscape, from the first Orthodox missionaries and Russian ambulant merchants to the biggest immigrant minority and the Russian Federation as one of the most influential trade partners of Finland — the history of mutual influence is fascinating.

Finland was part of Sweden in the Middle Ages. Following the Stolbov Peace treaty in 1617, the Eastern regions used Russian as their official language, although Swedish, Latin and Danish were otherwise functioning in that capacity. When Finland became a Grand Duchy within the Russian Empire in 1809 as a result of the Napoleonic wars the Russian Tsars promoted the use of Finnish to counteract the earlier Swedish influence. They also tried to introduce Russian, which became an obligatory language for bureaucrats after 1818, but only until 1824 when Finnish replaced it. Those with knowledge of Russian were treated with suspicion, but it opened some doors even in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Ketola 2007). For a short period between 1903 and 1905 the laws were translated into Russian, and the ‘Language Manifesto of His Majesty Nicolas II’ transformed the language of administration into Russian. These Russification efforts left deep traces in Finnish history: the two campaigns during 1899—1905 and 1908—1917 were called ‘times of oppression’ in Finnish, and were characterised by resistance to integration into the Russian Empire. Finland declared independence in 1917, which Lenin’s Bolshevik government verified (Alenius 2004).

Sopo (2014) studied the cultural influences of the Russian Empire in the period of Autonomy when the Finnish cultural infrastructure was constructed and the practice of collecting art took root. The Russian policy resulted in the financial and moral promotion of national Finnish values, together with a nascent loyalty to the imperial power and the acculturation of the ethnic elite, as elsewhere in Russia. According to Sopo, the Russian influence remains under-recognised in Finnish environs. Ketola and Vihavainen (2015) analysed the more recent developments and claim that only those who are acquainted with Russia’s history and cultural heritage are able to understand what is going on there.

Sweden, Russia and Germany are Finland's main import-export markets. According to The Confederation of Finnish Industries (Elinkeinoelämän keskusliitto, EK), Finns will have to master Russian, Portuguese, Chinese and Spanish in future if they want to succeed in foreign trade, which will mean abandoning the obligatory Swedish that is generally popular and making it a voluntary subject. About 30 per cent of the companies investigated wanted employees with knowledge of Russian, whereas about 15 per cent emphasised German. English remains obligatory, of course. Entrepreneurs support the diversification of languages in schools and the amelioration of the students' proficiency level: the diet should be rich in the major languages (Helsinki 2013).

According to Russian media reports in 2013, Russians have developed a liking for big expensive dachas in Finland. The average price of a dacha in 2012 was 115,000 euro: in Southern Savo, a house with a stretch of beach cost 189,000 euro; whereas Finns paid 29,000 euro for a flat, Russians paid 45,000 euro for the same property. Russian politicians have bought a lot of property in Finland (Volkova 2013), which has led to a proposal for a new Finnish law to prevent the selling or renting of land to customers outside the EU and other members of the European Economic Area (Puintila, Holopainen 2013).

A special number of the AMK journal (AMK-lehti 2013) was devoted to finding out how Finnish people managed in Russia and with Russian, how to interest young people in these subjects, and what must be taken into account by people starting to work with Russians. Views on Russian business were also considered, and opportunities in the arctic area were discussed.

The number of new books dealing with Russia and Finnish-Russian relationships is astonishingly high. Examples from 2013 include: Russians in Finland (Flinckenberg-Gluschkoff 2013, Varpio 2013), Finns in Russia (Harjula 2013, Kujala 2013, Rislakki 2013, Vilhunen 2013), moments of Russian history and presence (Hirvisaari 2013, Koskinen 2013, Mäkelä 2013, Niinivaara 2013) and relationships between the two countries (Uola 2013, Vihavainen 2013), in addition to doctoral dissertations on similar themes.

The Russian theme has been very prominent in Finnish prize-winning literature in recent years. The 2011 Finlandia Prize for fiction was awarded to *Hytti no 6* ('Compartment number 6') by Rosa Liksom: the novel is about a Finnish girl who shares a train compartment with a Russian man on the long journey from Moscow through Siberia to Ulan Bator. Another book telling a Russian story about the problematic relations between Maria Tsvetaeva and her daughter, Riikka Palo's *Jokapäiväinen elämämme* ('Our everyday life'), was the winner in 2013. Arto Mustajoki's *Kevyt kosketus venäjän kieleen* ('The gentle touch with Russian') was given the State Award for Public Information in 2013, and Kari Kniivilä's *Putinin väkeä: Venäjän hiljainen enemmistö* ('Putin's people: The silent majority of Russia') was awarded the Kaleva Prize for the best non-fiction book in 2014.

There has been a considerable amount of research on the cultural needs and consumer practices of Russian visitors (e.g., Malankin 2012; Virtasalo et al. 2012, 2013),



and quite a lot of printed material is available in Russian for tourists. Positive attitudes were at their highest level during the Olympic Games of 2014. However, following the Ukraine crisis and the collapse of the Russian rouble the number of Russian tourists fell drastically: Russia's economic distress was reportedly attributable to the planned economic sanctions. The image of Russia and Russians in the social media have been dealt with in Halonen et al. 2013.

Sports play an important role in building positive attitudes to Russians. There are some 30 Finnish sportsmen playing in the Russian KHL hockey league. The Finnish media widely report on their lives in Russia and the high salaries there. The Finnish hockey team *Jokerit* joined the league in the 2014—2015 season, and all its home matches attract the maximum number of spectators. Roman Eremenko moved with his father, a very popular Russian football player, to Finland when he was three years old. Now he is a striker in the Finnish football team. It sounds to be anecdotal, but it is how people treat such things.

### **THE CASE OF AN INTERNET BLOG**

More grass-root views are expressed in comments on the internet where people discuss how their relationships with Russia and Russian people are. Let us consider an example.

The Finnish writer Jari Tervo (2014) argues in his blog about the meaning of Russia for the Finns, and suggests turning the clichés upside down. The Finnish actor Ville Haapasalo [who studied in St Petersburg and introduces Russia for Finns and Finland for Russians, serving as a bridge between cultures] often looks like a Russian stereotype (badly clothed, smelling of vodka, embracing everyone, ready to party) and behaves like that in Russia, whereas Russian tourists in Finland are no longer enemies, they are clients (but it would be too much given the history to call them friends). The Finnish media describe them as almost like Finns but not like the English, with a liking for fur hats and travelling with the family, as if belonging to the middle class. They like the snow and clean nature that Finns take for granted. Nowadays, if a Finn sees a Russian it is something good, it means money. The tourists represent themselves, not their state's current or previous foreign policy. When Finland became independent her opponent was the Soviet Union, and Russians were enemies in times of war. Few Russians came to Finland as tourists after the war, and those who did were with official groups or delegations. The older generation finds it difficult to relate to Russians peaceably, and the young do not always succeed in doing so. The historically new tourist who asks the way to Gigantti, the electronics store, is not responsible for Stalin's blood-ridden aggressive politics. This is the content of Tervo's text in brief.

Comments on Tervo's article reflected a range of views. Finns despise Russians, some Finns believe Russia invasion will happen, and the Russians residing in Finland will help their compatriots. Nevertheless, they can differentiate between people and government. The typical thoughts are against Russian women as whores, men as thieves and alcoholics, all inappropriately dressed, behaving loudly and ruining the Finnish

property. There is much more in the Finnish mentality that unites them with Russians than with the other nations:

*I don't like Putin, but Russians are friendly and helpful. Thanks to their shopping, Finnish politicians can be among the 'great nations' in the dark times. It was the same during the Autonomous era when Russians spent their holidays in Finland. Attitudes have to change and become normal, as happened during the Soviet era when collaboration and reciprocally beneficial relations were established, even if Finnish hospitality was somewhat spurious. Indeed, Russians are Finns who speak Russian. Schools have to teach tolerance not through stereotyping other countries, but through understanding other individuals.*

The two neighbouring countries could peacefully co-exist, yet no more in the same country and usually, this is not the Finnish attitudes that are bringing mistrust and unwillingness to cooperate. The destiny of being stacked between Sweden and Russia had positive moments in the history and in the recent past. There were wars, economical exchange across the border, as well as cultural influences:

*Many people speak Russian, but are not Russians, and most Finns do not know what Russia is. People in some foreign countries think that Finns are Russians. The question of attitudes towards Russians is complex and multifaceted, as it is impossible to avoid issues such as nationalism, identity, political correctness and immigration. Russians are now buying Finnish sole in small quantities at very high prices. It would be nice if the new generation could view our neighbours and foreigners generally matter-of-factly. The proximity of St Petersburg and its cultural offerings are not being explored deeply enough, and the lack of language proficiency is a problem. Russians are also European Christians, the same family, and if they get a better leader, a vot ja harashoo [Rus. 'and this is good']. Putin is the person who raised Russia to its present status after the catastrophic era of the drunkard Yeltsin when oligarchs sold Russia to the rest of the world; now it is debt-free, salaries have more than doubled, and the luxury cars on offer are the kind Finns can only dream about.*

During the times of autonomy as the Grand Duchy under the Russian crown, Finland enjoyed many positive developments, socially, linguistically, economically; still, the Russification of the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is remembered. Although now, only 2% of Finns can speak some Russian and everybody must learn Swedish:

*Thanks to Ville Haapasalo, Finnish men are known all over Russia. Tervo has fortunately abandoned his racist and offending use of ryssä [slang ethnonym for 'Russian' with a pejorative meaning]; of course a Russian can be a friend; and they can decide for themselves about their leaders. Some Finnish politicians say that the threat to Finland is Russia. The Swedish party said in 1970 that Finns must learn Swedish, otherwise the USSR would attack Finland; now they should stop obligatory Swedish and get more young people to study Russian.*

The fears are not new, they are fed and calmed, reinforced and transformed, and the life goes on. The current period of peace is the longest in the Finnish history. The experience of the 25 years of relatively free border crossings brought reiterative encounters of all sorts of impressions; Finns could learn to know Russians better:

*At the beginning of the 1990s Russians were allowed in the shop Tarjoustalo one at a time, and only if they left their bags at the entrance, but now it is different: money talks.*

*Russian money is OK, but Russian people face hostility, even racism: at the end of the day there is nothing new in Finland, the promised land of bumpkins. There are bumpkins in both countries, and a civilised client does not mess up places, does not steal, does not replace the labels on more expensive products with those from much cheaper items, and does not rob the rented summer cottage of everything, including the door handles and locks. I am brave and dare to say that Russians are friends of Finns, and Finns are friends of Russians; the long historical shadow is cast in vain over ordinary people.*

Old people who remember the war stories will maybe understand even more easily but will not forgive and forget; the trauma of the lost territories is still alive. The baby-boomers have lived through the Finlandization period and have ambivalent approaches. Open-minded Finns will always say that politically the two countries are very different; language and religion are different, aesthetics as well. The learned history and the living history are different things; surprisingly enough, both sides are grateful to the Finnish marshal C.G.E. Mannerheim for his deeds:

*The big deals with the Russians have shifted from business to civil life: bordering a great power has its challenges and its benefits. Russians project great power in their attitudes, I cannot trust them. History has created a heavy relationship with Russianness, but the same sad melancholy is to be found in Finns: not all those who were born before the war have the traumatic memory of the big neighbour. Isn't it a new Finlandisation when the shops are open during Russians holidays? Russians are a good source of earnings for those who live near the Eastern border. There is a certain hatred of Swedish-speaking Finns as well.*

People are different among any community, some are good, and some are bad, if one learns to know them closer. Many Finns have Russian friends, but not many have ever been to Russia, even to St Petersburg, and this is a big experience. Some adapt quite well to the welcoming society, others have difficulties to learn the language. Rich Russians behave arrogantly; most of the people are poor and modest. Those who bring money to Finland are applauded:

*I am disturbed by the thought that greedy Finnish sellers will flatter Russians while serving them in their own language. Why don't Russians learn English, which would work here? As the old proverb goes: Be friends with your neighbour but don't pull down the fence. The customer is always right, whether he speaks Chinese or Savo [a dialect of Finnish], as many speak Finnish in Malaga or the Canaries, and the seller always speaks the language that makes the most commercial sense, and many people in Russia speak Finnish. Russians are people who appreciate culture and visit museums and galleries.*

The attitude towards Russia has and yet has not changed. Not all Finns have used the years of relative prosperity to visit Russia and to learn more about it. The expertise is always needed, and this means, new ties being created, more grassroots involvement, more exchanges on all levels, not only special people, but everybody:

*Our grandson studied in Russia as an exchange student, and the host family were nice to him, as was everyone, and as grandparents we learned a lot about the circumstances there, and our impressions are positive; individual contacts are the key to understanding!*

*Finns are afraid of Russianness because it reflects their own features. Russia is a land of opportunity for Finns: friendly relationships are like gold dust! Russians are paying back the reparations now.*

This discussion is inspired through the ‘eternal’ topics and reproduces the old and new stereotypes revitalized through any events that happen in the field of interests of both countries.

At the same time, the Finnish media discovered the pro-Russian trolls making propaganda of their own (<http://kioski.yle.fi/omat/troll-piece-2-english>).

The special issue of the *Nordic Historical Review* is devoted to the theme ‘Language and Borders: the Negotiation of Meanings on and around Russian-Scandinavian Borders’. It is attracting contributions through two well-known jokes. 1. It is 2050. Everything is calm on the Finnish-Chinese border (*A Soviet joke*). 2. What is the difference between Sweden and Finland? Sweden has much nicer neighbours (*A Finnish joke*).

Sovietology may be reappearing in Western countries, but the Finnish reaction is different: another issue of the same magazine on Russian modernisation reports on the Finnish Centre of Excellence in Russian Studies project Choices of Russian Modernisation, which is a six year joint multi-disciplinary research project coordinated by the Aleksanteri Institute and also involving the Department of Modern Languages (Russian language and literature) at the University of Helsinki and the School of Management at the University of Tampere.



Figure 1. A magazine for the Baltic States published in spring 2014

The *Iltalehti* newspaper of 25 May 2014 published the results of a survey conducted in Finland on May 27—30 among 5,807 adults whose age, gender and place of residence corresponded to the structure of the Finnish population. The results are shown in Table 4 (2% margin of error: Lehtonen 2014).

Table 1

**Changes in the attitudes of Finns to Russia after certain events in spring 2014**

Event	much more negative	somewhat more negative	unchanged	somewhat more positive	much more positive
The behaviour of the Russian ice hockey coach	42%	28%	30%		
women	46%	25%	28%		
men	37%	27%	35%		1%
Russian activities in the Ukrainian crisis	49%	29%	19%	2%	1%
The violation of the Finnish border by Russian aircraft	33%	34%	32%		

As the survey shows, attitudes are not stable, and vary according to recent events. This does not mean that those whose attitudes had not changed had a positive perception of Russia previously.

This subject continued to attract attention in the media during autumn 2014, as exemplified in Mykkänen (2014): the habitants of Eastern Finland were happy that Russian tourists were bringing in hundreds of thousands of euros every year, but they criticised their driving habits. The sanctions have not diminished the number of visitors, but there were fewer buyers of real estate, and the amounts of money spent during their time in Finland decreased on account of the weak rouble. Their attitudes had changed during the past fifteen years: the Russians they first believed were stealing from shops became neighbours and friends, bringing money and a vibrant culture into everyday life. The Finnish writer Sofi Oksanen (2014) reveals how Russia is waging an information war during the Ukrainian crisis, making the point that fear is a simple tool with which to manipulate people, and that the Finnish media is easily provoked — which is what the Russian government wants to do.

There is an overall desire to understand the recent developments in Russia. The November edition of 'Iltalehti-Fakta. Venäjä' ['Iltalehti facts: focus on Russia'] comprises a multifaceted analysis of what is happening there. Lehtinen (2014) devotes his article to espionage, a particularly hot topic in Soviet times (cf. Seppinen 2006): nowadays it is predominantly conducted through the internet (Simola 2009). Mallinen (2014) explains that Russians are inexplicable to Finns because they do not save money, they live with lies, cope with chaos, believe they are deeper than others and have no command of foreign languages. Experts on Russia discuss the multiplicity of neighbourhood relationships. Are the two countries brothers or squabblers (Koski 2014)? The cheese with information in Cyrillic script, which was rejected in accordance with Russian sanctions on European food imports and returned to Finland, was sold cheaply under the slogan 'Spasibo Putin!' Finns feel that Finland is the only Western state battling with Russia on an everyday basis, and that interactions are much more reasonable with her other neighbours. The estimated number of Russians in Finland ten years hence is 100,000 (Parkkari 2014): they may present an opportunity or a threat.

The presence of the Russian visitors abroad decreased in 2014 due mostly to the unstable political situation and weak rouble. Many tourist firms went bankrupt, and they say that Russians tend to spend their holidays in Crimea. With the worrying developments in Russia, the NATO-support has grown, and one Finnish politician, known through her critical views, is on the travel ban. In Russia, Finnish companies are suffering from the lack of secure investments into their projects, but are not withdrawing from the country; they believe in recovery. The number of Russians visitors, especially the hotel overnight stays, dropped by 42% last year, nonetheless, they are the largest group of tourists (37%). At the same time, Russian search engine Yandex is building a data center in Finland; Finland started to sell energy to Russia etc. In parallel, the interest to learn Russian and to study Russia has grown.



Figure 2. A fish seller assures customers that Russian is spoken in his shop; a graffiti in a park



Figure 3. Russian-Finnish code-switching in Finnish internet advertisements

### CONCLUSIONS

Elana Goldberg Shohamy (2006) pointed out that language is a free commodity that can be used and shaped by anyone. Aneta Pavlenko (2012), in turn, has shown how Russian has changed Europe in recent decades. Russians are present not only somewhere

far away, but as friends, neighbours, buyers and sellers. This makes people think that despite the wars in the past they have to learn Russian and try to understand the country through its language.

Current events have reinforced old stereotypes and revitalized some of the long forgotten opinions. Finns have varying degrees of competence in Russian and Russianness, but even scant knowledge is useful. This realistic view seems to predominate with those who influence the political and economic relationships; nevertheless, the psychological trauma of the wars is still present especially with the older people.

The contemporary ambiguity of the Russian language use shows the connection between the language and the cultural and political situation. The pluses of individual connectedness are evident, and the privileges can be given to those who are competent in the Russian affairs. The discussion on the meaning of such competence is subject to influence from the economy, politics, and cultural and sportive activities. Given that Russia remains unpredictable yet predictable, people swing back and forth in their moods.

At the beginning of February in 2014, TIME contributor Simon Schuster predicted that Western leaders who were not at the opening ceremony of the Winter Olympics in Sochi would regret it. Finnish President Sauli Niinistö and his wife were there at the Olympic stadium, and Niinistö returned to Sochi in August 2014 to meet President Putin. The following day he met President Poroshenko in Kiev. This is how Finns cope with their eastern neighbour, preserving their sovereignty and their self-esteem at the same time.

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## **ФИНЛЯНДСКО-РОССИЙСКИЕ ОТНОШЕНИЯ: ВЗАИМОДЕЙСТВИЕ ЭКОНОМИКИ, ИСТОРИИ, ПСИХОЛОГИИ И ЯЗЫКА**

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Статья посвящена финско-русским межкультурным связям. В ней анализируются современные дискуссии в СМИ и Интернете, касающиеся России, их значение и функции. Рассматривается набор предрассудков, связанных с Россией, которые имеют многовековую историю и периодически оживляются. Проведенный анализ показывает, что недавние события усилили некоторые из них и увеличили потребность в экспертах по России. Исследование выполнено в рамках кросс-культурной коммуникации. Русский язык, который на протяжении веков имел устоявшуюся позицию языка культуры, торговли, государственности и образования, рассматривается как ключ к пониманию того, что происходит с восточным соседом Финляндии.

**Ключевые слова:** финляндско-российские отношения, языковая и интеркультурная компетентность, трансграничные контакты, соседние страны, исторические заимствования.

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## LANGUAGE CHOICE IN EXPRESSING ANGER AMONG ARAB-ENGLISH LONDONERS

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The aim of the present study is to partially replicate the study in Dewaele (2013). We want to determine whether the independent variables linked to the preference of the first (L1) or second language (L2) for the communication of anger among a large heterogeneous group of long-time multilinguals from all over the world (Dewaele 2013) have similar effects in one relatively homogeneous linguistic and cultural group, namely 110 English-speaking Arabs living in London (UK). The analysis of quantitative and qualitative data showed that, in line with the findings in Dewaele (2013), L1 Arabic was preferred over L2 English for expressing anger at oneself, family, friends and at strangers. However, English was preferred to express anger in writing and occasionally in instances of divergence with Arabic-speaking interlocutors (Sachdev, Giles & Pauwels 2013). Frequency of use of English for anger was linked to lower age of onset of L2 learning, naturalistic or mixed L2 learning context, frequency of general use of the L2 and degree of L2 socialization and higher perceived emotionality of English. Gender, age and education were also linked to language choices. Participants explained how their religious beliefs, their cultural and ideological background affect their choice of language for expressing anger.

**Key words:** Expression of anger, inter-individual variation, multilingualism, perception of emotionality.

### INTRODUCTION

“I do not know why I chose English to argue in” was the answer the second author got from two of her cousins, May and Ahmad, about the reason behind their choice of English when they were arguing with other cousins. May, Ahmad, Rashid and Assad, all born and bred in London, UK, had a lively and impassioned conversation at a family meeting about same-sex marriage in England and Wales. The tension in the room increased to the point where Assad, who was arguing in Arabic against the idea, switched to English when May and Ahmad challenged his opinion and called him ‘old fashioned’ and ‘close-minded’. The fact that code-switching happened, defined as “changes from one language to another in the course of conversation” (Li Wei 2007: 14), is not strange in itself, as Arab-English Londoners live in a highly multilingual environment where code-switching is the norm rather than an exception (Sachdev, Giles & Pauwels 2013). However, the choice of English (the second language — L2) was unusual in an interaction at home with family members with for whom Arabic is the preferred language. This episode is a classic illustration of the fact that languages and language choices are not just “neutral means’ of communication” (Sachdev et al. 2013: 393). As the authors point out: “Which language(s) is/are used, when, why, and by whom are important questions” (p. 393). Assad’s switching to English created a psychological distance between the controversial topic at hand (i.e., homosexuality) and conservative Middle

Eastern cultural values to which the speaker is accustomed. This type of code-switching is at the heart of Communication Accommodation Theory, which integrates micro-individual with macro-collective perspectives on multilingual communication (p. 393). Two strategies are usually distinguished in Communication Accommodation Theory: 1) *convergence* “whereby individuals adapt their communicative behaviour in terms of a wide range of linguistic (...), paralinguistic (...), and non-verbal features (...) in such a way as to become more similar to their interlocutor’s behavior” (p. 394); and *divergence* which “leads to an accentuation of language and cultural differences” (p. 395). Assad’s sudden switch to English could be interpreted as a sudden drop measured on the barometer of the level of social distance between the participants (p. 394). The family members had been using Arabic as usual, the “we-code” within this family network, before the sudden divergence.

Ritchie and Bhatia (2013) noted that code-switching is linked to social roles and relationships between participants but that message-intrinsic factors and language attitudes can also play a role (p. 378). Heightened emotionality in the verbal exchanges has also been linked to increased frequency of code-switching (Dewaele 2013).

The increasing frustration that preceded the code-switch was probably linked to the different connections that participants had with their social worlds (Mesquita 2010: 83). We adopt the view that emotions are social phenomena (Mesquita 2010: 84). It is likely that May, Ahmad, Rashid and Assad varied in their emotional acculturation, namely the shift in emotional patterns in response to changes in sociocultural context (De Leersnyder, Mesquita & Kim 2011). Indeed, emotions are “ongoing, dynamic, and interactive processes that are socially constructed” (Boiger & Mesquita 2012: 221).

Recent statistics suggest that there are 240.000 Arabs in the UK, of whom 110.000 live in London (2011 Census). It is a vibrant and long-established community, and includes recent immigrants and students mainly from Iraq, Yemen, Sudan, Somalia, Morocco, Palestine and Lebanon (Miladi 2006). Arab-English Londoners are thus an ideal group to investigate inter-individual variation in language choices.

The present study answers two separate calls. The first one was issued by Porte (2012), who pointed out that replication research is essential, yet under-developed, in applied linguistics. Only through repetition, exact or approximate, can reliability and generalizability of original findings be tested. The second one was formulated in Dewaele (2013), calling for more research on language choice for the expression of anger in specific immigrant communities. His research was based on decontextualized data collected from long-time users of multiple languages, including a small number of Arabic first language (L1) users. Interviews with Arabic speakers who lived in the UK revealed that these multilinguals reported code-switching to English to express anger and to swear, in order to overcome social constraints.

The purpose of the study is to find out whether the independent variables (linguistic history, current linguistic practices, sociobiographical variables) that have been linked to language choice to express anger in Dewaele (2013) also emerge within this specific London-based Arab community.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The use of the L1 or a foreign language (LX) to express emotion can be a strategic decision of the multilingual. Bond and Lai (1986) reported that Chinese English learners used English most of the time when they were asked to talk about embarrassing and personal topics. Participants used their L1, Cantonese, most of the time when they were asked to discuss two neutral topics. However, English was used to “distance themselves from the embarrassing topics” (p. 200). Dewaele and Costa (2013) found that multilinguals in interactions with their multilingual psychotherapist enjoy the ability to switch languages when discussing highly emotional episodes because it allows them to create proximity or distance according to their need. However, not all language switches are strategic: intense anger, for example, can provoke unplanned limbic vocalizations (Van Lancker & Cummings, 1999). These sudden outbursts can be uttered in a different language than that used in the rest of the interaction (Dewaele 2004a).

Multilinguals typically prefer their L1 to express strong emotions such as anger, especially those who remain dominant in their L1 (Dewaele 2004a, b, 2006, 2013; Pavlenko 2005, 2012). Multilingual speakers often choose the L1 to argue in, as it feels more pleasing and “natural” (Pavlenko 2005; Dewaele 2006). The L2 is often experienced as being more detached than the L1, a phenomenon that has also been highlighted by bilingual authors such as Nancy Huston (English L1, French L2) who declared that compared to her L1, her L2 was less burdened with emotion and less dangerous. Although she lives in Paris and uses French for her academic activities, she described French as cold, uniform, smooth and neutral. When she was interviewed on French radio about language preferences to express unexpected strong emotions, she answered that English was her preferred language. However, when the journalist then asked her what she would say when facing sudden danger on the road. Nancy answered: “Je dis Christ fucking shit merde!” (I say Christ fucking shit merde! (“merde” meaning ‘shit’, is a high-frequency French swearword). She was obviously surprised at the unexpected appearance of the French swearword (Dewaele 2010: 596) and seemed to realize that her emotional language preferences had slightly shifted and that some French words had gained emotional resonance.

While many researchers agree that the L1 is typically the language of the heart for multilinguals, Pavlenko (2005) argues that there may be exceptions, as multilinguals “may use these languages to index a variety of affective stances, and they may also mix two or more languages to convey emotional meanings” (p. 131). Pavlenko (2012) pointed out that affective processing in the L1 is more automatic and multilinguals display heightened electrodermal reactivity to L1 emotion-laden words and expressions. Because of lower levels of automaticity in affective processing in the L2, there are fewer interference effects and less electrodermal reactivity to negative or taboo emotional stimuli. Pavlenko suggests that for some late bilinguals and LX users, languages may be differentially embodied, with LXs learnt later in life processed semantically but not affectively.

Pavlenko (2004) looked at self-reported code-switching between 141 multilingual parents and their children in emotional exchanges. L1-dominant parents preferred the L1 in communication with the children while those who were dominant in a LX were less likely to use their L1 (2004: 186). Positive and negative emotions were linked to different language choices. Finally, Pavlenko found that perceived language emotionality played a role in language choice and use in parent/child communication (p. 185).

Dewaele (2013) has examined language preferences of 1576 long-time users and learners of multiple languages to express anger in five different situations using the Bilingualism and Emotion Questionnaire (BEQ) (Dewaele & Pavlenko 2001—2003). The analysis of the data showed that the L1 was preferred to express anger in all situations, and that languages acquired later in life were used less frequently. Different factors were found to affect language choice in the expression of anger. Among these factors were: (1) history of learning, (2) context of acquisition, (3) general frequency of use, (4) network of interlocutors, (5) total language knowledge, (6) degree of socialization in the L2, (7) gender, age and level of education. Participants who had learned an LX through classroom instruction but had also used that LX in authentic interactions outside the classroom, and participants who had an early start in the acquisition of the LX tended to use that language more frequently for swearing than participants who had purely formal instruction and were later starters. General frequency of use of the LX showed a highly significant positive relationship with the use of that LX for swearing. Frequency of language choice for swearing was positively linked with perceived emotional force of swearwords in that language, in other words, emotional strength matched frequency of use. Perceived language emotionality also played a significant role in language choice for emotional expression (Dewaele 2013).

Dewaele (2010, 2011) focused on 386 multilinguals from the BEQ who said to be equally proficient in their L1 and L2 and used both languages constantly. Despite their maximal proficiency in both languages, participants significantly preferred the L1 for communicating feelings or anger. The analysis of an interview corpus confirmed the finding that the L1 was usually felt to be more powerful than the L2, but this did not preclude the use of the L2 (Dewaele 2011). L2 acculturation was linked to a gradual shift in language preferences and perceptions where the L2 started to match the L1 in users' hearts and minds. Participants who had socialized into their L2 culture reported picking up local linguistic practices (including swearing). Japanese, Chinese and Arabic participants explained that swearing in L2 English permitted them to circumvent the social prohibition of swearing in their L1, which carries strong social stigma. One Chinese participant living in London reported using euphemisms rather than the actual English swearwords ('sugar' rather than 'shit'), and she was aware of the fact that her L1 monolingual peers might disapprove of that practice (Dewaele 2010). Another participant, Layla (Arabic L1, English L2, having lived in the UK for 5 years) explained: "I never swear in Arabic (...) but in English (...) sometimes I use some swearwords, but I'm not really aware (...) of how immense those words are" (Dewaele 2013: 125).

Self-reported code-switching was found to be much more frequent when talking about more emotional topics with familiar interlocutors compared to neutral topics

(Dewaele 2013). Some participants reported switching from L2 to L1 when experiencing a burst of strong anger and swearing in the L1 even though their interlocutor did not understand that language (Dewaele 2013).

The differences uncovered in the BEQ database between Asian, Arab and Western participants have been linked to Markus and Kitayama's (1991) work on cultural differences in the display of emotions, often linked to different views of the self. The self is viewed as independent in the West, while it is considered interdependent in Asian, African, Latin-American and many southern European cultures (Markus & Kitayama, 1991: 225). While Westerners are thus more likely to express their emotions freely and frequently because their own goals and desires are the priority, the latter will show more emotional restraint in order to maintain social cohesion. However, it is important to avoid essentializing cultures. Within the same culture, individuals will display a wide range of variation in emotional restraint and emotional behavior. As Wierzbicka and Hawkins (2001) pointed out, individuals from a similar cultural background may have very different perceptions of what is appropriate. Even the same person might react differently at a different point in time.

While individuals may vary in their display of emotions at any time, long-term exposure to an LX culture can lead to "emotional acculturation" among immigrants (De Leersnyder, Mesquita & Kim 2011). The authors argued that the emotional experiences of people who live together (families, groups, cultures) tend to be similar and that immigrants start approximating host culture patterns of emotional experience. The authors found that immigrants' exposure to and engagement in the host culture predicted emotional acculturation (p. 460). The longer immigrants had lived in the host country, the more emotionally acculturated they had become as a result of intercultural interactions and relationships (p. 461). Moreover, immigrants' personality traits shift as a result of active participation in the host culture (Güngör et al. 2013).

Dewaele and Li Wei (2014a) found that participants' linguistic history and current use of languages determined their self-reported frequency of CS, but also Extraversion and Cognitive Empathy were linked to significantly more CS. Dewaele and Li Wei (2014a). In a study on attitudes towards CS, Dewaele and Li Wei (2014b) found that participants scoring higher on Tolerance of Ambiguity,

Cognitive Empathy and Emotional Stability had significantly more positive attitudes towards CS. Dewaele and Zeckel (to appear) analysed self-reported CS from 300 multilinguals and found it varies significantly according to the type of interlocutor (more CS in interaction with friends). A high level of multilingualism, early onset of bilingualism, Openmindedness and low levels of Flexibility were linked with significantly more CS.

To sum up, studies reported that bi- and multilingual speakers generally prefer to use their L1 to express deep feelings. However, as a result of naturalistic exposure, L2 socialization and emotional acculturation, the L2 can become the more emotional language and preferred to express emotion (De Leersnyder, Mesquita & Kim 2011; Dewaele 2013; Pavlenko 2005, 2012).

## **RATIONALE FOR THE PRESENT STUDY**

Previous research studies that looked at the expression of anger have covered a wide diversity of first languages, but few included L1 Arabic speakers. Therefore, this study answers the call by Porte (2012) and aims to partially replicate Dewaele (2013) by focusing on English-speaking Arabs. This is an interesting group to investigate, given its strong emotional attachment towards Arabic because of its association with Islamic religion (Othman 2006).

## **METHOD**

### **Participants**

Participants were 110 English-speaking Arabs (50 males, 60 females) living in Greater London who had been living there for a period ranging from 2 to 60 years. The age of participants ranged from 18 to over 65, with education ranging from primary education to PhD. The majority of the population were originally from 20 Arabic countries, the largest groups were Jordanians ( $n = 16$ ), Syrians ( $n = 14$ ) and Iraqis ( $n = 10$ ), followed (in decreasing numbers) by Egyptians, Lebanese, UAE, Algerians, Saudi, Sudanese, Bahraini, Yemeni, Omani, Tunisians, Kuwaiti, Mauritians, Qatari, Moroccans, Somali, Libyans and Djibouti. There were 99 bilingual speakers (L1 Arabic and L2 English) and 11 trilingual speakers (L1 Arabic, L2 English and L3 French). More than half of the participants reported themselves to be dominant in the L1 Arabic ( $n = 72$ ); a smaller proportion declared to be dominant in both L1 Arabic and L2 English ( $n = 22$ ); and 16 reported to be dominant in L2 English. However, the majority of respondents (83.6%) declared themselves to be fully proficient in English.

### **Instrument**

The data were elicited from the second author's social network and were gathered through a questionnaire with closed and open-ended questions, adapted from the BEQ (Dewaele & Pavlenko 2001—2003). The questionnaire was distributed using various methods. Some copies were distributed directly to people, while the rest were distributed through email and post. This allowed us to reach people from different age groups, social classes and educational backgrounds. Several participants did not have access to the internet and some were not skilled enough to use a computer. Therefore, they filled in the printed version of the questionnaire. The data were collected in 2013. The research design and questionnaire obtained approval from the Ethics Committee. The following sociobiographical information was collected: age, gender, level of education, country of origin, occupation, languages known to the participant, chronological order of language acquisition, dominant languages, context of acquisition, general frequency of use and typical network of interlocutors. Participants also filled out questions on self-rated proficiency scores in their different languages along with perceived emotionality of L1 and L2. They provided information on their frequency of use of L1 Arabic and L2 English in the expression of anger in five different situations.

The first part of the questionnaire consisted of close-ended questions with Likert scales and the second part consisted of open-ended questions inviting participants to write comments. Traditionally, questionnaires with Likert scales responses have been

discursively used and tested in socio-psychological research as they increase the validity of the research (Dörnyei & Taguchi 2009). However, Dewaele (2013), Pavlenko (2005) and Wierzbicka and Hawkins (2001) have pointed to the importance of linking the subjective experiences of participants with more objective evidence in order to provide good understanding. Our instrument allowed us to elicit objective evidence as well as subjective experiences.

The open-ended question asked for examples of language choices in situations where the participant had experienced strong emotions. This material (around 20,000 words) is mostly in English and will be used to illustrate the quantitative findings.

### Independent variables

A total of eight independent variables have been considered (Dewaele 2013).

(1) Age of onset of acquisition of English. The information has been elicited by the following question: “at what age did you start learning L2 English?” Possible answers on 5-point Likert scale included: age 0–2 = 1, age 3–7 = 2, age 8–12 = 3, age 13–x 18 = 4, age 19+ = 5. Participants were spread out evenly over the different groups:  $n = 11$  in group 1,  $n = 32$  in group 2,  $n = 16$  in group 3,  $n = 28$  in group 4 and  $n = 23$  in group 5.

(2) Context of acquisition where English was first learned. Participants were presented with the choice between three contexts: naturalistic context (outside of school) ( $n = 11$ ), instructed context (at school only) ( $n = 64$ ), or mixed context (both classroom contact and naturalistic contact) ( $n = 35$ ).

(3) General frequency of use. This information was elicited by the question: “How frequently do you use Arabic/English?” Possible answers on the 5-point Likert scale included for Arabic: yearly or less = 1 ( $n = 1$ ), monthly = 2 ( $n = 2$ ), weekly = 3 ( $n = 11$ ), daily = 4 ( $n = 30$ ), all day = 5 ( $n = 66$ ). And for English: yearly or less = 1 ( $n = 0$ ), monthly = 2 ( $n = 3$ ), weekly = 3 ( $n = 9$ ), daily = 4 ( $n = 25$ ), all day = 5 ( $n = 73$ ).

(4) Degree of L2 socialization: This variable is a second-order variable based on the difference of general frequency of use of L1 Arabic and L2 English. The value was calculated by subtracting the score for the general frequency of use of the L2 from the score for the L1. Somebody who reported using the L1 all day (score 5) and the L2 all day (score 5) would have a L2 socialization score of 0, indicating a moderate degree of socialization. If a participant reported a monthly use of the L1 (score 2) and a daily use of the L2 (score 5), the L2 socialization will be score –3, indicating a very strong degree of socialization. After regrouping values, we had the following groups: very weak ( $n = 6$ ), weak ( $n = 18$ ), moderate ( $n = 59$ ) and strong ( $n = 27$ ).

(5) Degree of perceived emotionality of English. The information was obtained through the question: To what extent do you agree with the statement “English is emotional”? Possible answers on 5-point Likert scale included: not at all = 1 ( $n = 0$ ), somewhat = 2 ( $n = 1$ ), more or less = 3 ( $n = 13$ ), to a large extent = 4 ( $n = 51$ ), absolutely = 5 ( $n = 45$ ).

(6) Gender, age, and level of education. The latter variable included the following categories: 6 participants had primary level education, 46 had finished their secondary education, 39 had a Bachelors degree, 17 a Masters degree, and 2 had obtained a PhD. Twenty-three participants were aged between 18 and 24, 33 participants were aged



between 25 and 34, 23 participants were aged between 35 and 44, 10 participants were aged between 45 and 54), 11 participants were aged between 55 and 64) with the final 10 participants being 65 or older.

### **Dependent variable**

Data were obtained about the frequency with which the participants use their L1 and L2 for the expression of anger in five different situations: anger directed at oneself, at family, at strangers and in letters or emails. The question was formulated as follows: "If you are angry, what language do you typically use to express your anger?"

Feedback was elicited through a five-point Likert scale, possible answers were: never = 1, rarely = 2, sometimes = 3, frequently = 4, all the time = 5.

The information was collected separately for L1 Arabic and L2 English.

Cronbach alpha analyses revealed that internal consistency reliability was high for the five-item language choice for anger scales in the L1 ( $\alpha = 0.71$ ), L2 ( $\alpha = 0.78$ ).

A series of Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests revealed that the values are not normally distributed. (K-S Z values vary between 2.9 and 3.9, all  $p < 0.001$ ). Therefore, Kruskal-Wallis tests were used as non-parametric equivalents to one-way ANOVAs and Mann-Whitney tests were used instead of t-tests. It also means we could not use multiple regression tests.

### **HYPOTHESES**

The following hypotheses were based on findings reported in the literature review:

H1: The participants will prefer to use Arabic to express their anger.

H2: Participants who started learning English at a younger age will use it more frequently in expressing anger than participants who started learning it later.

H3: Participants who learned English in a mixed context (both classroom contact and naturalistic contact) will use it more frequently to express anger than participants who learned it in an formal instruction setting (classroom contact only) or a naturalistic environment (outside school).

H4: Participants who use English more frequently overall will prefer English for expressing anger.

H5: Participants with stronger English socialization will prefer English to express anger.

H6: Participants who perceive English as highly emotional will prefer it to express anger.

H7. The participants' education level, age and gender could affect their language choice for the expression of anger.

### **RESULTS**

#### **Language choice for expressing anger in five situations**

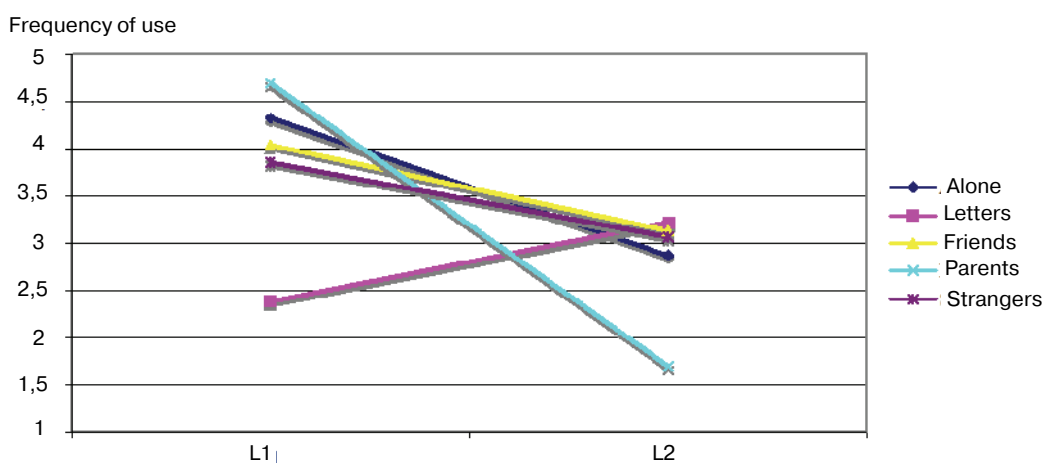
A series of Mann-Whitney tests revealed significant differences in frequency of language choice to express anger between L1 and L2 (table 1). Participants' use of L1 is, on average, 'frequently' to express anger (means range between 2.4 and 4.3 for the different situations). The L2 is used, on average, between 'rarely' and 'sometimes' (with means ranging between 1.7 and 3.2).

Table 1

**A comparison of frequency of use of L1 and L2 to express anger (Mann-Whitney tests)**

Situation	Mann-Whitney U	Z	p
Alone	1 839	-9.3	0.000
Letters	3 828	-4.8	0.000
Friends	2 915	-6.9	0.000
Parents	322	-12.7	0.000
Strangers	3 016	-6.8	0.000

Figure 1 shows that Arabic is used significantly more frequently than English to express anger at oneself, at friends, at parents, and at strangers. However, English is preferred to express anger in letters.



**Figure 1:** Mean frequency of use of the L1 and L2 to express anger

A typical comment is that of Fatima, a 25-year-old female teacher (Arabic L1, English L2), originally from Bahrain, who has lived in London for 23 years, dominant in both Arabic and English. She reported her preference for Arabic in oral argument and English to express anger in writing:

*The argument sounds more natural in Arabic so I use it to argue with family and friends but in writing I prefer to use English as it is more official and direct. The lack of using classic Arabic in my daily conversation makes it hard for me to use it in writing. Plus, I use English more frequently at work, therefore it is easier for me to express anger in English by writing.*

Abdu (70-year-old, male, retired engineer, Arabic L1, English L2, originally from Jordan, living in London for 40 years, dominant in Arabic) offered his typical Arabic view that anger should not be shown to others. However, he chooses Arabic when he is really angry.

*It's rare for me to show my frustration or anger to other people as I believe in this phrase, khalihabalqlabtjrahwla tla3 la bara w tfduah (خليها بالقلب تجرح ولا تطلع برا وتفضح), which means it is better to keep the anger inside rather than say it in the open. People*

would not understand and they would probably make fun of me behind my back. However, when I get really angry I use Arabic to show the other person how angry I am. It also helps me express myself more than English. As in Arabic I can use popular proverbs that are so powerful and meaningful which can save me time arguing.

Dodo (a 25-year-old, female student, originally from Libya and now living in London for about 5 years, dominant in Arabic) reported her preference for Arabic to express anger because of the perceived emotional strength of Arabic, linked to her cultural and religious background.

*I can use both languages, but I prefer to use Arabic to express deep emotions such as anger. Because Arabic comes from the heart, therefore it sounds more natural than English. Plus, many Arabic vocabularies and phrases that we normally use came from the Arabic culture and our religion, which increases the value of these words as it is full of meanings. I can critically argue and convince others with my opinions by simply using the Arabic language as I can use religious phrases from the Qur'an which stops them from arguing with me. For example, if someone hurts my feelings and I want to reply all I need to do is simply say what you did was Haram, which in English means sinful. This normally makes the other person feel really bad and ask for God's forgiveness.*

### The effect of age of onset (AoA) of learning the L2

The Kruskal-Wallis tests revealed that AoA has a highly significant effect on the frequency of use of the L2 for anger expression in the five situations (see table 2 and figure 2). Younger starters use the L2 significantly more frequently to express anger than later starters.

Table 2

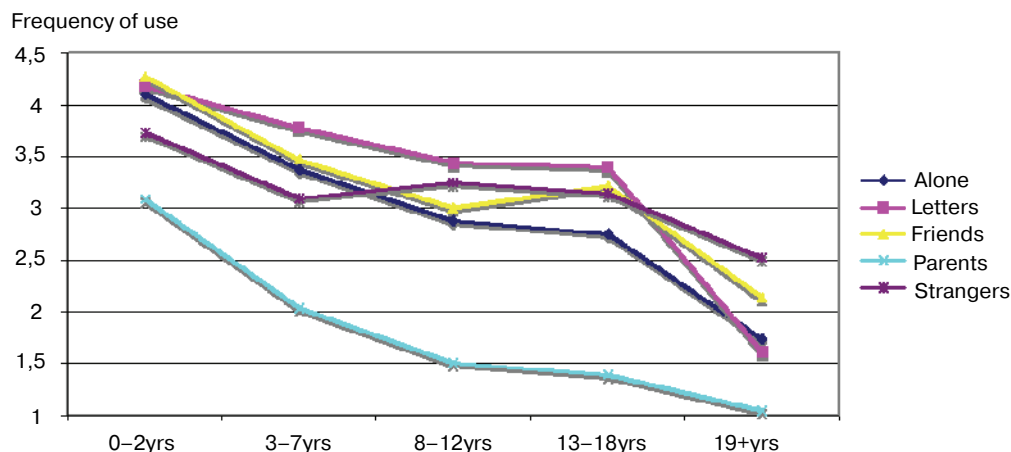
The effect of AoA, context of acquisition, general frequency of use, degree of socialization and perceived emotionality in the L2 on frequency of use of English to express anger (Kruskal Wallis Chi<sup>2</sup>)

Situation	AoA	Context of acquisition	General frequency of use	L2 socialization	L2 emotionality
Alone	54.4***	31.2***	36.3***	46.3***	66.1***
Letters	50.4***	38.3***	21.5***	27.8***	52.4***
Friends	49.9***	22.3***	33.2***	41.7***	59.9***
Parents	40.6***	26.1***	13.4*	37.1***	43.8***
Strangers	21.4***	19.6**	12.9*	26.1***	32.3***

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .001$ , \*\*\* $p < .0001$

An interesting comment by Noora (a 30-years old female, babysitter, originally from Algeria, living in London, dominant in Arabic, with French as a L3) mentioned the difficulty that late L2 learners face when arguing in the L2:

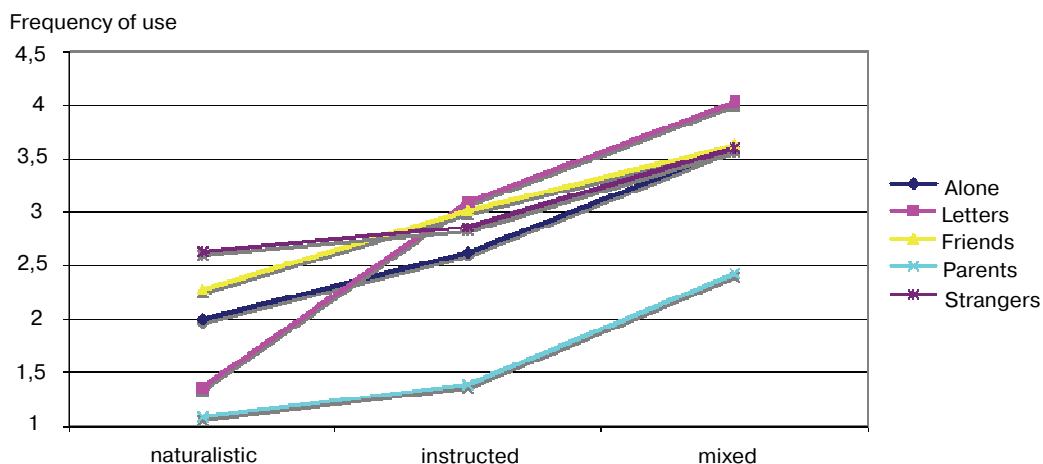
*It is a bit difficult to express anger in English. Even if I try to argue in English I get too worried about my pronunciation. My pronunciation is not as good as in Arabic, as I was 19 years old when I first learnt English.*



**Figure 2:** Mean values for frequency of use of the L2 to express anger according to AoA.

### The effect of L2 context of acquisition

The Kruskal–Wallis tests revealed highly significant effects of context of acquisition in all situations. Participants who learned the L2 in a mixed context (classroom contact and naturalistic contact) use the L2 more frequently for the expression of anger in all 5 situations than those who learned the L2 only through formal instruction or through naturalistic learning (see table 2 and figure 3).



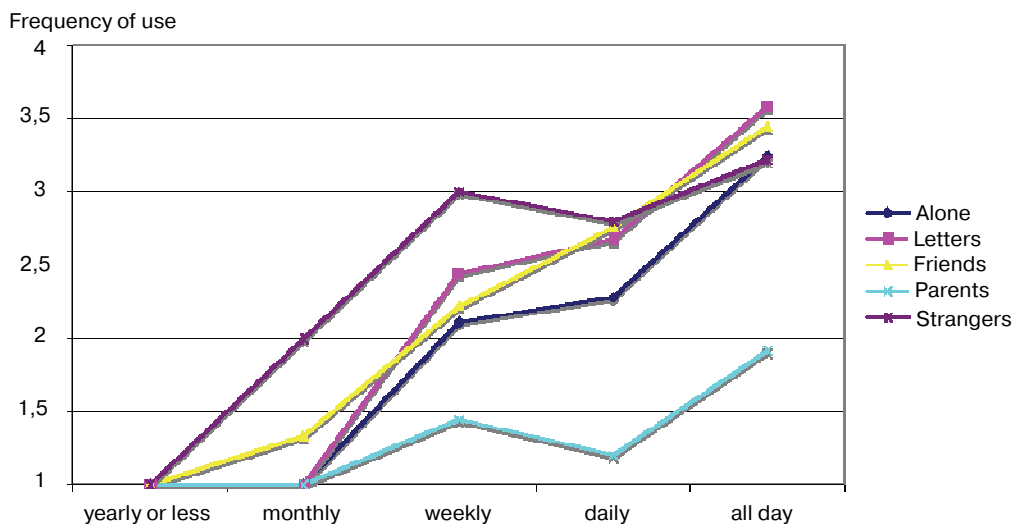
**Figure 3:** Mean values for frequency of use of the L2 to express anger according to context of L2 acquisition

Some participants link their preference for the expression of emotions in the L2 to good education. Asma (25-year-old, female, student, originally from UAE, living in London for about 4 years, dominant in Arabic) explained:

*I can easily express emotions in English language as I went to private English school to learn English. All my teachers were highly qualified and native English teachers. So they taught me how to express emotions and discuss different topics using English language only. Therefore, I find it easy to express emotions, including anger, or make a critical argument with somebody.*

### The effect of general frequency of use of L2

The Kruskal–Wallis tests revealed that the general frequency of use of English has a significant positive effect on the frequency of use of English to express anger in five situations (see table 2). Figure 4 shows that participants who use the L2 all day use it more frequently to express anger in all situations.



**Figure 4:** Mean values for frequency of use of the L2 to express anger according to general frequency of use of L2

Amira (a 35-year-old female, originally from Jordan, lawyer, a Londoner for 20 years, dominant in English) explained that she uses English in arguments as part of her daily job, and that this influences her language choice when arguing with other bilingual speakers.

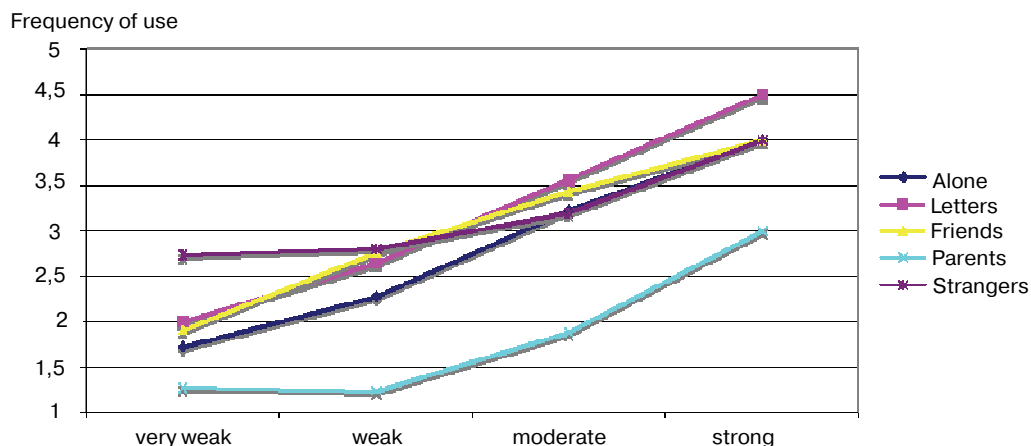
*Because I am a lawyer, I use English most of the time in arguing. Therefore, I find it easier to argue in English. English is the official language of the law. I can critically argue in English as I think English is more official and people take me seriously.*

### The effect of L2 socialization

The Kruskal–Wallis tests revealed that the degree of L2 socialization has a highly significant effect on frequency of use of the L2 to express their anger in all situations see table 2 and figure 5.

Mo (a 55-year-old male, business man, Syrian, a Londoner for 40 years and still dominant in Arabic) belongs to the “moderate” L2 socialization group. He explained how he uses English and Arabic at home and at work where he prefers Arabic to express anger.

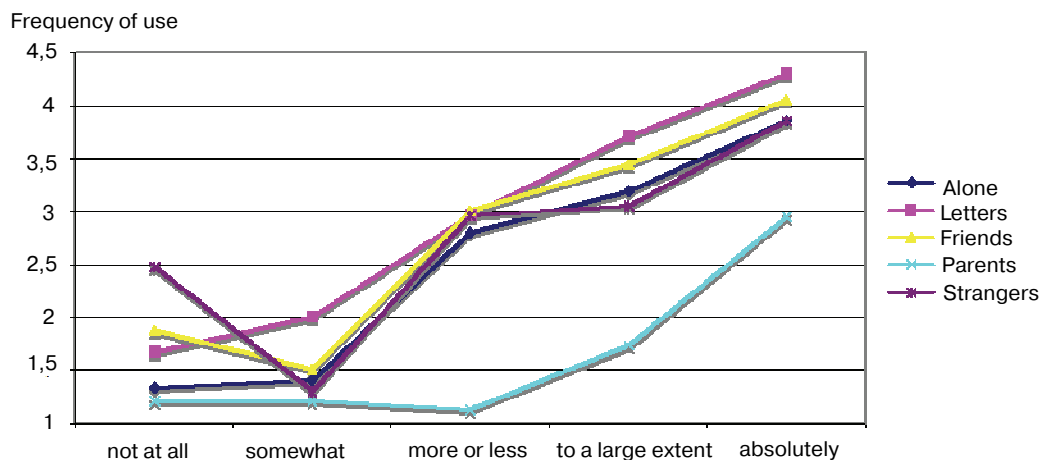
*I can use both languages to express emotion. However, I use English with my partner who speaks Arabic as her second language. English is the spoken language at home, therefore I find it easy to use English to express emotion with my family. Nevertheless, I use Arabic more at work because I run a small business that deals with Arab customers. Therefore, I use mostly Arabic with my employees when I get really angry with them. However, I feel that I can express myself more freely in Arabic by using short famous poems.*



**Figure 5:** Mean values for frequency of use of the L2 to express anger according to degree of L2 socialization.

### The effect of perceived emotionality of L2

The Kruskal-Wallis tests reveal highly significant effects of perceived language emotionality of English on the frequency of use of English to express anger for all situations (see table 2 and figure 6). There is a steady increase in the frequency of use the L2 to express anger for participants who perceive the L2 to be more emotional.



**Figure 6:** Mean values for frequency of use of the L2 to express anger according to perceived emotionality of the L2

Most of the participants reported that English has emotional resonance for them. For example, Basil (a 38-year-old male, accountant, originally from Iraq, a Londoner for 18 years, dominant in Arabic) answered that both languages have their own emotionality.

*Yes, Arabic represents my culture and religion. I can express myself and talk about emotional topics better in Arabic. However, English is also an emotional language as I can use it to go straight to the point especially when writing. English is rich and useful as much as Arabic. However, the richness of Arabic language comes from our culture.*

Some participants believe that both languages share similar emotional significance. However, each language is used in a particular situation for particular reason. For example, Arabic, mainly colloquial Arabic, is used in oral emotional expressions to sound more natural. English is used for emotional e-mails and Facebook.

**The effects of age, gender and education level**

A series of Mann-Whitney tests reveal non-significant gender differences in 4 situations (alone, friends, parents, and strangers). However, females were significantly more likely to choose English to express anger (*Mean* = 3.6) by letter than men (*Mean* = 2.7) (*Mann-Whitney* = 807.5, *Z* = 4.3, *p* < .0001).

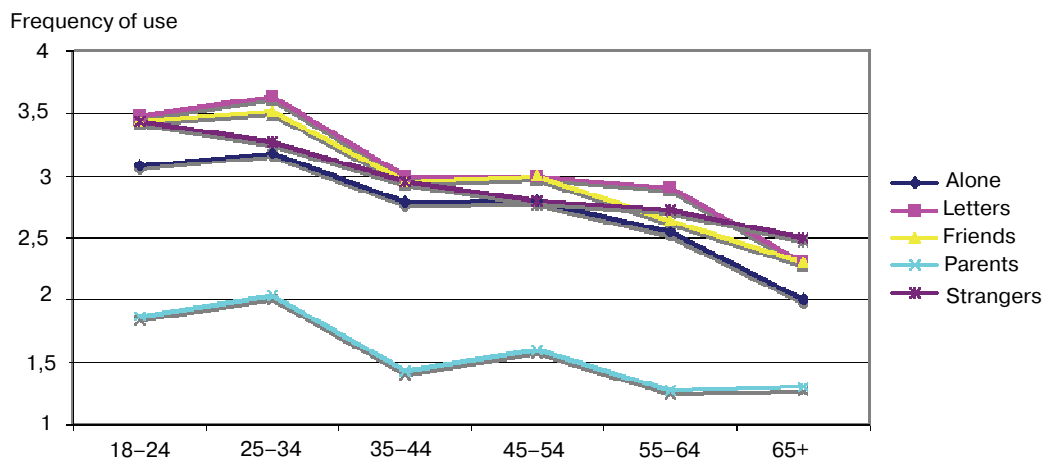
Age was found to have a stronger effect on the frequency of use of the L2 (English) to express anger in the L2 in 4 situations (alone, letters, friends, and strangers) but had no significant effect when facing parents in anger. Younger participants use English more frequently in anger at oneself, at friends, at strangers and in letters compared to older participants (see table 3 and figure 7).

Table 3

**The effect of age group and education level on frequency of use of the L2 (English) to express anger in the L2 (Kruskal-Wallis Chi<sup>2</sup>)**

Anger	Age group	Education level
Alone	12.1*	20.1***
Letters	13.9*	22.9***
Friends	20.0**	16.2*
Parents	9.4	5.1
Strangers	15.6*	7.5

\**p* < .05, \*\**p* < .001, \*\*\**p* < .0001.



**Figure 7:** Mean values for frequency of use of English to express anger according to age group

The Kruskal-Wallis tests showed a significant effect of education level on the frequency of use of English to express anger in three situations (alone, letters, and friends) (see table 3). But the effect was not significant in interactions with parents and strangers. Participants with bachelors or masters degrees used the L2 more frequently to express

anger in the first three situations (alone, letters, and friends — with mean values over 3) compared to participants with primary or secondary education (with mean values below 3 for the use of English).

## DISCUSSION

This study examined seven hypotheses linked to the effect of L2 English learning history, current language use, perception of English and sociobiographical variables.

The first hypothesis was largely confirmed, our participants preferred to use L1 Arabic to express their anger when alone, at friends, at parents and at strangers. However, they preferred English to express their anger in writing. This last result was unexpected, as Dewaele (2013) found that L1 was used more frequently by his multilinguals in expressing anger in all different situations, including letter writing.

Our participants used their Arabic more frequently than English with their parents to express anger. A number of participants reported that Arabic is the preferred language to express anger and endearment within the family. This finding reflects Dewaele's (2006) finding that the L1 is the preferred language for anger within the family (p. 135). Most of our participants explained that they preferred Arabic because it is strongly attached to Arabic culture, family values and Islamic religion. Pavlenko (2004) argues that the preference for the L1 is not surprising "as this is the language in which they have the best command of multiple linguistic repertoires and do not have to stop to think about word choices (thus losing face at a crucial moment in the interaction)" (p. 199).

Our second hypothesis, namely that participants who started learning English at a younger age would use it more frequently to express anger than participants who started learning it later, was confirmed. This pattern reflects the finding in Dewaele (2013) where early starters in an LX were found to be much more likely to use the LX to express various emotions, to perceive the LX to be more emotional and to report lower level of Foreign Language Anxiety. One possible explanation for this is that early acquisition of the L2 means that the language is acquired when the limbic system is active, providing rich emotional associations, and leading to both semantic and affective processing of the L2 (Pavlenko 2012).

Our third hypothesis, namely that participants who learned English in a mixed context (both classroom contact and naturalistic contact) would use it more frequently to express anger than participants who learned it in a purely instructed setting (classroom contact only) or in a naturalistic environment (outside school) is also supported. Participants who learned English in a mixed environment used L2 for expressing anger more frequently than those who learned L2 in naturalistic environment. Dewaele (2013) also found that instructed learners of an LX were less likely to express anger in the LX than mixed and naturalistic learners — the difference between these two groups was very small. One possible explanation for this is that foreign language classrooms are typically not environments where emotion scripts are discussed or used. Only authentic communication outside the classroom allows learners to engage in emotional interactions. Yet, naturalistic learners often lack self-confidence in the LX and tend to use it less frequently for emotion (Dewaele 2013).



Our fourth hypothesis, namely that frequency of use of English would be linked to frequency of use of that language for communicating anger, is fully supported in all situations. Participants who use English all day use it more frequently to express anger in all situations. Similar patterns were found for various emotions in the LX (Dewaele, 2006, 2008, 2013).

Our fifth hypothesis, namely that higher levels of L2 socialization would be linked to more frequent use of English to express anger, is fully supported in all situations. Using the L2 more frequently than the L1 implies a wider variety of social situations in which anger would have to be expressed or experienced (Dewaele, 2006, 2013).

Our sixth hypothesis, namely that participants who perceive English as being more emotional would prefer it to express anger, is fully supported in all situations. Some participants explained that they use English because it is suitable for their anger, particularly in writing. Dewaele (2013) and Pavlenko (2004) reported similar patterns with multilingual parents: those who perceived their L2 as highly emotional, would use it more frequently for disciplining and praising their children (2004: 187).

Our final hypothesis namely that participants' education level, age and gender could affect language choice for the expression of anger, is partially confirmed. Female participants were more likely to choose English to express anger by letter than male participants. Dewaele (2013) also found that his female participants used the L2 significantly more than male participants to express anger. Younger participants reported more frequent use of English in anger at oneself, at friends, at strangers and in letters compared to older participants. This could be linked to a higher level of emotional acculturation in the English culture of the younger generation (De Leersnyder et al., 2011). No clear patterns emerged in Dewaele (2013) between language choices for anger and age nor education levels.

The most surprising result in our study was the preference for English in expressing anger in letters. Some participants reported that they find it is easier to express anger in written form in English than using the modern standard Arabic form of writing. Our participants use English and Colloquial Arabic more frequently than the modern standard Arabic. Therefore, this might result in difficulty in writing using the classic Arabic and Modern standard Arabic. A number of the participants also explained that they have achieved a high level in English writing through education and therefore preferred writing in English rather than in modern standard Arabic. They also linked their preference for English to the frequent use of English in social media.

It thus seems that the patterns linked to language preference for expressing anger among English-speaking Arabs who live in London are broadly similar to those uncovered in the large-scale investigation about multilinguals worldwide (Dewaele, 2013). The qualitative data added an insight in the possible causes of the language choices, and these included a variety of personal, religious, sociocultural and linguistic reasons.

There are obviously factors that affect language choice to express anger that were not included in the present research design. Some of these could be stable, such as identification with Arabic culture and religion, where Arabic is the “we-code” conveying “in-group membership, informality and intimacy” (Ritchie & Bathia, 2013: 381). Arabic might thus be preferred to argue in favor of traditional Arabic cultural values, while Eng-

lish, the “they-code” — but increasingly also the “us too-code” — would be used to create distance, assert authority, express objectivity, suppress the tabooeness of the interaction (p. 381). English would thus be the logical choice for those arguing in favor of English cultural values, as it would be a highly salient instance of divergence with an Arabic-speaking interlocutor (Sachdev et al., 2013). While some of these code-switches could be strategic, others could be largely unconscious, and these could include the sudden appearance of a colloquial expression in either language.

### CONCLUSION

We started this paper with the anecdote about a group of Arab-English Londoners, May, Rashid, Ahmad and Assad in a heated discussion in the family home on same-sex marriage. Assad, who was opposed to this argued in Arabic against the idea, then switched to English to swear when May and Ahmad challenged him in English, despite the fact that they usually use Arabic at home. Asked why they diverged from Arabic, they answered that they had no idea. The language choices in this particular episode are atypical, considering our quantitative findings and the studies reporting a preference for the L1 to express emotions. However, Dewaele (2013) found evidence of this atypical direction of code-switching among his Asian and Arabic participants who explained that in exceptional cases swearing in English L2 allowed them to escape L1 social-cultural constraints.

Our investigation revealed that the independent variables that Dewaele (2013) identified as having an effect on the choice of the L2 among a large heterogeneous group of multilinguals had similar effects in our sample of 110 Arab-English Londoners. Arabic was preferred to express anger when alone, with friends, parents and strangers but English was preferred to express anger in letters. The choice of English for the expression of anger was linked to a lower AoA, naturalistic or mixed L2 learning context rather than purely formal instruction, frequency of general use of the L2, the degree of L2 socialization and higher perceived emotionality of English. Sociobiographical variables also had an effect on language choice, with female participants being more likely to use English to express anger in letters, younger participants expressing their anger in English more frequently when alone, with friends, strangers and in letters. The effect of education level was significant for anger expressed alone, with friends and in letters. Participants with lower levels of education reported using English less frequently than those with bachelor degrees, who also used it slightly more than those with masters and PhDs.

To conclude, early participation in authentic interactions in English and a moderate degree of L2 socialization, probably accompanied by L2 emotional acculturation, allows our Arab-English Londoners to express their anger in Arabic or in English according to the situation and the interlocutor. While Arabic is usually the preferred language to express anger, switching to English in angry exchanges with Arab-English interlocutors can happen. It can then be interpreted as accommodation, more specifically *divergence* to reject the Arabic in-group values and edge closer to English cultural values, or *convergence* to express anger in the L1 of the English-speaking interlocutor (Sachdev et al., 2013).

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## ЯЗЫКОВОЙ ВЫБОР АНГЛО-АРАБСКИХ ЖИТЕЛЕЙ ЛОНДОНА ПРИ ВЫРАЖЕНИИ ГНЕВА

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Цель данного проекта состоит в частичном воспроизведении исследования Деваеле (2013), выделившего факторы, оказывающие влияние на выбор языка для выражения гнева информантами-мультилингвами из разных стран мира. Наша задача состояла в том, чтобы определить, аналогично ли влияние факторов, обнаруженных в большой и чрезвычайно гетерогенной группе, на выбор первого (Я-1) или второго языка (Я-2) в относительно гомогенной лингвокультурной группе. В качестве испытуемых были отобраны 110 англоязычных арабов, проживающих в Лондоне. Проведенный количественный и качественный анализ полученных данных показал, что, как и в исследовании Деваеле (2013), для выражения гнева, направленного на себя, членов семьи, друзей и знакомых, испытуемые предпочитали арабский язык (Я-1). Однако для выражения гнева в письменной форме, а иногда и в случае разногласий с арабоязычными собеседниками предпочтение отдавалось английскому языку (Садчев, Гайл и Пауэлз 2013). Частотность использования английского языка для выражения гнева связана с возрастом, в котором его начинали изучать, контекстом изучения (естественным или комбинированным), частотой его использования для коммуникации, степенью социализации в англоязычном социуме, а также восприятием английского как языка, подходящего/неподходящего для выражения эмоций. Помимо этого, как показало проведенное исследование, на выбор языка оказывают влияние пол, возраст и уровень образования. Участники исследования пояснили также, какое влияние на выбор языка для выражения гнева оказывают их религиозные верования, культура и идеологическая позиция.

**Ключевые слова:** выражения гнева, индивидуальные вариации, мультилингвизм, выражение эмоций.

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## INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AND DISABILITIES FROM A COMMUNICATION COMPLEX PERSPECTIVE

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Intercultural communication presents a number of challenges that are less of an issue in same-culture interactions. This is important because travel and technological capability enable more and more immigrants, business people, tourists, etc. to engage in such interactions. One group of people that comprises 10% of the world population, the disabled, is increasingly being mainstreamed within cultures as well as traveling to other countries. Research finds that the disabled are often marginalized and discriminated against within their own country. When the abled enter an intercultural interaction with the disabled the communication challenges are even greater. Communication Complex, a metatheoretical perspective on communication that embraces a constitutive definition of communication combined with a neuroscience understanding of interaction, offers a deeper, yet highly practical explanation of the level of complexity that such an encounter entails. This article offers a brief introduction to this way of understanding intercultural communication, along with the suggestion that future studies and practical guides should take disabilities into account when analyzing or building skills.

**Key words:** Intercultural communication, intercultural interaction, communication complex, metatheoretical perspective.

### INTRODUCTION

Challenges faced in communication vary according to context. Put another way, communication is a complex undertaking, even though we often think of it in an overly simple way (Parrish-Sprowl, 2014a, 2014b, 2013, 2012, Parrish-Sprowl, S and Parrish-Sprowl, J, 2014). For example, two long-term friends, from the same community and culture, discussing a favorite subject in the comfort of their home may find communication to be fluid and easy. However, individuals from different countries, ones with a history of animosity, may find a conversation on a similar topic to be more work, frustrating, and possibly it could be deadly. Quite simply, adding to the complexity of the communication process, intercultural interaction holds potential pitfalls that are absent from within-culture conversation.

Often, in within culture conversation, we also find communication between the abled and the disabled to hold similar difficulties. People often do not know how to manage the issue of disability in a conversation. People might wonder how to talk to a person in a wheelchair without seeming to look down on them in the pejorative sense, or how to go about interaction with the deaf and blind in a way that does not feel disconcerting. These conversations can be smooth, if we learn how to do so, or they can be awkward or even offensive if we do not. The range of disabilities, including mobility, sight, sound, and mental impairments just adds to the challenge to develop capable communication skills.

To complicate matters even more, if we add to the intercultural communication context, one or more persons with a disability, a layer of complexity rarely discussed but growing in frequency, adds to the effort needed to communicate effectively. While a large and ever increasing literature on intercultural communication exists that blends theory, research and practice (see, for example, Gonzalez and Chen, 2015; Ting-Toomey and Chung, 2011), as is the case for communication and disabilities (See, for example, Braithwaite, D.O. and Thompson, T. 1999), the research literature combining the two is nearly nonexistent, with the exception of the treatment of a disability as a cultural category by itself (such as deaf culture). To address the issue of intercultural communication that includes people with disabilities, this paper will first discuss why this issue is of growing importance and identifies critical concerns and practical advice, from a communication complex perspective.

### **GLOBALIZATION AND OPPORTUNITY**

As has been noted elsewhere, globalization is a relatively new term for a process that has been continuously unfolding for centuries (Parrish-Sprowl, 2009). A number of authors share the opinion that the term was coined due to the qualitative differences of the current era (Prestowitz; 2005, Sachs, 2005). Three aspects in particular are relevant to the present discussion. First, is the development of a much more open level of interchange between people from different countries that, during the cold war, allowed scant interaction between their citizens. For example, China and the United States permitted almost no travel or correspondence between citizens during the cold war, but now China and the USA exchange thousands of students every year and China has become the largest trading partner of the USA. This openness facilitates much more intercultural communication between citizens than during the cold war or even any previous era.

Secondly, transportation between countries has become more available, both in frequency and price. It has become much easier, and considerably more affordable, for people to visit different countries than ever before and people from most nations are taking advantage of this opportunity. This increases the number of intercultural encounters that people experience, even if they do not travel but merely meet people who do. Finally, technology has enabled both increased virtual intercultural interaction as well as face-to-face conversation. The spread of the internet and the world wide web has facilitated a huge number of intercultural interactions that simply could not happen without this technology. In all, we have an unprecedented era in human history regarding intercultural contact.

With increased cross-cultural exchanges, the issues and concerns arising from communication have grown exponentially. Now, not only do diplomatic leaders need to be versed in intercultural interaction, so do countless people in business, education, and the leisure travel industry. Included in this growth in exchange is an increasing number of people with mobility, visual, hearing, and other impairments who travel and/or meet those who do, thus enabling them to participate in intercultural interaction in numbers historically unprecedented. This change adds to the complexity of intercultural communication, in part because many cultures still grapple with such interactions within, and at the same time it adds a dimension that demands even greater skill among the participants in a conversation.

## **DISABILITIES AND DISADVANTAGE**

According to the WHO, around 10% of the global population is disabled in some way, making them the world's largest minority (<http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/facts.shtml>). Furthermore, in nearly every country, people with disabilities are more likely to be undereducated, under or unemployed, and are often considered to be the most disadvantaged people in the community. As a consequence, many people, regardless of ethnic culture or nationality, do not develop a facility for effectively interacting with those we label disabled. From a communication perspective, we might consider this inability to be a type of disability itself. The discomfort and lack of experience that many have when communicating with those who are impaired, creates its own set of problems, ones that often foster insensitivity, cruelty, and discrimination. This is sometimes accidental and sometimes purposeful.

In many places, people often assume that being disabled also means that a person lacks intellectual capacity as well. This is fueled by education systems that often either do not or are inadequate in accommodating varying disabilities, leaving those who are hearing impaired, blind, or wheel chair bound either in special schools, segregated from others, or out of school altogether. Given such circumstances, it is extremely difficult for everyone to develop function and effective communication skills to cross the impairment boundaries. This is slowly changing, but it will be several years before those who are disabled are routinely mainstreamed in education and work environments in all countries. However, because this is happening, it is increasingly possible for a person to be in a position to communicate across the impairment divide, both within and across cultures. As a consequence, it is worth considering how we might best develop the skills to create positive and effective interaction in such situations.

## **COMMUNICATION COMPLEX: A REFRAMING OF SKILL**

Definitions of communication number well over one hundred with some that are highly similar and others that are quite different and even mutually exclusive. For example, some consider communication to be an intentional act, something that we choose to do or not, while others believe that it can be unintentional because all behavior is infused with meaning and thus interpreted as part of the meaning making process. How one defines communication matters greatly if we are considering providing advice for how one should develop communication skills. In recent years, a growing number of communication scholars have begun to view communication as more than a process of information exchange, one where crafting a great message is the centerpiece of skill development. The shift has been to one that focuses on the conversation between people and the dynamics of the interchange between those engaged in a reflexive process of constructing social reality (See *The Coordinated Management of Meaning* in Pearce, 2007).

This body of theory and research alters the conception of skill, it is more than the ability to clearly speak, one must consider how the conversation might unfold and how this dynamic can strengthen or undermine relationships and identities. Thus skill is more about creating good conversation than about great messages. The development

of an approach called Communication Complex builds on this thinking, but also draws on neuroscience research that increasingly demonstrates the physiological defining aspects of interaction, such that it both creates our ability to communicate and simultaneously our communication creates and shapes physiology (Hasson et al, 2012; Cozolino, 2014). While a number of ways have been developed to help us understand the intricacies of communication as a reflexive process, Communication Complex, as a meta theory, draws upon the Coordinated Management of Meaning (CMM) (Pearce, 2007) and Interpersonal Neurobiology (IPNB) (Siegel, 2010) to establish a way of explaining how interaction literally is shaped by and shapes us (Parrish-Sprowl, 2014, 2013, 2012).

Communication Complex offers a practical approach to engaging some key ideas and research in an effort to enable us to more effectively approach our daily interactions, especially when they present intricate difficulties. Communication Complex directs us to consider brain activity and other body experiences in our analysis of communication and as a guide to improved interaction. In addition, it draws on concepts from theories that are predicated on the reflexive nature of conversation that directs us to consider skill in a different way than we traditionally have done. For example, one useful set of terms that we can take from CMM is resources and practices. Basically, to engage in communication we need some resources to construct what we say to each other. These resources include the vocabulary and stories we use to express our self and make meaning with each other.

Practices are the engagement of resources in the act of conversing with each other. For example, sometimes we know what to say (resources) and just how to say it (practices), making our conversation move forward in a seemingly effortless way. Other times, we know what we want to say (resource) but do not know how to say it (practice) which can be frustrating. Everyone has, at various times in their life, not known what to say at a given moment (lack of resources), or wanted to say just the right thing in the right way but could not figure out how to do it (not skilled in the necessary practices) making us feel awkward. This is especially the case at difficult moments, such as an intercultural interaction with someone whose culture is at odds with our own or when meeting a person with an impairment for the first time. Imagine such a situation as a really important job interview, when we must talk with the family of someone who just died, or any situation that demands that we communicate with great skill and care in situations that we do not routinely face or where we are not comfortable.

How we conduct ourselves when talking with each other, especially when there are difficulties, depends, in part, on our orientation to communication. One of the most difficult shifts we need to make regarding our interactions with others; is to consider it as a co-constructing process rather than simply a vehicle to convey a message from one person to another. This is partly the case because most people live in nations, if not cultures, that hold as central, the notion of each of us is a separate individual, rather than as individuals who are systemically interconnected. Making this more complicated, is the pervasiveness of psychological language that suggests that cognition, thoughts, attitudes, beliefs, etc., are developed within the individual mind, not in interpersonal communication, despite a growing body of neuroscience research to the contrary (Cozolino,



2014; Hasson et al. 2012; Siegel, 2012). Indeed, the evidence suggests that identities, including that of being disabled, relationships, families, communities, and cultures are reflexively shaped by, and shaping of, communication.

IPNB aggregates a large amount of neuroscience research, as does Cozolino (2014) indicating that we are not born with a set of resources and practices; we learn them. Primary sources for both are family, other early childhood caregivers, friends, media, and schools. As we learn them, they become patterns of neural firing in our brain, forming something like a map. When someone says something we engage our brain maps to make sense out of it. One of the things that we have learned from research in neuroscience is that we have the ability to constantly develop new brain maps. What this means is that while we have a tendency to get stuck in patterns of thought and action, we are capable of change, if we choose to work at it. Thus each person has the ability to develop and practice new ways of interacting with people that make for better relationships. More importantly, everyone will have this ability for the rest of your life, barring injury or illness.

This has two important implications for intercultural communication and disabilities. First, it is important for people to remember that at any given point in their life, through accident, violence, or disease, they could join the group known as the disabled. We have only modest control of this possibility. However, because our brains can constantly rewire, we can learn to interact in new ways that enable us to continue to have productive and satisfying lives. For example, imagine that a person loses their hearing due to a loud noise or an injury. They are fully capable of developing new ways of listening and responding in conversation; enabling them to effectively function in a world where hearing is expected. In turn, the people in their life are also fully able to develop new ways of listening and responding to them. With the concepts of resources and practices, and a little knowledge of the brain and human interaction (all resources), we can examine how the communication between others and the hearing impaired can evolve into effective, functional skill (the practices).

Secondly, when encountering people from different cultures, with or without impairments, everyone is capable of developing new resources and practices that can overcome the awkwardness and misunderstandings that can arise from such situations. In other words, people can learn or be trained to improve their performance throughout the lifespan. As people develop new insights into how things might be understood in such interactions they can make different choices regarding how to talk into such situations. This fosters improved practices, and, in turn, better and more productive interaction.

For example, simple statements can mean different things, depending on a person's resources. If, when encountering someone with a different background or abilities, saying, "I understand" their situation or how they feel is more complex than people often consider. In one way, to understand is to comprehend an idea or concept. A person can understand what discrimination or stereotypes are and why they are not helpful to bridge the gap in an intercultural interaction. This form of understanding we can associate with left-brain oriented processing, which is to say it relies more on reasoning and language than lived experience. In another way, we can "understand" discrimination in a visceral, emotional way. Someone on the receiving end can literally feel it, leading them to say and do

things in reaction to such talk. Understanding in this sense typically requires individuals to actually experience the receiving end of discrimination. When they do, that person will feel their reaction throughout the entire body. For example, imagine that a Russian who is hearing impaired goes to Germany and is treated badly because the people they encounter think that the Russian is rude when they do not respond because they cannot hear. This could be very upsetting. This type of understanding is quite different than a conceptual understanding, and tends to be more associated with right-brain oriented processing. If people learn (resources) that “understanding”, in communication, can unfold in different ways, then they can make better choices regarding the people they encounter, reducing the number of miscues that can arise. That is not to say that either way is exclusively left or right brain in processing; nothing is, but our way of making meaning in these examples tends to orient more one way than the other.

Imagine, then, if a person with a conceptual understanding of culture, disability, or both, says to the person with an experiential understanding “I understand how you feel”. The person whose resources are developed through lived experience may well be off put, upset, or even angry by the declaration of understanding, while the conceptual person may be perplexed or even react with anger when the other thinks they do not understand. It is easy to see how this simple speech act, honestly put forth by two people in an intercultural conversation, can lead to a really problematic misunderstanding. What might have begun as an encounter meant to be friendly and enjoyable, can sometimes turn out not to be, and may even disintegrate into an ugly, invective filled, conversation. This is an unfortunate turn of events, especially if everyone began the conversation with good intentions.

When an individual has never encountered a person from a particular culture, especially one that is disabled, then they may not have resources to interact that move beyond a conceptual way. For many, encountering people from other cultures is a novel, not routine, experience. In addition, an individual may also have rather limited experience talking with the disabled. They may believe it was wrong to discriminate, but quite honestly, not know enough about how to talk with someone in a wheel chair or who is deaf to even know what ways of communicating might create the conditions for discrimination. Part of the problem with discrimination is that sometimes people do it on purpose, but probably more often it is conveyed unwittingly via the assumptions made about the other person. Once a person begins to develop the resources and practices built from routine interaction with those who are different, their entire understanding may well change.

At first it can feel awkward, leading to an array of negative feelings, including anger, frustration, confusion, and sometimes a deflated sense of spirit. For the person that is at the receiving end of discrimination, unwitting or not, it is an emotional assault on the person that is difficult to describe. This is a new way of understanding (a new resource) that has the potential to impact how one converses with others. However, what we want to avoid, based a communication complex understanding (a set of resources), is to have conversations that can work through the barriers and obstacles present in intercultural interaction, with or without disabilities. This required new resources and practices if conversations are to be functional, helpful, and encouraging.

This can be accomplished if we consider engaging, for example, a third possible way of interpreting the phrase “I understand”; one that is more of a left-right brain integrated orientation, one that encompasses both the conceptual and experiential dimensions of understanding. This understanding includes both a conceptual framing, along with a recognition that experience shapes our neural patterns, such that it alters “understanding” in a way that is fundamental and meaningful, apart from the logical/rational way we might understand it. If a person has not been subjected to discrimination, but at least recognizes and acknowledges that such experience is an important dimension of “understanding” it, then the conversation has the potential to unfold in a very different way, one that both participants can find more satisfying and less awkward.

In a practical sense, developing a set of communication skills (or practices) that facilitates meaning making and understanding from a Communication Complex perspective, despite cultural and/or disability differences among the participants, can lead to a good conversation. Such skills are easy to learn, not difficult to use, but they can make a big difference in how conversations, relationships, and identities are created. It is the case, that it is not only what one says, but also how they say it. When people learn about communication one aspect always included is a recognition that both the verbal and nonverbal aspects of messages exist. However, people do not always extend this into a whole body experience; one that recognizes that the way that our brain processes interaction and how our body reacts is critically important in meaning making. Yet, often people do not consider even simple adjustments to the way they talk, although they would be more effective if they do so.

It is important that people understand that communication is a reflexive process that simultaneously creates brain structure and meaning, and thus recognizing that we are best off when we mutually work to improve the quality of our conversation. Now, consider the intercultural interaction that includes a person with impairment; to frame the complexity of skill required to engage effectively in the encounter. In the following example, imagine a conversation with a person from the USA who is hearing impaired and a person from Russia who is not. Each could do something like the following:

Both the Russian and the US person:

- ◆ Be wary of stereotypes, they are often inaccurate or completely wrong.
- ◆ Recognize that language differences can lead to making meaning in ways that fit a person’s culture, not necessarily in the same ways as the other person’s culture.
- ◆ Spend time listening to the other and not simply speaking. The resources gained will improve practices. Listening is a critical communication skill.

Person from the USA:

- ◆ Getting close enough to the person from Russia so that it is possible to hear.
- ◆ Try to talk in an environment that is not overly noisy.
- ◆ Inform their Russian friend that they are hearing impaired so that he or she can understand why the US person has difficulties that are greater than understanding accents or cultural differences.
- ◆ Repeating what the Russian has said so as to receive affirmation that the meaning is understood as the Russian had hoped it would be.
- ◆ The US person must continue to look at the Russian face so that they can use the visual cues to augment language.

Skills for the Russian Participant:

- ◆ Once they know the person from the US is hearing impaired, they can use some kind of gesture to gain attention, alerting the person that they have something to say.
- ◆ The Russian should then wait until the US hearing-impaired person is ready to attend to what they want to say.
- ◆ Affirm the US person's response, or indicate it is off, since they cannot hear well, the Russian can assist by gently correcting misunderstandings.
- ◆ The Russian should speak in a normal cadence, adjust volume accordingly, because exaggerated speech, both by really slow speed and too much volume, is actually more difficult to understand, not less.
- ◆ Recognize that hearing impairment does not mean intellectually inept. It means that taking in and processing what the Russian said and what the person from the US thinks they heard is a slower process, but not necessarily one that indicates a slow intellect.
- ◆ The Russian can also help by proactively including the US person in a group conversation by giving them the opportunity to participate. Turn to them and give them the opportunity to speak in an otherwise rapid paced conversation.

Communicating well is a challenge that we confront everyday of our lives. Some situations demand more from us than others. Due to an ever growing level of interconnectedness of the global population, it is increasingly difficult to confine our interactions with those who are just like us and to ignore all others. As a consequence, people must develop greater skill to navigate the intercultural environment, whether they travel to it or it arrives at that door. Current levels of immigration in Europe, for example, ensure the need for increased skill in intercultural interaction. In the absence of such education the world can expect increased tension both within and between communities and countries. One need only look at the sectarian strife in the Middle East to understand what can occur if we do not develop a collective facility to productively engage one another.

The treatment of people with disabilities is changing around the world, in some countries more rapidly than others. Although this is creating the conditions for policy makers to reconsider outmoded approaches to education and work opportunities for people with some type of impairment, the movement has been generally slow. As a consequence, people with disabilities are often marginalized. More specifically, as is noted in the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities:

The rights enumerated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in a perfect world, would be enough to protect everyone. But in practice certain groups, such as women, children and refugees have fared far worse than other groups and international conventions are in place to protect and promote the human rights of these groups. Similarly, the 650 million people in the world living with disabilities — about 10 per cent of the world's population—lack the opportunities of the mainstream population (<http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/questions.shtml>).

It is important to recognize that people with disabilities may need varying supports (such as elevators or sign language interpreters), however, they can generally be mainstreamed in schools, worksites, and other public spaces. By doing so, schools create

an environment where people can develop within culture skill as part of their general educational process.

Still, as the example above illustrates, intercultural encounters where disabilities are involved are a more complex undertaking than when either contextual parameter exists without the other. As we move forward in intercultural communication research and teaching, the issues around such encounters that involve people with disabilities should be acknowledged. Communication Complex offers an approach that enables an understanding of the challenges of such an encounter that has more depth and breadth than most traditional communication theories. In addition, there is a substantial amount of research that supports this approach. The example in this article is but one small insight into the possibilities that can be drawn from this theoretical framing. As the world grows increasingly more technologically saturated; along with greater travel, migration, and the interconnectedness of business, intercultural communication will be a larger part of our daily interactions. People need to become knowledgeable and skilled in this area. As they do so, it is important to not leave one of the worlds largest and most discriminated against minorities behind: those with disabilities.

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## МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНАЯ КОММУНИКАЦИЯ И ИНВАЛИДНОСТЬ С ПОЗИЦИЙ КОММУНИКАЦИОННОГО КОМПЛЕКСА

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В контексте межкультурной коммуникации возникают проблемы, которые не столь очевидны в рамках одной культуры. Это обстоятельство значимо в связи с тем, что благодаря путешествиям и новым технологиям все более значительное число иммигрантов, предпринимателей, туристов и т.д. участвуют в подобного рода интеракциях. 10% населения мира составляют инвалиды, которые все в большей степени включаются в обычную жизнь общества и путешествуют в другие страны. Исследования доказывают, что инвалиды часто воспринимаются как маргиналы и подвергаются дискриминации в своей собственной стране. Еще большие сложности возникают при межкультурном общении здоровых людей и инвалидов. Коммуникационный комплекс — метатеоретический подход к коммуникации, объединяющий конститутивное определение коммуникации с ее нейробиологической трактовкой, — предлагает более глубокое и в то же время практико-ориентированное объяснение уровня сложности такого взаимодействия. В статье кратко анализируется данный подход к межкультурной коммуникации, предлагаются перспективы исследований, намечаются практические шаги по учету инвалидности при анализе либо отработке соответствующих коммуникативных навыков.

**Ключевые слова:** межкультурная коммуникация, межкультурная интеракция, коммуникационный комплекс, метатеоретический подход.

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# FACEWORK IN NON-FACE-THREATENING EMAILS BY NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKERS

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The aim of this research is to investigate the speech act of assignment submission and presence of facework in submission emails sent to faculty members by native and nonnative English speaking graduate students. Brown and Levinson's politeness theory (1987) and Spencer-Oatey's (2002, 2008) rapport management framework were utilized to analyze the emails. The corpus consisted of 105 emails from 40 NES and NNES students. Drawing on speech event analysis approach (Merrison, Wilson, Davies, & Haugh, 2012), we analyze both submission head act as well as optional elements like openings, small talk and closings in an email. Our exploratory study revealed that, contrary to the argument that CMC is a lean medium (Duthler, 2006) in which it is difficult to achieve interpersonal communication, through the employment of opening, small talk and closing strategies, students attended to relational goals in their email communication.

**Key words:** Submission email, politeness, rapport management, computer-mediated communication.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Computer-mediated communication (CMC) has opened new venues for student-faculty communication. Specifically, emails have been utilized for out of class communication between professors and students. However, because emails similar to other forms of asynchronous CMC lack contextual cues and immediate feedback typical of face-to-face communication or synchronous CMC, it is more difficult for senders to ascertain what kinds of impression their messages exert on the recipient(s). Fortunately, CMC offers affordances such as time to reflect and plan what to say, how to say, and manipulate linguistic and non-linguistic cues to optimize self-presentation. Linguistic cues such as openings, small talk, and closings can be strategically implemented with more forethought and less cognitive load in email communication than synchronous or face-to-face communication (Bou-Franch, 2006; Eslami, 2013; Herring, 1996). Previous research on politeness in email communication between students and faculty has mainly focused on face threatening speech acts such as requests and apologies. However, students also frequently use emails to submit their assignments and papers to faculty members. It is, therefore, insightful to examine if and to what extent facework is used in submission emails, which are basically a response to faculty members' request to submit assignments/papers and thus are not face-threatening speech acts as proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). Thus, the goal of this exploratory study is to examine how students actively manage facework with faculty members when submitting their assignments through emails. Submission emails are email messages that attach assignments to the emails sent to the faculty members, and due to the absence of face-threaten-

ing speech act(s) (i.e., students are responding to requests from professors, not asking professors to help them), students are not required to employ facework and politeness strategies (e. g., opening and closing).

According to Androutsopoulous (2006), prior research on email communication or in the field of CMC focused on language use but ignored the dynamic between technological, social and contextual factors that shape the CMC medium. The assumption was that CMC offers a level-playing field for exchange of information and minimizes the power distance between speakers, leading to diversity and an egalitarian-oriented communication style. In other words, CMC mainly serve the purpose of information exchange than interpersonal communication (Kiesler & Sproull, 1992).

However, contradictory research results have challenged the notion that CMC provides an egalitarian playing grounds (Bloch, 2002; Biesenbach-Lucas, 2007)). For example, in a study of address forms in initiating and follow-up emails between students and faculty, Bou-Franch (2011) found follow-up emails sent down the institutional hierarchy contained less address formulas (e. g., opening and closing). In fact, Herring (2003) argued existent power relations in the real world usually transfer to the Internet. Also, recent research demonstrates interpersonal features such as openings and closings exert considerable influence in CMC (Bou-Franch, 2011; Duthier, 2006; Eslami, 2013; Herring, 2007; Walvogel, 2007). Therefore, the current research focus on CMC has shifted to user-related approaches and interpersonal features of CMC (Herring, 2007).

Drawing on the findings of politeness research, this paper seeks to build a model for analyzing a 'non-face-threatening' speech act (submission emails), and illustrate that facework can account for the use of linguistic strategies that maintain a harmonious relationship between the interlocutors. The following is the organization of this paper. In section two we provide a detailed literature review of the theoretical framework: politeness theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987) and rapport management framework (Spencer-Oatey, 2002; 2008) as well as empirical studies on student-faculty email communication and on openings, small talk and closings. The methodology and analysis procedure are presented in the third section. Following the method section, we present results and discussion. Finally in section five we present conclusion and limitation of the study.

## II. POLITENESS THEORY

Email communication has become a primary mode of communication between students and their professors. Because the participants do not benefit from immediate feedback present in face-to-face communication, all understanding must be achieved through linguistic exchanges. Additionally, in institutional context of academia constructing and negotiating social identities is accomplished mainly through work related communication. As a result, both task oriented and social interaction in the academic context has to be intertwined with politeness strategies that allow for a balance of transactional and relational work. Accordingly, linguistic politeness is an important and essential element of student-faculty interactions in academic settings. Nevertheless, there is a scarcity of research on the politeness manifestation in computer-mediated task oriented interactions especially in relation to non-face-threatening speech functions (e.g., submitting assignments).



During the course of institutional interactions the interactants' face (Goffman, 1967) is often threatened (Darics, 2010). In order to achieve both transactional and relational goals and provide supporting environments, the face-threatening acts have to be mitigated by different types of face work. Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory has been used as the politeness framework for most of the CMC studies. In their groundbreaking work on linguistic politeness, Brown and Levinson (1987) proposed that people's concern on face influenced their use of politeness strategies. Harrison (2000) for example, applied Brown and Levinson's framework to email discourse to identify politeness strategies. Vinagre (2008) in her study of politeness strategies on collaborative emails found that positive politeness strategies constituted the majority of politeness strategies and concluded that politeness was subordinated to clarity in these email communications. However, Brown and Levinson's politeness theory has been criticized because it considers politeness as face-threatening act (FTA) mitigation and does not consider the use of politeness in situations that are not face-threatening. Furthermore, the interactional perspective of politeness is ignored and the emphasis is on the speaker's intentions (Locher & Watts, 2005).

In this model, face is consisted of two interrelated aspects, negative face and positive face. Negative face can be conceptualized as the desire for privacy and a focus on deference, whereas positive face is a person's want of inclusion and solidarity. For example, addressing a professor with title and last name indicates the distance between student and faculty. On the other hand, first name address signifies both the student and professor are in an academic fraternity. Moreover, politeness strategies are coupled with different types of speech acts such as requests and apologies. Three factors: power, social distance and politeness influenced variations in the employment of politeness strategies. The politeness strategies are used to mitigate the force of face-threatening acts, that is, actions that violate people's want of privacy or freedom of action. In other words, for Brown and Levinson, politeness is essentially the use of various linguistic strategies to soften the force of a FTA.

Although influential, Brown and Levinson's (1987) model has come under attacks by other linguists. Matsumoto (1988) and Gu (1990) argued that in collectivistic cultures such as Japan and China, face is a collective construct and thus Brown and Levinson's (1987) emphasis on individual freedom and autonomy did not address the needs of the group.

Spencer-Oatey (2002, 2008) proposed a modified framework for conceptualization of face and rapport in light of scholars' challenges on Brown and Levinson's (1987) model. Spencer-Oatey (2002, 2008), through examination of face sensitive incidents, delineated a rapport management model. This model entailed three interconnected components: the management of face, the management of sociality rights and obligations and the management of interactional goals.

According to Spencer-Oatey (2002, 2008), face management is concerned with how people actively manage face sensitivities during interaction. On the other hand, the management of sociality rights and obligations involves the management of social expectations. Sociality rights are people's behavioral expectations and if these expectations

are not met, interpersonal rapport will be affected. Spencer-Oatey (2002, 2008) delineated two fundamental components of sociality rights: equity and association.

Equity is the fundamental belief for a person's entitlement to personal considerations from others so that other people do not mistreat us or impose upon us. There are two components under equity (Spencer-Oatey, 2002, 2008): the notion of cost-benefit and the related issue of autonomy-imposition. Association, on the contrary, is a person's belief for social involvement with others in keeping with the types of relationship that we have with them. According to Spencer-Oatey, association rights connect with interactional involvement-detachment and affective involvement-detachment. Interactional involvement is the extent to which we feel comfortable for appropriate amounts of social chitchat or small talk with others. Affective involvement, in contrast, is our shared concern with other's feelings and interest.

Finally, people often have specific agendas when they interact with others, which Spencer-Oatey (2002, 2008) referred to as interactional goals. Interactional goals can be relational as well as transactional. For instance, when submitting an assignment through email attachment, students are merely responding to the professor's request, thus fulfilling a transactional goal. However, by using relational language such as opening, closing and small talk, students may enhance rapport with the professor and thus achieve a relational goal in student-faculty communication.

In summary, this section provided the theoretical underpinning of politeness theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987) and rapport management framework (Spencer-Oatey, 2002, 2008). These two theoretical models provide a framework for analyzing students' submission email and reveal how interactional goals manage both transactional and relational aspects of email communication

### **Pragmatics of student-faculty email communication**

Advances in information and communication technology have led to increased use of online communication, including email. Email has been widely adopted for both personal and institutional communication because of its high transmission speed (Crystal, 2001). As email lacks paralinguistic cues present in face-to-face or synchronous communication (e.g., chat), an email sender needs to exercise more caution in constructing appropriate messages, especially in a high power difference situation, such as student-faculty communication (Hartford & Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Biesenbach-Lucas, 2007). To effectively communicate with faculty members, students need to have sufficient pragmatic competence, awareness of politeness conventions and an understanding of email etiquette (Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2011). They also may need more time to plan and compose emails in which various face-threatening acts may be committed (Chen, 2006; Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2011). Furthermore, they have to make sociopragmatic choices regarding forms of address, degree of formality and directness, closings, presence and amount of mitigation and the types of modification strategies (Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2011). This means they must assess the relationship with professors and the degree of imposition of their requests in relation to rights and obligations of the parties involved (Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2011).

Comparative studies have found that, in general, even non-native English speaking students with high English language proficiency may lack appropriate pragmalinguistic ability to sufficiently mitigate their email requests and often resort to nonacademic reasons (e.g. working full time), which are not appropriate in academic contexts (Biesenbach-Lucas, 2007; Chalak, Eslami & Eslami-Rasekh, 2010; Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2011; Felix-Bradsdefer, 2012; Hartford & Bardovi-Harlig, 1996). Studies (e.g., Jessmer & Anderson, 2001) have shown that polite and grammatical email messages were evaluated most positively by the recipients. In addition to the head act, most email messages include various other components such as greetings, closings, and small talk, the existence of which can influence the tone and politeness level of the message. Several studies have examined the opening and closing sequences of emails to determine the factors that influence the choice of these pragmatic strategies and how the choices affect the relational tone of the email message.

### **Openings**

A typical e-mail message usually contains three distinguishable components: a) opening, b) body of the message, and c) closing. Several studies have revealed how interactants in email use apologies, indirectness, inclusive forms and greetings and closing in order to create a good work climate (Hossjer, 2013; Waldvogel, 2007). A number of studies have investigated opening strategies in authentic emails in workplace and academic settings (Bjorge, 2007, Bou-Franch, 2006; Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2011; Eslami, 2013; Gains, 1999; Gimenez, 2001, 2006; Formentelli, 2009; Lorenzo-Dus & Bou-Franch, 2013; Waldvogel, 2007).

Overall, the examination of opening sequences in email communication has revealed differences based on cultural differences, message sequence (initiating or follow-up email) and language proficiency of the students. The choice of opening moves depends not only on the context but also on the producer's cultural and social background. The relationship between the interlocutors also plays a very important role in the choice of pragmatic strategies. Bou-Franch's (2011) study showed that in e-mail conversation between students and lecturers and between lecturers in Peninsular Spanish, openings and closings were prevalent, especially in unequal relationship emails (students-lecturers). Bjorge (2007) study revealed that power differences and asymmetry in relationships are particularly stressed in cultures with a high power-distance index (Hofstede, 2001). The results of the study verified that students with high power distance culture origins would employ more formal opening strategies than those from low power distance ones. Her data showed that students from high power distance cultures tended to use more formal forms, such as "Dear Professor/Sir/Madam/Teacher + professor's first and last name". On the other hand, students whose countries of origin were categorized as low power distance cultures favored informal greetings like "Dear + professor's first name", "Hi/Hello + professor's first name" or even had no openings.

Eslami's (2013) comparative study of Iranian and American graduate students' email opening strategies also corroborated the influence of cultural factors on strategy use. She investigated 300 requestive emails addressed to one professor. Results indicated both groups adopted openings in their emails. However, the number of opening moves was

not only higher in the Iranian students' emails but also lengthier. Moreover, Iranian students used more small talk in their opening sequence indicating a more relational communication style. Similar findings are reported by Merrison et al. (2012) and Lorenzo-Dus and Bou-Franch (2010) studies on British and Australian and British and Spanish students' email messages.

### Small Talk

Opening strategies are not the only elements available for tailoring messages to individual email recipient. Small talk, defined as a non-task oriented conversation about neutral topics, can function as a mitigator to soften face threats and provide an initial time interval that allows interlocutors to size each other up and establish an interactional style and some degree of mutual trust and rapport. (Bickmore & Cassell, 1999). Pullin (2010) conducted a study that investigated the function of small talk and how *English as a lingua franca* speaker utilized this important tool to manage rapport with colleagues and clients. She found that small talk served the function of creating a relaxed atmosphere before the beginning of serious talk (meeting) and thus nurtured rapport. In addition, as the boss joined the banter, small talk helped mitigate power and nurture solidarity.

In addition, Hossjer (2013) introduced two functions of small talk in a study of workplace email communication. She classified small talk as 1) a face-boosting act (FBA), which mostly consists of people discussing their daily lives or describing annoyances in their work for establishment of a generally positive attitude in a situation or 2) a tool that mitigates FTA such as explanations for why something has not been done. In a corpus of 3200 emails spanning three years, she found both types of small talk. For example, in the last paragraph of an email explaining the delay of an article, the writer used a variety of strategies such as well-wishing, praise, and joke to downgrade the fact that he committed a FTA of late submission of an article for publication

### Closings

According to Waldvogel (2007) and Eslami (2013), closings in emails consist of three elements: pre-closing phatic comments like "Have a nice day"; farewell formula and; any name signoff. In addition, "thanks" is considered as a closing strategy when it comes with or without the writer's name. Studies on closing strategies found that these three moves (pre-closing, farewell, self-identification) were not always present in emails examined and thus stylistic variation existed. One factor that conditions these variations is cultural differences. Borge (2007) revealed that, consistent with opening strategies, students from more authoritative cultures (e.g., Iran, China, Jordan) tended to opt for formal alternative in their email closings than students from egalitarian cultures (e.g., U.S., Britain). Similarly, Larina (2015) has addressed culture-specific communicative styles and defines it as a "systematic and regular use of typical strategies" (p. 197). She connects the communication styles of Russian vs British speakers to *power distance*, which is higher in Russian communication than in English communication (Larina, 2005).

Additionally, Bou-Franch (2006) also found great variation in the closing strategies in her email corpus. All 30 emails contained closings, of which thanking and signature were most prevalent. Leave-taking (e.g., "see you in class on Monday"), a subcompo-

ment of pre-closing, also was found in the emails. Lorenzo-Dus and Bou-Franch's (2013) comparison between Peninsular Spanish (PS) and British English (BE) emails also evidenced different stylistic conventions for closings. In the PS data, thanking, leave-taking (e.g. "See you soon") and signature comprised almost ninety percent of all closing moves whereas the most two frequently used moves in BE data were signature and thanking. Eslami (2013) study compared the email closings of native English speaking (NES) American students and non-native English speaking (NNES) Iranian students. The findings revealed differences in the closing strategies the two groups used. Iranian NNES students oriented towards a more formal style of communication by employing more thanking, apologizing, farewell and name sign-off in their closing sequences. Also, compared to American NES students, the Iranian students' closing sequence was denser, consisting of more words and moves (11.1 words and 3.9 moves in Iranian closing sequence compared to 4.1 words and 2.1 moves in American closing sequence).

In summary, a review of relevant studies on relational language use in emails indicated that students do actively utilize rapport management strategies by a combination of different opening, small talk and closing moves. However, as previously indicated, context internal and context external factors affect the type and amount of facework students employ in their email messages. Therefore, the focus of this study is to investigate to what extent, and how, facework is attended to in non-face-threatening emails (i.e., submission emails). Furthermore, the amount and type of facework used by the two groups of NES and NNES students in their email communications with faculty is examined to understand the similarities and differences between the two groups. The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. Do NES and NNES students attend to relational aspect of communication in their assignment submission emails?
2. Are there differences in the patterns of facework strategies in NES and NNES students' assignment submission emails?
3. What types of openings, small talk and closings do NES and NNES students use in their assignment submission emails?

### **III. METHODOLOGY**

Drawing on politeness theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987) and rapport management framework (Spencer-Oatey, 2002, 2008), we examine different strategies that NES and NNES students adopt to realize their submission head act and the amount and type of opening, small talk and closing strategies in their email messages. Participants, data collection and analysis procedure will be provided in the following subsections.

#### **Email data and Participants**

The corpus consisted of 105 emails (49 NES messages, 56 NNES messages) from 40 students (20 NES, 20 NNES students) sent to a faculty member over a course of several semesters. To comply with the university's Institutional Review Board requirements, personal information related to the participants will stay confidential and pseudonyms are used. The professor to whom these email messages were sent is a female faculty member. She encourages communication with emails through inclusion of her email

address on her course syllabi. She maintains a formal style of communication with her students, and does not encourage students to address her on a first name basis. Similarly, the institutional culture of the university, does not encourage the use of first name for addressing faculty members and the norm for students is to use title plus last name to address faculty members.

The senders of emails are NES and NNES graduate students pursuing advanced degrees at a large Mid-western university. Only the email messages that were sent to the faculty member with the main purpose of submitting assignments/papers were used for this study. The NNES graduate students were mainly from Asian countries (Japan, Korea, Taiwan, China, Iran and Saudi Arabia) pursuing their master's and doctorate degree at the university. In line with the NNES graduate students, the NES students were also master and doctoral students at the same university.

### Data Analysis Procedure

To analyze the data, first the head act and other optional moves in the email message were identified. In addition to the main message (head act), email messages may include some optional components such as openings, small talk, and closings. The analysis consisted of: a) identifying emails that were mainly sent to submit assignments (submission emails), b) identification and analysis of submission head act, c) identification and analysis of other optional components (openings, small talk, and closings).

The analysis and classification of the different moves in the email messages were based on previous studies on email communication (e.g., Bou-Franch, 2006; Eslami, 2013). Following the identification and classification of different moves, descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data.

### Findings Opening Moves

Openings are considered optional elements in the email communication and can include greeting, self-identification and small talk. Examples for each of the move from the data are shown in table 1 below.

Table 1

Moves in opening sequence

Greeting	Dear Dr. Henson, Dr. Henson, Hello Dr. Henson
Self-identification	I am Junwook Yu
Small talk	I hope you are having a nice week!

We further analyzed the frequency and occurrence of different kinds of moves within the opening sequence. Results are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2

Percentages of opening moves in NES and NNES data

Types of Opening Moves	NES	NNES
Greeting	49 (78%)	55 (72%)
Self-Identification	1 (2%)	4 (5%)
Small Talk	13 (20%)	18 (23%)
Total	56 (100%)	77 (100%)

As table 2 indicates, greeting was the most common move in the opening sequence. Specifically, both NES and NNES groups utilized nearly two-thirds of greetings in their opening sequence. While some small talk was employed, we can see that both groups of students seldom used self-identification in their openings. It may be that the familiarity between the professor and students obviated the use of name identification in the opening sequence.

Chi-square test was used to examine if difference between the groups was significant statistically. The statistical test revealed NES and NNES students' use of opening strategies were not statistically different. However, although statistically there was no difference in the two group's employment of opening strategies, closer examination revealed qualitative difference in NES students' and their counterparts' opening strategies. Specifically, one third of NES greetings were realized using positive politeness strategies that indicated informality and solidarity (e.g., *Hi, Dr. Henson*). On the other hand, over two thirds of openings in NNES data employed pragmatic expressions indicating deference and independence (e. g., *Dear Dr. Henson*). This result corroborated previous research's claim (Bjorge, 2007; Bou-Franch, 2006, 2011; Chen, 2006) that NNES students observed the power difference between the sender and the recipient (i.e., professor, instructor).

In addition to greeting, NES and NNES students employed similar amounts of small talk in their opening sequences. A closer examination of the contents following Hossjer's (2013) classification revealed that only face-boosting small talk was used. This was not unexpected because students were only submitting their assignments. Because we excluded those emails containing a request in addition to assignment submission, these emails could be categorized as containing no FTA and thus the existence of small talk only suggests students' rapport management move. A content analysis revealed that similar to opening strategies, there were also qualitative differences in small talks. Whereas NES students' small talk emphasized their effort and responsibility of the submitted assignment, the NNES students orientated to the professor's kindness in instruction and caring for students. Examples of NES and NNES students' small talk are presented below.

**Example 1**

Small talk from NESS' email message

I'm excited about some of the sources that I found

**Example 2**

Small talk from NNESS' email message

So glad to cooperate with you for my first semester. I have learnt a lot from you, classmates, books and papers~!!! Thank you so much for being so patient!

However, other small talks are more ritualistic, generally orientating to the well-being of the professor (e.g., *Hope you are doing fine; Hope all is well with you*). In contrast to other moves in the opening sequence, both groups of students tried to convey a positive politeness orientation. This result was in line with previous research (Bou-Franch, 2006, 2011; Eslami, 2013).

### Submission head act strategies

The head act structures used to submit the assignments/papers (submission head acts) were analyzed following variations in syntactic structures. We present different types of submission head acts in Table 3.

Table 3

**Syntactic structures of the submission head act**

Syntactic Structure	Examples
Please plus a verb phrase	Please check the attachment for table of specification.
Attach plus a verb phrase	Attached is the annotated bibliography for class.
Pronominal plus a verb phrase	My bibliography is attached.
Adverbial plus a verb phrase	Here is my evaluation from Chapters 18 and 19 discussion.
Demonstrative plus a verb phrase	This is my assignment

In line with opening sequence, we further calculated the frequency and percentages of different types of submission head acts found in NES and NNES email messages. Table 4 presents data of these calculations.

Table 4

**Submission head act by group**

	NES Students	NNES Students
Please + VP	8 (15%)	4 (7%)
Attached + VP	16 (30%)	25 (46%)
Adverbial +VP	23 (43%)	8 (15%)
Subjective + VP	4 (7%)	9 (17%)
Possessive + VP	3 (5%)	1 (2%)
Demonstrative +VP	0 (0%)	6 (11%)
Question	0 (0%)	1 (2%)
Total	54	54

Table 4 indicates that NES and NNES students employed different submission strategies. While nearly half of NES students employed the adverbial +VP strategy (e.g., *here are the evaluations for my group members*, 43%), NNES students mostly used attachment strategy (e.g., *attached is my annotated bibliography*, 46%). However, the NES group also preferred attachment strategy as the percentage was the second most prominent from the data. We ran chi-square test to determine if differences between NES and NNES group were statistically meaningful. The statistical test revealed that NNES group's use of submission strategies did not differ significantly from NES group's usage ( $df = 3$ ,  $\chi^2_{crit} = 7.81$ ,  $\chi^2_{obs} = 5.1$ ,  $p < .05$ ). However, although statistically similar, we found NNES group used more and varied types of submission strategies, two of which (demonstrative and question) were not found in the NES data. Despite these two additional strategies, the data indicated that both groups' submission strategies were more similar than different. Both employed ritualistic structures such as attachment and adverbial strategies for submitting their assignments. Interestingly, there were instances of the politeness marker *please* in the head act. Because these emails are transactional in nature, students are not required to mitigate the head act. Therefore the existence of please strategies may have suggested students' attention to relational aspect of communication.



### Closing Moves

Closing sequences contained up to four different moves: thanking, phatic comment, farewell and name sign-off. Table 5 present lists of moves in the closing sequence.

Table 5

Moves in closing sequence

Thanking	Thank you, thanks
Phatic Comment	Have a good weekend
Farwell	Best, with regards
Name sign-off	Emma

We further analyzed the frequency and percentages of types of moves found in closing sequences of these email messages. Results are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6

Percentages of closing moves in NES and NNES data

Types of Opening Moves	NES	NNES
Thanking	23 (20%)	38 (22%)
Phatic Comment	34 (29%)	50 (29%)
Farewell	10 (9%)	37 (21%)
Name Sign-off	50 (42%)	49 (28%)
Total	117	174

Table 6 indicates that although NES and NNES employed similar opening moves, both groups diverged in the use of closing strategies. Whereas NNES students employed a combined 50% of phatic comment and farewell strategies in their closing sequences, phatic comment is the most prominent move identified in the NESs' closing sequences. The NNES students' more frequent use of all types of moves than NES students corresponded with previous research showing that in comparison to NESs, NNES students have a tendency to use more interpersonal moves (Bou-Franch, 2011; Chen, 2006; Eslami, 2013) in their email communication.

Chi-square test indicated statistically significant differences in NES and NNES students' closing strategies ( $df = 2, \chi^2_{crit} = 5.99, \chi^2_{obs} = 11.7, p < .05$ ). A closer look at the data revealed that compared to NNES students; NES students barely used the farewell move for closing. This result was in line with Eslami (2013), which documented NESs' lack of use for farewell move. However, this may only reflect a stylistic difference because NES and NNES students used similar amounts of thanking moves. Bou-Franch (2006) argued that the thanking move indicated an expression of deference through the use of negative politeness strategy showing recognition of indebtedness to the receiver. The last closing move, name sign-off, was used less frequently in emails sent by NNES students than by NES students (42% vs. 28%).

### Orientation of solidarity and deference

As Bou-Franch (2006) and Eslami (2013) indicated, email senders express their orientations toward deference or solidarity by using different types of opening and closing strategies. Waldvogel (2007) also indicated openings and closings reflected the de-

gree of politeness due to their orientation to the email recipients' face needs. Following previous studies (Bjorge, 2007; Eslami, 2013), informal, direct moves such as “*Hi*” are considered as expressions of familiarity and solidarity, thus indicating positive politeness moves. On the other hand, formal, indirect moves like “*Dear Dr. LN*” or “*Best regards*” indicate deference and are considered as negative politeness strategies (Bou-Franch, 2006, 2011; Brown & Levinson, 1987; Waldvogel, 2007). We examined the distributions of these strategies in this study. Table 7 presents distributions of positive and negative politeness strategies.

Table 7

**Positive and negative politeness strategies in greeting and farewell moves**

		NES	NNES
<b>Opening</b>	Positive Politeness	89.8%	23.6%
	Negative Politeness	10.2%	76.4%
<b>Closing</b>	Positive Politeness	30.2%	34.5%
	Negative Politeness	69.8%	65.5%

As indicated in table 4 above, NES students overwhelmingly employed positive politeness strategies (89.8%) in their email openings compared to NNES students (23.6%). NNES students employed formal greetings indicating deference and independence (e.g., *Dear Dr. Henson*, 76.4%), whereas only a small fraction of formal greetings appeared in NES data (10.2%). As Bou-Franch (2006) and Eslami (2013) showed, using formal greetings with recipients' LN puts emphasis on deference and distance in the institutional hierarchy.

However, while a divergent pattern existed for greetings in NES and NNES students' email messages, both groups orientated toward formal farewell moves (NES, 69.8%, NNES, 65.5%). NNES students used variants (such as *best regard*, *respectfully*, *sincerely*, *all the best*) whereas variants used by NES students include *sincerely* and *best*. The farewell move pattern found in the data is a reflection of students' understanding of roles and obligations in the institution (Harford & Bardovi-Harlig, 1996) and demonstrated that existing unequal power relationship was transferred from the physical world to the virtual world (Herring, 2007). Therefore, in contrast to the claim that CMC provides an egalitarian communication medium, email interaction in the institutional setting still preserves the general formal manner of communication as in face-to-face meetings. Our findings show social and cultural expectations extant in the context which email communication happens still exert influence on its outcome.

### **Rapport Management Strategies**

In the rapport management framework, four rapport orientations were identified: rapport enhancement orientation, rapport maintenance orientation, rapport neglect orientation and rapport challenge orientation. Because in submitting assignments through email, students are essentially responding to a professor's requests, a sentence such as *this is my assignment* in a bare email would suffice for this goal. However, as previous sections indicated, both NES and NNES students actively used interpersonal features (e.g., opening, small talk, closing) in their emails. These results suggested both groups of stu-

dents held a rapport enhancement orientation, which Spencer-Oatey (2008) explained as the motivation to enhance the harmony of the relationship. In terms of face, students were employing these optional elements in an email to attend to the face needs of the faculty recipient. However, NES and NNES students diverged in the way they claimed sociality rights with the professor. Specifically, by using negative politeness strategies in opening and closing sequences, NNES students indicated their awareness of institutional hierarchy (Hartford & Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Eslami, 2013; Merrison et al., 2012) and used a more deferential politeness style (Chen, 2006; Merrison et al., 2012). On the other hand, the NES group orientated toward affective involvement with the use of positive politeness strategies. However, both groups held the same interactional goal, which is to enhance rapport with the faculty recipient as students typically rely on faculty members for a variety of “services” in institutional encounters (Biesenbach-Lucas, 2007; Merrison et al., 2012).

## **V. CONCLUDING REMARKS**

This study provided taxonomy for analyzing students’ submission emails. As far as we know, this is the first study that has addressed submission emails, which are frequently used by students to send their assignments or papers to their faculty members. To summarize, our exploratory study of NESs’ and NNESs’ assignment submission emails revealed that, contrary to the argument that CMC is a lean medium (Duthler, 2006) in which it is difficult to achieve interpersonal communication, through the employment of opening, small talk and closing strategies, students attended to relational goals in their email communication. Whereas in face-to-face communication, students may just hand in their assignments without the need for any relational work, in online communication, even when there is no face-threat involved in the communication event, and students are responding to the faculty members’ course related requests, they still attend to facework and relational communication.

As submitted by other researchers (e.g., Eslami, 2005; Bayraktaroglu, 1991), there are two types of acts affecting face value. The first one as suggested by Brown and Levinson (1987), are face threatening acts. The second one is face-enhancing acts. The face-enhancing acts are acts that satisfy the face wants of the addressee and can include both positive and negative politeness strategies (Eslami, 2005). It is our claim, that the speech acts that were used by students to submit their assignments electronically are all face-enhancing act since they are all optional acts without which the illocutionary force of submission can be realized.

However, NES and NNES students’ differed in their conceptualizations of student-mentor relationship. Whereas NNES students emphasized more deference in opening and closing strategies, the NES students orientated more toward solidarity with professors. Ultimately their goal is to maintain harmony in ongoing mentoring relationship. The findings have implications for digital communication in general and the importance of relational work in a bare communication medium with mainly transactional communication intentions.

More research is needed to investigate gender differences in the realization of facework in email communication. We recommend that further researchers collect emails

from different groups of students sent to different faculty members of different genders or ranks to compare how students manage rapport. It would also be beneficial to conduct other studies with students from more diverse backgrounds and in different institutional culture to substantiate the findings of this study.

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## **СТРАТЕГИИ ВЕЖЛИВОСТИ В ЭЛЕКТРОННЫХ ПИСЬМАХ СТУДЕНТОВ**

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Цель настоящей работы — изучение с позиций теории вежливости электронных писем англоязычных и неанглоязычных студентов магистратуры, отправляющих задания своим преподавателям, и выявление различий в стратегиях вежливости в данном речевом акте. Теоретическую основу исследования составили теория вежливости Браун и Левинсона (1987) и теория достижения взаимопонимания (Spencer-Oatey 2002, 2008). Материалом исследования послужили 105 писем сорока англоязычных и неанглоязычных студентов. Опираясь на метод анализа речевых актов (Merrison, Wilson, Davies, & Naugh, 2012), мы рассматривали как основной речевой акт подачи задания, так и вспомогательные элементы письма — вступление, так называемый small talk и завершающие фразы. Наше исследование показало, что, несмотря на представление о том, что компьютерные технологии ограничивают возможности межличностного общения (Duthler 2006), помимо основного речевого акта, студенты широко использовали вспомогательные структурные элементы письма для передачи межличностных отношений.

**Ключевые слова:** электронное сообщение категория вежливости, достижение взаимопонимания, компьютерная коммуникация.

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# APOLOGIES AND THANKS IN FRENCH AND JAPANESE PERSONAL EMAILS: A COMPARISON OF POLITENESS PRACTICES

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This article examines the ways in which politeness is used in French and Japanese personal emails (i.e. from one person to another). The data for the study consist of 411 emails from both communities and regrouped by criteria such as the correspondents' gender, age and relationship (close vs distant; hierarchical vs equal). Two widely studied acts, very present in the French and Japanese data, namely thanking and apologising, are analysed.

First of all, the notion of politeness is examined as it is understood in French and Japanese cultures, followed by a discussion of the positioning adopted by the various established approaches to this notion. This leads us to reconsider the concept of face as it is understood in Europe and Asia, the notion of discernment (Ide) and the theory of the territory of information (Kamio), as well as to re-examine the approach of politeness in the light of recent research findings. Following this overview, the paper proposes a framework where a distinction between politeness and civility is advocated. In this perspective, the means used to express politeness (*politeness* in its broader meaning) are based on personal choices: either due to politeness (in a specific meaning) or according to social obligations ascribable to civility. More specifically, politeness (in its specific meaning) in one side is linked to personal choice. In French for instance, this can result from language used: formal language vs common language (*convier* vs *inviter*); verbal choices (conditional verbs instead of indicative tenses: *je voudrais* vs *je veux*); syntax (inversion of the subject or not in questions), etc. In Japanese, politeness can be detected through the choice to use of the suffix *desu* (*kawaii desu* (*it is cute*)) when neutral or common language could be suitable (*kawaii* (*it is cute*)).

In the other side, civility refers to the obligation to respect social norms. In French, the speaker may have to use the pronoun of address *vous* (vs *tu*) as required by his and the hearer position, status, rank, etc. while his Japanese counterpart may have to use forms of humility or deference.

The two visions embrace the Western and Asian conception of politeness: they complement each other.

Furthermore, the impact of electronic devices on the evolution of writing practices is considered, with particular regard to the function of politeness discursive configurations such as apologies and thanks, and compared to another genre like letters. Thus the analysis of the writing styles shows the kind of patterns of linguistic behaviour chosen by cyberwriters of each language and culture.

Finally, the results of the analysis show that attention to the addressee leads to the use of apologies in Japanese where in French, attention to the speaker/writer leads to the use of thanks. In addition, some expressions seem to be used only in certain relationships.

**Key words:** Politeness, Civility, Apologies, Thanks, Japanese, French, Emails.

## INTRODUCTION

As in face-to-face situations, authors of personal electronic messages (from one individual to another) use all kinds of ritual and politeness formulas to open or close contact (opening and closing greetings). Such expressions are to be found in various places in email messages — unlike on internet forums or chats — whatever the profile of the writers, and whatever the nature of the emails.

It is often said that polite behaviour is widespread in Japan compared to other countries. It is also said that Japan is a society based on a collective orientation while France

is seen as a society based on an individual orientation. But, when confronted with social reality through empirical data, do these assumptions hold? In order to confirm or contradict these claims, we will, in this paper, try to answer the following questions: does polite linguistic behaviour in French and Japanese e-mails<sup>1</sup> enact comparable strategies? Which linguistic patterns are chosen by cyberwriters of each language and culture and how do they compare? Which genres do they refer to? For instance, would the letter or the conversation be the most relevant source?

In order to answer some of these questions and explore the issues they raise, two widely studied speech acts will be analysed, namely thanking and apologising (cf. in particular for Japanese Coulmas 1981; Kumatoridani 1999; Miyake 2002; and for French: Kerbrat-Orecchioni 1990; 1992; 1994; 2001a and b), as these are very present in the French and Japanese data. This is also the case for speech acts such as salutations, requests about health, project, auto-presentation, seasonal greetings, etc. that have already been studied (cf. Claudel 2012a; 2012b; 2014).

After a presentation of the theoretical framework adopted here and a description of the data, our paper will explore the way thanks and apologies are used in personal electronic messages in French and Japanese. It will result in a linguistic-discursive analysis of some configurations used to achieve both speech acts.

## **1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

In the field of human and social sciences, politeness is now a well-established research domain, as shown by the numerous studies dedicated to the subject. We will briefly review the mainstream approaches in Europe and Asia before presenting our own view.

### **1.1. Positions adopted in Europe and Asia**

The most widespread theories of politeness from the Anglo-Saxon and Japanese worlds show various attempts by researchers such as Lakoff, Leech, or Brown and Levinson on the one hand, and Ide and Kamio on the other, to develop their own theories with relatively little dialogue with one another. Alongside Brown and Levinson's general model of politeness, less comprehensive theories have been built based on more specific categories, such as the principle of cooperation Grice (Lakoff, Leech), discernment (Ide), the concept of face (Mao, Leech), etc.

#### **1.1.1. Face theory**

In the field of linguistic politeness, the model most widely used is that of Brown and Levinson. One of its central concepts is the concept of face, borrowed from Goffman (1967). Brown and Levinson ascribe two aspects to face: one positive, one negative. The need to preserve positive and negative face explains that various strategies are used to counter any threat to a person's face. Brown and Levinson view politeness as a means to soften verbal and non-verbal behaviour. Indeed, any behaviour, be it verbal or non-verbal, is seen as potentially involving an FTA (Face-threatening act). The perspective adopted by Brown and Levinson is that politeness is based on "volitional" strategies. In other words, it "is made up of conscious, voluntary, explicitly marked acts" (Barešová 2008: 34).



This model is questioned by Kerbrat-Orecchioni (1992: 184; 1997: 11—17; 2001b: 74—77), who views relationships as less confrontational than in Brown and Levinson's model. Alongside FTAs, she introduces the notion of Face Flattering Acts (FFA). FFA are in some way similar to Bayraktaroglu's *face-boosting acts* (1991), *face giving acts* (cf. Lim 1994) and *face enhancing acts* (cf. Sifianou 1995; Koutlaki 2002). Like FTAs, FFAs testify for the relational implications of language acts produced in various situations and cultures (cf. Kerbrat-Orecchioni 2002: 440-441).

Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness, based on the notion of face, claims to be universal. Kerbrat-Orecchioni, among others, questions this claim to universality. Asian researchers, such as Matsumoto (1988, 1989), invite us to re-examine the notion of face in the light of the Japanese conception of social relationships. In addition, Ide (1989), Ide and Yoshida (1999) or Mao (1994) focus on the strategic dimension of politeness in relation to the preservation of face.

### 1.1.2. Discernment and theory of the territory of information

Other Japanese studies on politeness take into account the degree of knowledge that the speaker has of the various characteristics of the situation of communication (cf. Ide 1989, 1992), or of the information territory of the hearer, as illustrated by Kamio (1990, 1994, 1995).

The approach of Hill et al. (1986) and Ide (1989) is based on the rejection of a conception of politeness as being limited to inter-individual relations (or interactional strategies). It is also associated with the rejection of the idea that the speaker and addressee are essentially driven by the desire to maintain face. Hill and Ide's position is based on an approach to inter-individual relations as being regulated by social conventions. These social conventions are connected with the situation and the environment in which the encounter takes place. This conception is what they call politeness of discernment (*wakimae*). Ide's definition of *wakimae* is as follows:

*Wakimae* means social norms according to which people are expected to behave in order to be appropriate in the society they live in (1992: 298).

In other words, in the *wakimae* framework, the deployment of linguistic strategies by individuals is not determined by a universal system of politeness. It is imposed by the position each one has in the hierarchical and/or social context. In this perspective, the use of forms of politeness is inextricably bound up with the position occupied by the speaker and the addressee.

As for Kamio's theory of 'territory of information', it examines three domains of research: evidentiality, politeness and modality. According to Kamio, politeness can be achieved by the transmission of information in a roundabout way. Such is the case when the speaker favours the use of indirect forms when communicating information that is more familiar to the addressee than the speaker, because it belongs to the addressee's territory.

Thereby, Kamio's theory "seeks to establish the relationship between information, the speaker's/hearer's cognitive state of knowledge of information, and the forms of utterances" (1994: 68).

## 1.2. The third way, that of the placed analysis

However enlightening and interesting both Brown and Levinson's model and Ide and Kamio's framework may be, other studies, such as Cook (2006, 2011) or Geyer (2008), have shown that these conceptions of politeness require adjustments when applied to authentic data, collected in various circumstances. Accounting for more complex data has led to new orientations of research focusing on some elements of Brown and Levinson's model in order to challenge them (see in particular Eelen 2001, Geyer 2008, Mills 2011, Watts 2003).

Taking into account all the parameters of the situation of speech, these studies — based on natural data — led to questioning the claim according to which, for example, the use of the honorary is pre-determined. Studies such as those of Geyer or Cook thus underline the strict dependence of the use of such formulae on the way the interaction unfolds.

Our research on linguistic politeness in French and Japanese emails adopts this approach. It employs an analytical framework based on a discursive approach, analysing “politeness occurring in longer chunks of authentic discourse”, in contrast with Brown and Levinson's approach (cf. Kádár 2009).

There are various forms of expressions through which politeness can be expressed and the term politeness itself can have several meanings. In this paper, politeness has two different meanings: one large signification that embraces individual and social behaviours and another one, more specific, that concerns individual performances only.

Indeed, forms of politeness may display an orientation to individuality as well as a dependency on the social context, both in French and in Japanese. This phenomenon is hard to account for using either Ide's prism of discernment or Brown and Levinson's face theory. For instance, the use of humility or deferential (honorific) forms depends on statuses, positions, ranks, etc. of the participants. A French expression as: *Veillez agréer Monsieur le Directeur, l'assurance de ma haute considération* (Please accept, Sir, the expression of my highest consideration) to close a letter, depend upon the rank of the addressee. It is related to civility.

The linguistic and discursive operations used by cyber-writers, as indeed by all language users in any speech community, to express politeness are based on personal choices due to inter-individual politeness or to social obligations ascribable to civility. From our point of view, this approach to politeness allows us to identify two distinct practices. The first is *politeness*, which is a matter of personal will and can manifest itself in the choice of a language register: current vs formal — *vouloir* vs *daigner* (to deign) or *ôkii desu* vs *ôkii* (it is big). The second practice is *civility*, which is based on social requirements strongly enforced by rank, status, environment, etc.: such requirements may determine the choice, in French, of addressing one's interlocutor as *vous* rather than *tu*. And even if it is true that no one can be forced to respect social conventions, in many situations (job interview, employee-employer interaction, etc.), discernment (cf. above 1.1.2) leads the interlocutor to adjust his/her formulae to enhance communication.

The advantage of this approach is its ability to take into account Japanese key notions as *tatema* (facade) vs *honne* (reality) and *uchi* (inside) vs *soto* (outside), used to

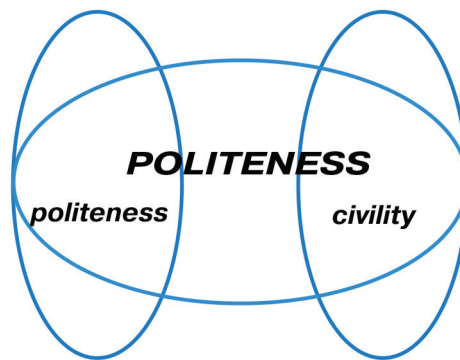
describe regulation of social behaviours. In Japan, degree of sincerity that comes with the expression of politeness is linked with the distinction between two different kinds of behaviours. Behaviours tied to conventions, therefore socially expected (*tatemae*, “facade”) and behaviours related to personal feelings, really perceived (*honne*, “the bottom of things”) (cf. Doi 1993: 29—36; Hayashi & Kuroda 1997: 48). One or the other behaviours might be adopted according to the individual and the interactive situation. “Facade” or *tatemae* is expected when the aim pursued is to maintain social organisation of the relations according to each member status or role. Behind *tatemae* “intimate feelings (*honne*) must be hidden except with the close relatives [...]” (Hendry 1994: 412).

Other indicator of social relationships, close to the distinction made between proximity and distance relations, contrasts in-group (*soto*) and out-group (*uchi*) members. From that basis derives a differentiated use of formulae or words as for instance the expressions of salutations *ohayô* (*good morning*) and *konnichiwa* (*good morning*). *Ohayô* is used with close circle (family members, friends). It is not the case for *konnichiwa* “as this expression does not promote the casual feeling sensed in the former expression” (Ide 2009: 20).

These Japanese notions underline the impact of socio-relational factors on politeness practices in Japan. In that country, every one is acutely aware that exchanges could be more or less constrained by social expectations. The regulation of encounters may set up in prescribed behaviours, but it may also be the result of individual choices depending on the interaction unfolding.

The distinction between manifestation of politeness in his most global meaning (in capital in the table 1 below) linked, on one hand, to volition (politeness) and on the other hand, governed by social imperatives (civility) enables a new reflexion.

The diagram below summarises this position:



Diagram

It is not possible to ascribe one of these orientations (politeness vs civility) to one community rather than another. Politeness and civility are relevant to both Western and Asian communicative practices. They are not in conflict but rather complement each other. As a result, our position retains both a vision of politeness oriented to individual initiative (which tends to be found in societies generally perceived as egocentric, such

as France) and an approach focused on community and the collective dimension (which is more frequently encountered in societies generally perceived as community-oriented such as Japan). As Triandis *et al.* point out “[c]orresponding to the collectivism continuum we have the personality attribute of *allocentrism*; corresponding to individualism we have the personality attribute of *idiocentrism*. In all cultures there will be both allocentrics and idiocentrics” (1993: 367).

Before developing this point, let us see how thanks and apologies can be defined.

## 2. MATRIX INTRODUCTION OF BOTH ACTS: THANKS AND APOLOGIES

Thanking (in bold) can be broadly outlined as:

◆ verbal or non-verbal action of A to the advantage of B **entailing a reaction from B** and being able to entail or not the acceptance of A.

And the apology (in bold) can be outlined as:

◆ verbal or non-verbal action of A affecting B **involving a reaction from A** being able to entail or not the acceptance of B (cf. Kerbrat-Orecchioni 2001b: 128).

In emails, the analyst has access only to the comments of B for thanks (see below examples 1 and 2) — either because he doesn’t have the follow-up emails, or because the event at the origin of the act occurred outside of the exchange — and he has only access to those of A for apologies (examples 3, 4a and 4b, below p. 138):

	A <b>no access</b>	B <b>message</b>	A <b>no access</b>
(1)	invitation	= > (your invitation) + thanks	= > $\emptyset$
(2)	answer	= > ( <i>o-henji</i> — your answer) + thanks	= > $\emptyset$
	A <sup>2</sup> <b>message</b>	B <b>no access</b>	
(3)	errors of spelling + apologies	= > $\emptyset$	
(4a)	absence of news + apologies	= > $\emptyset$	

The Japanese formulae *sumimasen* are used both for thanks or apologies according to the context. Taking into account this precision, the distinction operated by Kumatori-dani (1999: 629) between the two speech acts (thanks or apologies) applies to these matrices. This is based on the following principle: the event connected to thanks the primary focus is on the speaker (the beneficiary of the “gift”); whereas, in the event concerning apologies, it is on the addressee (the victim of the ‘offence’).

This distinction is operational insofar as it is based on the capacity of the speaker to judge the event from a certain point of view, and to produce one act or another, as suited to the situation. The speaker can either see the event as unpleasant or offensive for the addressee and produce apologies, or pleasing for him/herself and produce thanks.

It is on this basis that the following analyses will bring to light the reason why thanks are used in French when Japanese prefer apologies.

Prior to this review, the next step consists in introducing the data.

### 3. DATA DESCRIPTION

#### 3.1. Distribution of the emails

The examination of writers' verbal activities was carried out over 411 emails written in Japanese and French. E-mails were classified according to the correspondents' gender, age and relationship (close *vs* distant; hierarchical *vs* equal) allowing us to take into account subcultures. The distinction drawn up must also be coordinated with expectations in the area of politeness. In French as in Japanese data, more formal conventions could be found between students and teachers than between friends.

Table 2

**Japanese corpus – distribution of the number of emails  
based on relationship, gender and age**

Relationship	Friends (124 emails)		Acquaintances (30 emails)		Colleagues (38 emails)		Family members (11 emails)		Student <-> Teacher (6 emails)	
	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M
Age										
16/25	40	11	2	—	4	—	—	—	3	1
26/55	62	11	21	7	24	10	8	1	2	—
+ 55	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—
Subtotal	102	22	23	7	28	10	8	3	5	1
<b>209 emails (166 W – 43 M)</b>										

Table 3

**French corpus – distribution of the number of emails  
based on relationship, gender and age**

Relationship	Friends (95 emails)		Acquaintances (26 emails)		Colleagues (44 emails)		Family members (13 emails)		Student <-> Teacher (24 emails)	
	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M
Age										
16/25	28	26	—	—	5	—	—	4	7	1
26/55	31	9	18	8	33	6	6	3	14	1
+ 55	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Subtotal	59	36	18	8	38	6	6	7	22	2
<b>202 emails (143 W – 59 M)</b>										

As far as the selection criteria of the corpora are concerned, we gathered quantitatively relevant data, sufficiently homogeneous to be compared, with enough heterogeneous aspects to contain elements of differentiation, and in sufficient quantity to allow for a comparative analysis.

### 3.2. Apologies and thanks in the data

Apologies and thanks are particularly interesting speech acts to study for the specific issues they raise. They are very present in the French and Japanese e-mails as we can see from the following table:

Table 4

Apologies and thanks in the data

	France (202 emails)	Japan (209 emails)
<i>apologies / excuses</i>	11.21% (23 occurrences)	22.48% (47 occurrences)
<i>thanks</i>	24.87% (51 occurrences)	26.3% (55 occurrences)
TOTAL	36.09 %	48.80%

The frequent use of these two acts further justifies the attention we give them in our analysis.

In what follows, we will describe the way apologies and thanks are used in our data.

## 4. APPROACH TO THANKS AND APOLOGIES

The investigation of thanks and apologies in the data focuses on the nature of the formulas (4.1), their distribution with regard to the interpersonal relationship between the correspondents (between friends, colleagues, acquaintances, teacher/student contacts, family members) (4.2), a comparison of their location (opening, closure or body of the email) with the practises suggested for writing letters (4.3), and the functioning of thanks and apologies (4.4).

### 4.1. Nature of the preferred formulas

The linguistic realisation of thanks and apologies observed in this research is always explicit. Counting the occurrences of these two acts in e-mails enables us to identify the preferences French and Japanese writers have for one or other of these politeness devices.

The most frequently occurring pattern for apologies in French is *désolé* (*sorry*) on its own (8 cases) or in an expression such as in *je suis désolé* (*I am sorry*) (3 cases), or with a formula including the word *excuse* (12 cases) in various forms depending on the level of politeness: *Veillez m'excuser...* (*would you [please]...*); *je vous prie de bien vouloir...* (*I would request that you...*); *Je tiens à m'excuser...* (*I wish to [apologise]...*); etc.

In Japanese, formulas often used to apologise are *gobusata* (*Excuse me [for my long silence]*) alone or with a polite or humble form (*shite-imasu/shite-orimasu*) (14 cases). By contrast the most used form in the data is *gomen* (*excuse me*) with or without final particle (*no / yo / yô*) or with the suffix *nasai* (15 cases).

In addition, thanks in French are almost exclusively achieved through *merci* (*thank you*) (45 cases), while in Japanese, the expressions mainly used are *arigatô* (*thank you*) on its own or in expressions with a humble form *gozaimashita* or *gozaimasu* (53 cases). Furthermore, a pattern frequently identified is the formula *môshiwake* (*I am sorry*) with suffixes involving levels of (im)politeness: *nai*, *arimasen*, *gozaimasen* (8 cases).

#### 4.2. Set expressions linked with interpersonal relationships of cyber correspondents

In French, apologies and thanks are used respectively in 11.21% and 24.87% of the corpus. In terms of the relationship between writer and addressee, the distribution of the expressions shows that it is between student and teacher that both acts are most frequent: 34.78% of cases for the apologies and 47.82 of cases for the thanks<sup>3</sup>. In addition, thanks are favoured between colleagues (45.65%). Thus, the results suggest that it is in a formal context that these acts are present in French.

In Japanese, 22.48% of the corpus contains an act of apologising and 26.79% an act of thanking. The close observation of the type of relationships where these acts are the most frequent have enabled us to establish that there are more apologies in emails between acquaintances (40%) than between colleagues (31.57%), whereas the formulas available for expressing thanks are frequently used in relationships between student and teacher (50%) and between colleagues (34.21%).

From a general point of view, in the French data, thanks are used between colleagues (21 occurrences), between friends (16 occurrences) and from student to teacher (11 occurrences). The expression used is *merci* (*thank you*). It can be modulated with *a lot*, *very much*, etc.

In Japanese, thanks are largely expressed through the word *arigatô* (*thank you*). This term is used alone in emails between friends; it is written with a humble form (*gozaimasu*; *gozaimashita*) when emails are between colleagues.

At the denotative level expressions like *arigatô* and *arigatô gozai-masu/gozaimashita* are alike.

At the social level they differ. The relationship (friends, colleagues, etc.) and the degree of familiarity (close *vs* distant relation) between the writer and the addressee, the situation (formal *vs* informal), the pragmatic features (intensity of the thanks more or less consequent according to the service provided), etc. can dictate the need or not to use a suffix of politeness. The act of thanking must respect these various parameters. Accordingly, its use cannot be theoretically interpreted, without taking these variables into account. That is why *arigatô* will not be less polite than *arigatô gozaimashita*; in certain contexts, *arigatô gozaimashita* could be even considered as unsuitable.

This is why, in electronic messages exchanged between colleagues, the expression *arigatô gozaimasu shita* is preferred, whereas in more intimate situations, *arigatô* is essentially used. In this context, it is not civility, but politeness that is mobilized.

In other relational situations, the number of thanks is too low to allow us to draw conclusions on their distribution expression by expression.

In French, the apology is completely absent from emails exchanged between family members. In other types of relationships, apologies may be used, but they are slightly more present in emails between student and teacher. In that kind of relationship, the expression can express a certain distance: *Je vous prie de bien vouloir m'excuser* (*I beg you to...*).

In the Japanese corpus, the apology was only found in emails exchanged between friends, colleagues and acquaintances. In other relational levels (between student and

teacher and between family members), this speech act was absent. This can be explained as follows. On one hand the number of emails of an educational nature is very small, and on the other, it confirms the notion that the apology may not be a speech act suitable for close relationships in Asia.

The following table (table 5) shows that some expressions are specific to a type of relationship, while others seem more multi-purpose. As we can see, *gomen* with or without particle — as it is used in face-to-face situations — is the usual form between friends, while between colleagues, compositions with *moshiwake* are chosen. On the other hand, between acquaintances, an apology involves the expression: *go-BUSATA*, a way of apologising for not having been in contact for a while:

Japanese corpora

Table 5

Apologies expressions depending on the relationship

	Friends (amis)	Colleagues (collègues)	Acquaintances (camarades)
<i>gomen (ne / yo / yô)</i>	13		
<i>gomen nasai</i>	1		1
<i>shitsurei</i>	2	1	3
<i>moshiwake nai</i>	1	3	
<i>moshiwake arimasen</i>	1	1	1
<i>sumimasen</i>	2	3	2
<i>go-BUSATA shite-imasu</i>	1	1	5
<i>go-BUSATA shite-orimasu</i>	2	1	2

The differences observed between Japanese and French in the use of the apology have to be linked with specific formulae in Japanese (cf. Claudel 2012b). That is the case of *yoroshiku*. This expression expresses a sense of gratitude after a request — in a relationship between superior and subordinate as is the case in an educational situation (student/professor), for example.

Thus, in French and Japanese languages and cultures, when pleasant events happen, instead of thanks, apologies may be preferred as Ide (1998), Kumatoridani (1999), Miyake (2002), etc. have shown for Japanese. As for French, apology as *Il ne fallait pas* or *Vous n'auriez pas dû* (that could be translate in Japanese into: *môshiwake arimasen; kyô shaku desu* (men language) or, *osore-irimasu* (woman language)) may occurred instead of thanks.

Theses formulae are words of gratitude but most of all, they suggest a kind of embarrassment. As a result, they are used to achieve apology to the addressee for what he has done for the benefit of the hearer.

The analysis also shows that even when both languages introduce comparable acts of language — in this particular case, the apology — their frequencies, conditions of use and expression change.

**4.3. Occurrences of apologies and thanks in emails and letters**

The analysis of occurrences of both acts also highlights recurring tendencies. In French, an apology mainly appears in opening sequences, whereas thanks are more fre-



quently used in email closures. In Japanese, apologies and expressions of thanks are usually introduced in opening sequences of emails. This way of writing is similar to the practices recommended for writing letters.

Thus, in French, in its overall composition, the structure of a letter is based on “phatic sequences of opening and closing on the one hand, transactional sequences constituting the body of the interaction, on the other” (Adam 1998: 41). The exordium and the peroration, included in transactional sequences are optional. Given our research perspectives however, we will examine these.

In Japanese, models of letters are provided in numerous guides for natives or for learners of Japanese (e.g. *Tegami, hagaki no kakikata* 1996; *Tatemastu et al.* 1997). The formulas introduced in these handbooks present expressions to be used in letters, listed according to the linear organisation of a letter (see table 6, below).

The table 6 indicates in bold where apologies and thanks are supposed to occur in French (cf. Adam 1998: 42; Kerbrat-Orecchioni 1998); and Japanese (cf. *op. cit.*):

Table 6

Apologies and thanks in letters

Recommended behaviour in French		Recommended behaviour in Japanese	
in letters			
<i>Opening</i>	<i>Closing</i>	<i>Opening</i>	<i>Closing</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ greetings</li> <li>◆ comment on the spatial framework</li> <li>◆ acknowledgment</li> <li>◆ <b>thanks</b></li> <li>◆ reproach</li> <li>◆ <b>apologise</b></li> <li>◆ request for a reply</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ justification</li> <li>◆ regret</li> <li>◆ promise</li> <li>◆ <b>thanks</b></li> <li>◆ response to appeal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ seasonal greeting</li> <li>◆ recipient new request</li> <li>◆ transmission of new information</li> <li>◆ <b>thanks</b></li> <li>◆ <b>apologies</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ transmission of good wishes for health</li> <li>◆ transmission of a message</li> <li>◆ solicitation of an answer</li> <li>◆ request for advice</li> <li>◆ rejection of a proposal</li> <li>◆ accompany solicitation</li> <li>◆ transmission of greetings to third party</li> </ul>

This overview of the expected formulas in Japanese written correspondence highlights ways of saying which are similar to the French approach.

Given the use of apologies and thanks in Japanese messages (at opening), the rules like those fixed for letters seem to influence e-mails. Furthermore, these two acts are seldom used in other sequences of emails. In French, the impact of the letter on e-mail is also obvious, as shown in the preceding analysis.

#### 4.4. The functioning of the acts

##### 4.4.1. Reactive acts or ritual acts?

As indicated in another paper (Claudel 2012a: 86), unlike language acts such as requests about health or the reminder of a long period without contact, thanking is developed in the continuity of an exchange. It is generally a reactive act for a person at the origin of the action — verbal or non verbal — implemented by the one for whom this act is intended. As for apologies, they accompany or follow an instance of behaviour — verbal or non verbal — on the part of the speaker that draws a reaction from them.

Thus apologies and thanking exchange structures are different, as the following sequences illustrate:

- 1) Chère + prénom,  
Merci pour ton invitation. Je serai ravi que nous dînions ensemble samedi soir [...] (*Dear + first name, Thank you for your invitation. I shall be delighted to have dinner together on Saturday evening [...]*)
- 2) X san, o-henji arigatô gozaimashita. Tasukarimasu.  
*(X san, Thank you for your answer. It helped me a lot.)*
- 3) Là, c'est la fin de la soirée "désintégration" qui a débutée [sic] après un tournoi de torball. Je te demande donc de pardonner mes fautes d'orthographe car depuis une semaine et demi [sic] ma moyenne de sommeil doit être de 5 H.  
*(Right now, it is the end of the evening of "disintegration" which began after a tournament of torball. So please forgive my spelling mistakes as I've only had about 5 hours of sleep each night for the past week and a half.)*
- 4a) onshinfutsû, gomen yo gomen yo.  
*(Excuse me, excuse me for not having been in touch.)*
- 4b) henji ga okuremashita môshi wake arimasen.  
*(Sorry for the late answer.)*

— Statement 1 contains the possessive of second person **ton (your)** — which refers to the correspondent — followed by the mention of the event of gratification **invitation** from which the writer benefited thanks to the correspondent;

— Statement 2 contains the prefix **o** — which indicates the correspondent — followed by the mention of the event of gratification **henji (answer)** from which the writer benefited on behalf to the correspondent;

— Statement 3 contains the possessive of the first person **mes (my)** referring back to the writer, followed by the mention of the event at the origin of the damage **spelling mistakes** with which the addressee of the email is confronted;

— Statements 4a and 4b contain the mention of the potentially harmful behaviour for which the writer is responsible **onshinfutsû (not to give news)** and **henji ga okureru (to delay answering)** and the addressee a victim.

In the studied context, it is difficult to characterize thanks and apologies according to the opposition initiative/reactive. For instance, even if the apologies seem to anticipate a possible criticism, they cannot be seen as an initiative ritual. Thus, we see the use of the two acts (thanks and apologies) in emails as a kind of more or less obligatory behaviour whose realisation is recommended, as previously mentioned, in the standard format for a letter in Japanese — and not a reactive act.

#### 4.4.2. An event of contentment directed to the writer

The event of contentment giving way to thanks is generally indicated in the statement as previously noted, in French (5) and in Japanese (6):

- 5) Merci pour le CR. (*Thank you for the CR.*)  
Merci pour ton message. (*Thank you for your message.*)

Merci beaucoup **pour ton travail de rédaction** [...] (*Thank you very much for your editorial work [...]*)

Tout d'abord un grand merci **pour ta lettre** [...] (*First of all a big thank you for your letter [...]*)

Merci encore **de ton coup de main** !! (*Thank you again for your help!!*)

Ce petit message cariooca pour te remercier **des coordonnées de X**. (*This small message cariooca to thank you for the contact details of X.*)

- 6) **shashin** arigatô! (*Thank you for the pictures!*)  
**hagaki** arigatô. (*Thank you for your post card.*)  
**hoteru no yotei** dômo arigatô. (*Thank you very much for the hotel booking.*)  
**messêji** arigatô gozaimashita. (*I thank you for your message.*)  
**genkô todokimashita. Oisogashii tokoro** wo arigatô gozaimashita. (*Thank you for sending the manuscript at a time when you are so busy.*)

However, it may happen that the action at the start of the gratification is not specified.

7) X chan arigatô! (*Dear X Thank you!*)

8) X chan, sankyû de—su ☺ (*Dear X Thank you ☺*)

In any case, as shown by Kumatoridani (1999: 629), the event entailing the thanks is indeed directed to the writer who is the beneficiary, in Japanese and in French.

#### 4.4.3. Acts directed to the speaker in French vs towards the addressee in Japanese

##### 4.4.3.1. 'Thank you in advance' or 'par avance' in French

In French, thanks can also occur in an anticipated way with the use of the adverbial phrase *in advance* (or its equivalent 'par avance'). In the present examples, they only appear in the closures of emails (*Thank you in advance*) and are linked to a request. This linguistic form is mainly used between colleagues (9) or from a student to a teacher (10, 11):

9) Merci **d'avance** et à très bientôt. (*Thank you in advance and see you very soon.*)

10) Merci **d'avance** pour votre réponse. (*Thank you in advance for your answer.*)  
Cordialement, (*Best Regards,*)

11) je vous remercie **par avance** de votre compréhension et vous renouvelle mes excuses pour ce retard.  
ci-joint mon adresse mail: [...]  
veuillez agréer mes sincères salutations  
(*I thank you in advance for your understanding and renew my excuses for this delay.*  
*Attached my e-mail address: [...]*  
*sincerely yours*)

This expression raises a problem of politeness insofar as it pushes the addressee to answer favorably to the request which is being made. The more or less direct invitation made to the addressee to accomplish something for the benefit of the writer can hinder his/her freedom of action. In that way, it can damage his negative face. That is why any act of early thanks risks compromising its pragmatic impact.

#### 4.4.3.2. Preference for apology over thanking in Japanese

The scenario consisting in soliciting the addressee to do something — which, as we have just seen, can be associated with anticipated thanks in French — occurs in other types of polite sentences in Japanese, among which apology (12, 13):

- 12) o-isogashii tokoro wo **taihen môshiwake arimasen**. shikyû to iu koto de wa nai node, o-jikan no aru toki ni o-henji wo itadakereba to omoimasu. [...] orikaeshi kochira kara okake naoshimasu.

*(I kindly request you to forgive me for the disturbance at a moment when you must be so busy. As it is not urgent, the best thing would be to answer me when you have time. I will call you back.)*

- 13) 15 nichi no kuraianto nihon wo tatteshimau tame, **katte nagara** narubeku hayaku o-henji wo itadakemasu yô o-negai môshiagemasu.

*(As our customer leaves Japan on the 15th, I am really sorry but I have to ask you to answer me as quickly as possible.)*

The request forces the addressee to react and not the speaker. That is why, in Japanese e-mails, all kinds of linguistic formulae are used linking thanks or apologies to a specific expression of request: *yoroshiku* (cf. above and Claudel 2012b), containing a form of early thanks (14, 15):

- 14) o-hikiuke itadakereba hontô ni arigataku, kasanete **yoroshiku** o-negai itashimasu.

*(I would be extremely grateful to you for taking responsibility for this on my behalf, and once again, I leave it up to you.)*

- 15) makotoni bushitsukena mêru wo sashiage kyôshuku desu ga dôzo **yoroshiku** o-negai itashimasu.

*(I apologise for sending you such a message and I thank you in advance for what you will be able to do for me.)*

As we can see, apologies are favoured in Japanese where thanks are preferred in French. This distinction could be linked to a different vision of interactional goals. Indeed as underlined by Coulmas:

The Japanese conception of gifts and favors focuses on the trouble they have caused the benefactor rather than the aspects which are pleasing to the recipient (1981: 83).

Moreover, the configurations are in this case, very specific. Only the expressions *bushina* and *moshiwake nai* are concerned. People over 25 years old use these expressions in any kind of relationships: between colleagues, between friends or acquaintances.

### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this comparison shows that the number of different ready-to-use rituals is more important in Japanese e-mails than in French ones. Indeed, in Japanese, fixed expressions are widely involved (e.g. *hisashiburi*, *go-busata*, *môshiwake arimasen*). Therefore the variety of common expressions available to Japanese writers could explain the quantitative difference observed between the French and Japanese data. Indeed *arigatô*, *sumimasen*<sup>4</sup>, *o-sewa ni naru*<sup>5</sup>, etc. can express thanks; and *gomen nasai*<sup>6</sup>, *orei môshiagemasu*, *môshiwake*<sup>7</sup>, *shitsurei*, *gobusata-itashimashita*<sup>8</sup>, etc. can express an apology.

The diversity of formulae in Japanese could be interpreted as an indication of the importance of the relationship and of the need felt by the writer to act carefully. The extensive choice of expressions can be seen as a demonstration, for Japanese interactants, to have much needed linguistic resources that can help people to live together peacefully. However, a historical approach would be necessary to explore this claim.

In addition, the use of apologies and thanks in e-mails shows that neither of the two communities are more or less (im)polite than the other, but the set expressions available in Japanese (see table 5, above) are more diversified than in French. Where attention to the addressee seems to lead to the use of apologies in Japanese, in French attention to the speaker/writer apparently leads to the use of thanks. Furthermore, some expressions seem to be used only in some relationships. At this point, the difference between politeness and civility (see table 1, above) plays its full role. In formal relationships, as between colleagues or between student and teacher, civility dictates the need for using more distant expressions — consisting in the adjunction of humble or honorary suffixes or formulae — rather than politeness.

Therefore, the analysis conducted through the present study allows us to suggest that the conception French and Japanese communities have of politeness is not entirely identical, even if some behaviours are shared or comparable.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> My research interests focus on the comparative analysis of French and Japanese languages and cultures. French is my first language and Japanese is the other language I have chosen to study.

<sup>2</sup> Possibility:

B	A	B
sending a fax	apology	minimization
<i>B-san kino fakkusu okutte oita kara.</i>	<i>Doomo sumimasen deshita.</i>	

<sup>3</sup> The percentage is calculated according to the number of occurrences in the emails characterized by the same interpersonal type of relation.

<sup>4</sup> To gain an insight into the value of *sumimasen* (*I'm sorry*) as apology or thanks, see Miyake (2002) and Kumatoridani (1999).

<sup>5</sup> “*Osewa ni naru* literally means ‘to be taken into care’” (Mizutani *et al.* 1985: 76). In reality, this expression is used to express thanks.

<sup>6</sup> When used (except for family members), the expression *gomen nasai* (*excuse me*) is found in close relationships, as in family because it is less formal than *shiturei-shimasu* (*Excuse me — I have been rude*) (Mizutani *et al.* 1988: 14).

<sup>7</sup> まことに申し訳ありません : *I am very sorry. I beg your pardon. I do apologise.*

<sup>8</sup> “[It] is an expression of apology for not having written or called on the other person” (Mizutani *et al.* 1986: 103).

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## **РЕЧЕВЫЕ АКТЫ «ИЗВИНЕНИЕ» И «БЛАГОДАРНОСТЬ» ВО ФРАНЦУЗСКОЙ И ЯПОНСКОЙ ЛИЧНОЙ ЭЛЕКТРОННОЙ ПЕРЕПИСКЕ: СРАВНИТЕЛЬНЫЙ АНАЛИЗ ТРАДИЦИЙ ВЫРАЖЕНИЯ ВЕЖЛИВОСТИ**

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В статье исследуются способы реализации стратегий вежливости во французской и японской личной электронной переписке. Материалом исследования послужили 411 электронных писем. При анализе полученных данных принимались во внимание такие критерии, как пол, возраст респондентов, а также степень горизонтальной и/или вертикальной дистанции между ними. На основе полученных данных в работе исследуются два широко изученных речевых акта — «Извинение» и «Благодарность».

В статье рассматриваются интерпретации понятия *вежливость* во французской и японской культурах; исследуются различные точки зрения и способы изучения данного концепта, что вызывает необходимость переосмыслить содержание концепта *лицо* в сознании представителей европейских и азиатских культур, понятие *учтивость* (*Ide*), а также теорию информации (*Kamio*). Вслед за обзором академических трудов в работе предлагается разграничение дефиниций *вежливость* и *учтивость*. Согласно изложенной точке зрения, языковые средства реализации вежливости (в ее самом широком понимании) основаны на личном выборе индивидуума, который руководствуется понятием *вежливость* (с точки зрения ее этнокультурной специфики) или социальными установками, приписываемыми концепту *учтивость*. Таким образом, вежливость в ее специфическом понимании всегда определенным образом связана с личным выбором индивидуума. Во французском языке, например, это реализуется в виде использования различных стилей языка, например: официальный vs разговорный (*convier vs inviter*), а также в выборе глагольных форм (условное наклонение вместо изъявительного: *je voudrais vs je veux*), синтаксисе (инверсия подлежащего или употребление отрицания в вопросительных предложениях: *je voudrais vs je veux* и т.д. В японском языке реализацию стратегий вежливости можно проследить на основе использования суффикса



*desu* (*kawaii desu*- это мило), в тех случаях, когда нейтральный или разговорный стиль речи был бы более уместен (*kawaii* — это мило). С другой стороны, учтивость сопряжена с неизменным соблюдением социальных норм поведения. Во французском языке говорящий может испытывать необходимость употребления местоименной формы обращения *vous /вы* (вместо *tu /ты*), как это предписывает его положение, статус, ранг или статусная позиция его собеседника. Японскому коллеге в аналогичной речевой ситуации может потребоваться использование тех языковых средств, которые подчеркивают его покорность или почтительное отношение.

В дальнейшем в работе рассматривается влияние электронных средств коммуникации на письменную речь; анализируется использование различных стратегий вежливости в речевых актах «Извинение» и «Благодарность». На основе проведенного анализа делается вывод о том, что в японском языке внимание к адресату передается через речевой акт «Извинение», в то время как во французском языке внимание к говорящему/пишущему реализуется с помощью речевого акта «Благодарность», что свидетельствует о разном понимании вежливости в японской и французской лингвокультурах.

**Ключевые слова:** вежливость, учтивость, извинение, благодарность, японский язык, французский язык, электронные письма.

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## A CROSS-CULTURAL STUDY OF AMERICAN AND RUSSIAN PROPRIETIES IN COMMUNICATION\*

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An examination of eleven intercultural textbooks, used in the field of communication in America, reveals little research comparing Russian and American proprieties in communication (Chen & Starosta, 1998; Dodd, 1998; Jandt, 2004a; Jandt, 2004b; Kelly, Laffoon & McKerrow, 1994; Lustig & Koester, 1996; Martin & Nakayama, 2004; Martin & Nakayama, 2005; Martin, Nakayama & Flores, 2002; Samovar & Porter, 2003; Samovar & Porter, 2001). In order to investigate the similarities and differences (S/D) of the two countries, an instrument was developed containing questions dealing with proprieties and customs appropriate in both cultural settings. In order to maintain language integrity, the 29-item instrument was administered to English speaking students with: 1) no direct exposure to the Russian culture, or 2) direct exposure to the Russian culture. The results suggest proprieties in American and Russian society are more similar than difference in the majority of areas investigated in this research. However, there was a substantial difference between the two cultures in the following four areas: a) Russians are less likely than Americans to discuss their ethnicity in public situations; b) Russians are more polite than Americans in social situations; c) Russians feel more comfortable than Americans about speaking their minds in public situations; d) Russians are more honest when expressing opinions than their American counterparts.

**Key words:** Communications behaviour, proprieties in communication, speech strategies.

### INTRODUCTION

Intercultural textbooks, currently used by educators in college classrooms in America, discuss a variety of aspects dealing with communication among international cultures as well as communication among co-cultures in the United States. Each text discusses a large gamut of information ranging from topics dealing with the rationale for studying intercultural communication, world view, family issues, values and perceptions, verbal and nonverbal interaction, educational and business situations as it relates to a variety of countries around the world. Although the authors successfully discuss several major countries throughout the world, it is blatantly obvious that discussions concerning Russian customs and proprieties are missing from the majority of the textbooks.

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## RATIONAL

Few intercultural textbooks refer to the Russian culture. Six of the eleven intercultural textbooks examined in this study (Dodd, 1998; Jandt, 2004b; Kelly, et al, 1994; Martin, et al, 2002; Samovar & Porter, 2003; Samovar & Porter, 2001) did not address Russian culture. Three of the remaining five books (Chen & Starosta, 1998; Lustig & Koester, 1996; Martin & Nakayama, 2005), dedicate one or two sentences to information concerning Russia. Jandt (2004a), in the textbook, *An Introduction to Intercultural Communication: Identities in a Global Community*, dedicates a little over one page to a discussion of the history of Russia. Martin & Nakayama (2004), in the text, *Intercultural Communication in Context*, allocate the greatest number of references pertaining to Russia culture found in the textbooks investigated in this research. The authors' include a one-half page story, written by a Russian student, plus three sentences pertaining to the following categories: romantic relationships, social conflict and Russian history. There are also two, one-sentence, references to the Soviet Union in their text. This research examines the similarities and differences of the Russian and American cultures to enhance cross-cultural understanding of the proprieties of each culture.

## METHODOLOGY

A two-step process was used in the development of the questionnaire: 1) A focus group consisting of 10 Russians and 10 Americans contributed general observations of communication styles and customs of each culture; 2) A list of questions was developed based on a content analysis of the conversation gathered from the focus group.

The 29-item questionnaire consists of four categories: I.) Borders of Curiosity with Strangers; II.) Social Gatherings of Acquaintances; III.) Age and Gender Communication in Social Settings with Acquaintances; IV.) Manners/Etiquette between Strangers in Social Settings.(See Appendix A).

In order to maintain language integrity of the instrument, the 29-item instrument was administered to English speaking students with: 1) No direct exposure to the Russian culture, or 2) Direct exposure to the Russian culture. The instrument was administered to 67 American students at a large southeastern college. The qualifying criteria — the respondents spoke English and were raised by American parents who spoke English. They also did not have direct exposure to the Russian culture. Thirty-nine students, at a large western university, met the criteria of having direct exposure to the Russian culture. E.g.) English speaking, born in Russia, raised by parents who spoke Russian thus giving them direct exposure to the Russian culture. A total of 106 university students completed the instrument.

## RESULTS

The data were analyzed using Pearson Chi-Square analyses. A total of 106 surveys were analyzed (39 respondents had direct contact with the Russian culture and 67 respondents had no contact with Russian culture). A two-tail analysis, at the .01 level of significance, suggests that American and Russian cultures are more similar than different in the majority of areas investigated in this research. In the first category, "Borders of Curiosity with Strangers", students reported similar responses for Russian and American cultures. However, the questions pertaining to ethnicity suggest a difference between the two cultures. The difference is illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1

**Borders of Curiosity with Strangers in Social Settings**

**Crosstab**

			Country		Total
			NonRussia	Russia	
Question acceptable in U.S.: Where family name comes from	Yes	Count	57	19	76
		% within Country	85.1%	50.0%	72.4%
	No	Count	10	19	29
		% within Country	14.9%	50.0%	27.6%
Total		Count	67	38	105
		% within Country	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Crosstab**

			Country		Total
			NonRussia	Russia	
Question acceptable in U.S.: Where accent comes from	Yes	Count	57	21	78
		% within Country	85.1%	55.3%	74.3%
	No	Count	10	17	27
		% within Country	14.9%	44.7%	25.7%
Total		Count	67	38	105
		% within Country	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

In the category “Social Gathering of Acquaintances”, students reported a significant difference between the two cultures in the majority (5 out of 7) of questions as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

**Social Gatherings of Acquaintances**

**Crosstab**

			Country		Total
			NonRussia	Russia	
Situation acceptable/preferred in U.S.: guest offer to help host	Yes	Count	65	30	95
		% within Country	97.0%	76.9%	89.6%
	No	Count	2	9	11
		% within Country	3.0%	23.1%	10.4%
Total		Count	67	39	106
		% within Country	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Crosstab**

			Country		Total
			NonRussia	Russia	
Situation acceptable/preferred in U.S.: guest explain why leaving party	Yes	Count	26	34	60
		% within Country	40.0%	87.2%	57.7%
	No	Count	39	5	44
		% within Country	60.0%	12.8%	42.3%
Total		Count	65	39	104
		% within Country	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

End of Table 2

**Crosstab**

			Country		Total
			NonRussia	Russia	
Situation acceptable/preferred in U.S.: guest expected to bring gift	Yes	Count	24	31	55
		% within Country	35.8%	81.6%	52.4%
	No	Count	43	7	50
		% within Country	64.2%	18.4%	47.6%
Total		Count	67	38	105
		% within Country	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Crosstab**

			Country		Total
			NonRussia	Russia	
Situation acceptable/preferred in U.S.: host repeatedly offer food/drink	Yes	Count	27	31	58
		% within Country	40.3%	79.5%	54.7%
	No	Count	40	8	48
		% within Country	59.7%	20.5%	45.3%
Total		Count	67	39	106
		% within Country	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Crosstab**

			Country		Total
			NonRussia	Russia	
Situation acceptable/preferred in U.S.: explanation necessary when refusing food/drink	Yes	Count	8	28	36
		% within Country	11.9%	73.7%	34.3%
	No	Count	59	10	69
		% within Country	88.1%	26.3%	65.7%
Total		Count	67	38	105
		% within Country	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 3 illustrates the one question the respondents reported a significant difference in the category, “Age and Gender Communication in a Social Setting with Acquaintances”.

Table 3

**Age and Gender Communication in a Social Setting with Acquaintances**

**Crosstab**

			Country		Total
			NonRussia	Russia	
Situation common in U.S.: use slang with older person	Yes	Count	29	5	34
		% within Country	43.9%	12.8%	32.4
	No	Count	37	34	71
		% within Country	56.1%	87.2%	67.6%
Total		Count	66	39	105
		% within Country	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The following responses, reported in Table 4, illustrate the significant differences in the “Manners/Etiquette” category.

Table 4

**Manners/Etiquette between Strangers**

**Crosstab**

			Country		Total
			NonRussia	Russia	
Acceptable communication in the U.S.: reprimand someone you do not know	Yes	Count	6	21	27
		% within Country	9.4%	55.3%	26.5
	No	Count	58	17	75
		% within Country	90.6%	44.7%	73.5%
Total		Count	64	38	102
		% within Country	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Crosstab**

			Country		Total
			NonRussia	Russia	
Acceptable communication in the U.S.: give advice before being asked	Yes	Count	16	24	40
		% within Country	23.9%	61.5%	37.7%
	No	Count	51	15	66
		% within Country	76.1%	38.5%	62.3%
Total		Count	67	39	106
		% within Country	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Crosstab**

			Country		Total
			NonRussia	Russia	
Acceptable communication in the U.S.: complain about your life around strangers	Yes	Count	5	23	28
		% within Country	7.6%	59.0%	26.7%
	No	Count	61	16	77
		% within Country	92.4%	41.0%	73.3%
Total		Count	66	39	105
		% within Country	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Crosstab**

			Country		Total
			NonRussia	Russia	
Acceptable communication in the U.S.: share personal information with strangers	Yes	Count	7	15	22
		% within Country	10.8%	38.5%	21.2%
	No	Count	58	24	82
		% within Country	89.2%	61.5%	78.8%
Total		Count	65	39	104
		% within Country	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Crosstab**

			Country		Total
			NonRussia	Russia	
Acceptable communication in the U.S.: express an honest opinion about clothing/hair	Yes	Count	31	27	58
		% within Country	47.0%	73.0%	56.3%
	No	Count	35	10	45
		% within Country	53.0%	27.0%	43.7%
Total		Count	66	37	103
		% within Country	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## CONCLUSION

A content analysis of the Intercultural textbooks, currently used by instructors in the field of communication, suggest authors are dedicating little space to topics related to the people and culture of Russia. This study was conducted to investigate the similarities and differences of Russian and American cultures to enhance pedagogical research and cross cultural understanding. The proprieties in American and Russian societies were found to be more similar than different in the majority of areas investigated in this research. However, there is a substantial difference between the two cultures in following four areas: a) Russians are less likely than Americans to discuss their ethnicity in public situations; b) Russians are more polite than Americans in social situations; c) Russians feel more comfortable than Americans about speaking their minds in public situations; d) Russians are more honest when expressing opinions than are their American counterparts.

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## ПРЕДСТАВЛЕНИЯ ОБ УМЕСТНОСТИ И ПРИЛИЧИЯХ В КОММУНИКАЦИИ: СРАВНИТЕЛЬНОЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ ПОВЕДЕНИЯ АМЕРИКАНЦЕВ И РУССКИХ

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Цель данного исследования — выявление сходств и различий в коммуникативном поведении американцев и русских. Как показал анализ 11 учебных пособий в области межкультурной коммуникации, предпочтения американцев и русских с точки зрения уместности и социальных приличий изучены в американской коммуникативистике явно недостаточно (Chen&Starosta, 1998; Dodd, 1998; Jandt, 2004a; Jandt, 2004b; Kelly, Laffoon&McKerrow, 1994; Lustig&Koester, 1996; Martin&Nakayama, 2004; Martin&Nakayama, 2005; Martin, Nakayama&Flores, 2002; Samovar&Porter, 2003; Samovar&Porter, 2001). В целях исследования сходств и различий коммуникативного поведения представителей двух стран был разработан вопросник, касающийся привычек речевого поведения в обеих культурах. Для установления «лингвистической прямоты и искренности» англоговорящим студентам, имеющим либо не имеющим непосредственных контактов с русской культурой, предлагалось ответить на 29 вопросов. Как показало исследование, в большинстве сфер, включенных в опрос, сходств в коммуникативном поведении представителей двух культур больше, чем различий. В то же время существенные различия обнаружены в 4-х сферах: а) русские менее, чем американцы, склонны обсуждать свою национальность; б) русские более вежливы в публичном общении; в) русские более склонны обсуждать свои личные проблемы с незнакомыми; г) русские более искренни в выражении своего мнения; чем американцы.

**Ключевые слова:** коммуникативное поведение, коммуникативная уместность, речевые стратегии.

### **Appendix A** **Instrument**

#### **COMMUNICATION STYLES SURVEY**

Where were you born? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your gender? Female Male

Age group under 21 22—35 36—50  
over 50

In general, what interpersonal communication styles do you experience or observe in **social situations**? Comment in general terms — not what **you** would specifically do in each situation.

Circle **YES** or **NO**



**I. BORDERS OF CURIOSITY WITH STRANGERS in a social settings.**

Are the following questions acceptable in \_\_\_\_\_ culture?

- |   |     |    |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. How much did you pay for your house?   | Yes | No |
| 2. Do you have a college degree?          | Yes | No |
| 3. Are you married?                       | Yes | No |
| 4. Do you have any children?              | Yes | No |
| 5. Are you planning to have children?     | Yes | No |
| 6. How old are you?                       | Yes | No |
| 7. Where does your family name come from? | Yes | No |
| 8. What is your religion?                 | Yes | No |
| 9. Where does your accent come from?      | Yes | No |

**II. SOCIAL GATHERINGS OF ACQUAINTANCES**

Are these situations acceptable/preferred in \_\_\_\_\_ culture?

- |  |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. Is it acceptable to ask a person to bring food or drink when inviting him/her to a party? | Yes | No |
| 2. Should a guest offer to help the host/hostess?  | Yes | No |
| 3. Should a guest explain his/her reasons for leaving a party?                               | Yes | No |
| 4. Is a guest expected to bring a gift (candy, wine, etc.) for the host/hostess?             | Yes | No |
| 5. Is it expected of the host/hostess to repeatedly offer food or drink to the guests?       | Yes | No |
| 6. Should guests apologize for arriving late at a party?                                     | Yes | No |
| 7. Are explanations necessary when refusing food or drink?                                   | Yes | No |

**III. AGE and GENDER COMMUNICATION  
in a social setting with ACQUAINTANCES.**

Are these situations common in \_\_\_\_\_ culture?

- |   |     |    |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. Is it acceptable to use slang /jargon (“you guys”, “cool”) in a conversation with a person who is obviously older? | Yes | No |
| 2. Is it acceptable to use mild profanity (“shit”, “damn”) when speaking to a person obviously older?                 | Yes | No |

- |   |     |    |
|---|-----|----|
| 3. Is it appropriate to use mild profanity to a person of the opposite gender?  | Yes | No |
| 4. When members of the opposite sex are present, is it appropriate to announce the need to use the restroom in an explicit manner? (eg., "I am going to pee.")          | Yes | No |
| 5. When members of the opposite sex are present, is it appropriate for a female to discuss specific female topics? (eg., feminine hygiene products, physical problems). | Yes | No |

**IV. MANNERS/ETTIQUETTE BETWEEN STRANGERS  
IN A SOCIAL SETTINGS.**

Is it acceptable communication in \_\_\_\_\_ culture to

- |  |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. compliment the opposite gender on what they are wearing?  | Yes | No |
| 2. initiate conversation with a person in a public place?  | Yes | No |
| 3. speak to a child you do not know?   | Yes | No |
| 4. reprimand someone you do not know?  | Yes | No |
| 5. give advice to before asked? (eg., In a fitting room at a department store.)                    | Yes | No |
| 6. complain about your life at social gathering of strangers?                                      | Yes | No |
| 7. share personal information with stranger? (eg., "My husband is abusive to me and our children.) | Yes | No |
| 8. express an honest (negative) opinion when asked about a new item of clothing or hair cut?       | Yes | No |

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# INTERCULTURAL ASPECT OF TRANSLATION TEACHING

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## INTRODUCING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION INTO THE TEACHING OF TRANSLATION\*

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This article examines how the teaching of translation at university level can come to include the systematic development of intercultural skills. It will do this initially by presenting the methodology and outcomes of a European Union funded project entitled ‘Promoting Intercultural Competence in Translators’. The precise aims, context, participants, timing and working methodology of the project will be clearly outlined. This will be followed by an explanation of key theoretical principles which underlay the project and which were embodied in a ‘good practice guide’ at its conclusion. The project produced three key outputs freely available on the project website aimed to help university lecturers in Translation to enhance the development of students’ intercultural skills — a ‘curriculum framework’ (syllabus), teaching materials and assessment materials, for each of which the theoretical/pedagogical underpinning will be explained and examples provided. The article will conclude with an extended reflective section examining some of the limits of the project, areas in which it could be further developed or adapted to context, finishing with an indication of areas in which further research is needed.

**Key words:** intercultural Communication, intercultural competence, translation, pedagogy, curriculum framework, teaching Materials.

### INTRODUCTION

Interest in Intercultural Communication has grown considerably in recent decades across a wide range of communities and contexts and Translation is an important example of one such context. A significant number of researchers within Translation Studies as well as translators and teachers of Translation have developed interests in this ‘intercultural dimension’. Within Translation Studies influential theorists like Bassnett (2014) and Baker (2011) have long presented Translation as involving subtle interplay between linguistic and cultural features and have as such recognised, at least implicitly, the intercultural dimension of the practice of translators. There have also been important attempts to improve our explicit understanding of the many intercultural aspects of translation processes (cf. Leppihalme, 1997 and Katan, 2004) and both conferences and PhDs are now being devoted to such themes. Similarly, many have come to recognise the impor-

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tance of including an intercultural dimension in translator training. A clear example of this is the European Commission. In order for a Master's programme within the European Union to be officially recognised as a 'European Masters in Translation', the university offering it has to demonstrate that it systematically incorporates the development of intercultural competence in its programme (cf. [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/translation/programmes/emt/key\\_documents/emt\\_competences\\_translators\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/translation/programmes/emt/key_documents/emt_competences_translators_en.pdf)).

Equally, an increasing number of pedagogically orientated articles in this area are starting to appear (cf. Yarosh, 2015). The current article lies within this latter tradition as its main focus is pedagogical. It aims to contribute to debates on how the intercultural skills of students of Translation can best be developed. It will do this initially by explaining and presenting the findings of a European Union funded project which had exactly this aim — to improve the ways in which Translation students are taught intercultural skills. It will conclude with a review of the project and an analysis of ways in which its work might be taken further.

### **A EUROPEAN PROJECT — BACKGROUND, METHODOLOGY AND KEY PRINCIPLES**

The background framework of the project was as follows. In 2010 colleagues involved in the teaching of Translation in universities in six countries of the European Union, plus an international languages association co-ordinated from a seventh, came together with the shared perception that intercultural aspects of translation were not being taught as effectively as they could be. They accordingly submitted a bid to the European Commission proposing to run a project which would be aimed at allowing any university teaching Translation to improve the ways in which it developed students' intercultural abilities. The bid was duly accepted and the two-year project entitled 'Promoting Intercultural Competence in Translators', abbreviated as 'PICT', commenced in 2011. What the project produced was then made freely available in seven EU languages on the project website ([www.pictlp.eu](http://www.pictlp.eu)). The core of what the project produced was a form of syllabus, termed a 'curriculum framework', for the teaching of Intercultural Competence to translators, materials to teach it and assessment materials for evaluating students' intercultural skills, all of which will be explained later.

Where methodology is concerned, the project involved more curriculum development than an attempt to arrive at original research findings as such. Nonetheless, it drew extensively on existing research as well as carrying out research of its own in order to make its contributions to pedagogy. The curriculum development process which the project followed derived from a carefully researched methodological formula which is well-established for EU pedagogical projects and which is also common in a range of other educational and professional communities of practice. This involves —

- (1) trying to establish what students need to know, be aware of, be able to do etc. in the domain in question — in this instance, intercultural aspects of translation processes — and then formulating these needs into a series of learning dimensions and learning outcomes which together constitute a 'curriculum framework'

- (2) producing teaching materials allowing students to develop along all of these learning dimensions
- (3) producing assessment materials allowing students to be tested along all of these learning dimensions

At many stages prior research fed into this underlying process, research drawn most frequently from the broad fields of Intercultural Communication, Translation Studies and Pedagogy. Decisions taken throughout by the project team were, however, also informed by a ‘situational survey’ the design, implementation and analysis of which followed fairly standard canons of survey methodology ([www.pictllp.eu/en/the-pict-project/the-starting-point](http://www.pictllp.eu/en/the-pict-project/the-starting-point)) This constituted the first phase of the project and involved large numbers of teachers and students of translation across the seven participating countries who were asked about wide-ranging aspects of (a) current practice in the teaching of intercultural aspects of translation and (b) what they would wish to see change. The curriculum framework was then formulated by the project team who went on to produce teaching and assessment materials corresponding to the curriculum framework. These were then piloted as rigorously as the constraints of the project permitted and carefully amended. Given, however, that the actual project partners, with their own perceptions and biases, were bound to have a major impact on the outcomes of the project, a project which was intended to produce pedagogical materials usable throughout the EU and beyond, a serious attempt was made at the outset to achieve some degree of ‘representativity’ within the project team. As a result European Union partners as geographically, and potentially culturally, diverse as possible were sought and the team eventually involved colleagues from Bulgaria and the UK on the Eastern and Western edges and Italy and Finland on the Southern and Northern — Poland, Germany and France then ran across the middle.

A number of key principles came to underlie the project which eventually came to be embodied in a ‘good practice guide’ for the development of intercultural competence when teaching Translation ([www.pictllp.eu/download/Good\\_Practice\\_Report.pdf](http://www.pictllp.eu/download/Good_Practice_Report.pdf)). Firstly, the crucial importance of teaching intercultural skills was naturally seen as fundamental and of teaching them *explicitly* – that is, (a) giving the teaching of intercultural skills both at theoretical and practical levels a formal place in courses, modules and syllabuses (b) making clear to students the importance of intercultural skills and the fact that they are being taught (c) assessing them and making it clear to students that intercultural skills are being assessed. A second principle was that these outputs should in every way possible be ‘flexible’ so that they could be easily adapted to extremely varied cultural and institutional contexts. A final principle, again deriving from the variety of context in which the project’s outputs might be used, was to attempt to incorporate variety into the outputs of the project itself. Accordingly, the curriculum framework has both theoretical elements and very professional ones offering something both to Translation programmes at the theoretical and the more applied range of the spectrum. Similarly, the teaching materials range from those which are more theoretically-orientated and more likely to fit in with a lecture-based (teacher-centred) style to others more practical and text-based (student-centred), although it was also taken as a principle that any activity-based learning tasks should have clear theoretical underpinnings.

## CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK' FOR DEVELOPING THE INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE OF TRANSLATORS

Amongst the things which the project produced and which constituted its core was a 'curriculum framework' underlying both the teaching and assessment materials. In essence it comprises two parts. Its first part tries to identify areas in which students of Translation need to develop themselves if they are to deal effectively with the intercultural challenges of being professional translators. These areas for development were seen as falling into the following three general categories (see figure a below) —

- (1) *theoretical* — mastery of underlying concepts, principles and perspectives derived from Intercultural theory, Translation Studies and related disciplines
- (2) *textual* — ability to make careful, interculturally aware, translation decisions when producing translated texts
- (3) *interpersonal* — ability to make careful, interculturally aware, communication decisions when interacting through any medium with clients, colleagues etc. when working as a translator.

Each general area or 'learning dimension' was then sub-divided into four smaller areas or 'learning sub-dimensions'. So dimension 2, the textual dimension, for example, has as its third sub-dimension 'Recognition of problems of non-equivalence and applying strategies to address them'.

**Curriculum framework – intercultural skills for translators**

1 dimension – theoretical	2 dimension – textual	3 dimension – interpersonal
1.1. Core concepts of the theory of intercultural communication (e.g. <i>culture</i> , <i>identity</i> , representations, etc.)	2.1. Comparative analysis of cultural issues from source and target audiences	3.1. Cultural awareness and empathy manifested in social exchange (e.g. when negotiating a translation brief with a member of the source culture)
1.2. Conceptual tools for analysing intercultural perspective (e.g. frameworks for cultural comparison, scales of cultural awareness etc.)	2.2. Comparative analysis of texts from an intercultural perspective — lexical and syntactic features, discourse patterns, visual resonance — and use of the analysis in the translation processes	3.2. Curiosity and pro-activeness in all forms of contact with other cultures (e.g. when interacting with colleagues or clients from the source culture)
1.3. Knowledge of the cultural context of translation (e.g. differences between professional translation practices in several countries, implications for translators, etc.)	2.3. Recognition of problems of non-equivalence and applying strategies to address them (e.g. explicitation, omission, substitution, etc.)	3.3. Sensitivity to affects and potential conflicts in communication (e.g. spoken, non-verbal etc.)
1.4. The links between intercultural communication theory and Translation Studies (e.g. cultural profiling and readership analysis, cultural subjectivity and translator's personal visibility)	2.4. Recognition and management of the impact of the translator's internalized culture and emotional reaction to elements of the source culture and text	3.4. Social positioning (e.g. deciding whether to conform, hybridize or deviate from the dominant social norms)

**Figure a** ([www.picllp.eu/en/curriculum-framework/curriculum-framework-document](http://www.picllp.eu/en/curriculum-framework/curriculum-framework-document)).

The purpose of this first part of the curriculum framework should perhaps be clarified. It is *not* intended as a syllabus for a module in Intercultural Communication for Translation students, although it could be used as a basis for designing such a module.

Rather, it is a list of areas which, in the view of the project team and drawing on the project survey, students need to develop *in some context* during their overall course of study of Translation. So the dimensions or sub-dimensions could be introduced across a range of modules in different years of their study. Equally, neither the dimensions nor sub-dimensions are intended to be sequential — different views may be taken on which should be taught first. Some might prefer to ensure students have a solid grounding in the theoretical dimension before passing on the concrete application of theory in translation or interpersonal processes — yet some might also prefer to raise issues of theory within the context of producing translated texts on the grounds that the relevance of theory was then easier for students to see. The dimensions and sub-dimensions are therefore meant to be a highly flexible pedagogical tool simply trying to articulate what might need to be taught, but to be implemented and adapted in ways that suit the context and vision of the staff involved.

This kind of curriculum framework will already be familiar to some as it functions in exactly the same way as a number of curriculum frameworks used in various communities of practice for language teaching, a highly influential example of which is the ‘Common European Framework of Reference for Languages’, produced under the auspices of the Council of Europe ([www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework\\_EN.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf)).

Linguistic competence is in contexts of this kind often divided up into Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing (sometimes with additional components) each of which is an area or ‘dimension’ in which students need to develop. Equally, some curriculum frameworks divide these general areas or ‘dimensions’ up into smaller ones, into ‘sub-dimensions’ or ‘sub-skills’. Listening might, for example, be seen as having the sub-dimension of ‘reading for gist comprehension’.

It is perhaps worth devoting a little space to the rationale behind each of the three general learning dimensions. The rationale behind the theoretical dimension is fairly obvious. Not only did the survey prioritise this dimension, but project partners felt that without a good mastery of relevant intercultural theory translation students would be unable to deal with the intercultural challenges of professional practice. Central to this theoretical dimension would be the development of student awareness, making use of theoretical tools, of how cultural factors are intimately bound up with linguistic ones, of how translators are always influenced by culture and work within complex cultural contexts. The rationale behind the textual dimension probably needs little explanation — translators need to produce a wide variety of written texts and clearly need to be able to deal, drawing on theoretical tools, with the huge range of intercultural challenges producing translated texts may involve. The final dimension — interpersonal — may surprise some. It is a response to the fact that translators always work in specific professional environments and have to interact constantly with other people as part of their work. The interactions might be with clients, agencies, in-house colleagues, editors or others and might take the form of spoken communication which is face-to-face or via telephone or skype conversations or written communication via text messaging, email or social media. Given the likely cultural variety of the participants in these interactions they will often constitute classic instances of intercultural communication. In some Translation programmes this ‘professional’ aspect of the translator’s role will be judged to be an

important part of the training students need to receive. Other programmes will place more emphasis on the theoretical dimension and others again on the processes of text production. Once more the curriculum framework is intended to be flexible and teachers of Translation will need to engage in adapting it to context.

If the first part of the curriculum framework involves an attempt to capture key areas in which students of Translation need to develop their intercultural abilities, the second part describes different levels of development they might achieve in these areas — as such it is closely linked to issues of assessment. Accordingly, every sub-dimension indicating a relatively specific area in which students need to develop intercultural has three corresponding ‘descriptors’ — that is, it has three descriptions of the level of competence students might have reached along that dimension. For example, corresponding to textual sub-dimension 2.3, referred to above, (‘identification of problems of non-equivalence and the use of strategies for resolving them’) are the following three level descriptors —

<b>2.3 Recognition of problems of non-equivalence and applying strategies to address them (e.g. explicitation, omission, substitution, etc.)</b>	has knowledge of some translation strategies for coping with intercultural problems but has difficulty choosing the appropriate ones to apply.	is able to apply some translation strategies but still at times relies mostly on intuition.	has a wide repertoire of translation strategies and is able to critically evaluate and justify their choice and applicability to each specific translation.
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**Figure b** ([http://pictlp.eu/download/curriculum/PICT-CURRICULUM\\_ENGLISH.pdf](http://pictlp.eu/download/curriculum/PICT-CURRICULUM_ENGLISH.pdf)) p.10.

The PICT curriculum framework again follows many communities of both educational and professional practice in describing achievement in this kind of way. Its approach, therefore, to achievement and assessment is once again close to that of the widely used Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, referred to above, which describes different levels of achievement for each of the broad areas (listening, speaking etc.) which it considers to be part of linguistic competence. The descriptors for the PICT project have two basic purposes. Firstly, they help to make it more precise for teachers of Translation, for each sub-dimension, what knowledge, awareness, skills etc. they should be trying to teach their students. In the second place, and more importantly, the descriptors can help in assessing students. The level descriptors are not, of course, precise enough to allow for the ascription of *specific* marks to students but, depending on how marks are ascribed within a particular institutional context, they can allow a description of competence for a given sub-dimension to be associated with a *range* of marks whether in characters or numbers. So, to take the table above, one might associate the first description of achievement ‘has knowledge etc.’ with the mark range 0—40, the second description ‘is able to apply etc.’ with 40—70 and the final column with 70—100 so that the table is at least a broad guide to assigning marks. It is, moreover, usually not difficult to amend the three level descriptors for each sub-dimension so that they become more if that corresponds better to institutional norms of assessment — an institution, for example, giving marks from 1 to 5 could modify the three descriptors from the PICT project to give five, a task which experience has already shown, tends to be relatively



easy. Using descriptors of this kind can also play a role in helping to standardise marking between different teachers, across different teaching groups and across different academic years.

### TEACHING MATERIALS

The project produced thirteen sample intercultural teaching materials, each in seven languages, which can be used freely by teachers of Translation ([www.pictllp.eu/en/teaching-material](http://www.pictllp.eu/en/teaching-material)). Each sample ‘teaching material’ actually comprises the following —

1. A **lesson or ‘session’ plan** specifying —
  - ◆ the precise sub-dimension(s) of the curriculum framework that the materials in question are intended to develop
  - ◆ the stage of the students training at which the material might be used (1 — early, 2 — middle, 3 — late)
  - ◆ the practical or resource preparation to be done by the teacher before the class
  - ◆ a statement of whether the activities require students to work individually, in pairs/groups etc.
  - ◆ the approximate time the lesson should take if all of the activities are used unadapted
  - ◆ the ‘background’ theory with which the teacher needs to be familiar prior to the lesson. This includes reading suggestions which may also be incorporated into a reading list for students
  - ◆ a description, for the teacher’s benefit, of what each activity in the lesson involves analogous to what is commonly found in the ‘teacher’s book’ that in some traditions accompanies a student text book for learning a foreign language.
2. Actual **worksheets** or suggestions where to find them —
  - ◆ activity worksheets to be given to students for use in class
  - ◆ where appropriate, recommendations on the kinds of easily available text for translation the teacher would need to give to students in class.

The sets of materials are available on the project website downloadable as Microsoft word documents as well as PDFs without any form of copyright restriction. It was mentioned in an earlier section that flexibility of all outputs was an underlying principle of the project. Microsoft word documents are easy to modify and allow materials to be rapidly adapted to context. Equally, in a number of cases, texts for translation have been recommended rather than provided (for example, the teacher will need to choose an appropriate recipe or tourist brochure). This is to allow the choice of text to be made relevant to context which includes the choice of source and target language — the student activities will, however, still be completely usable whatever text of the recommended type is chosen and whatever the source and target languages are. It is also intended that the suggested time for the sequence of activities can to an extent be adapted to what is usual in the institutional context in question by the omission/extension of some of the student activities. Likewise, a limited amount of work would be required to convert the sequence of activities into something more student-centred or teacher-centred.

To make all of this a little more concrete an example taken directly from the PICT website is included below about which I will make a few explanatory comments. The example taken is entitled 'Realia in Travel Brochures' ([www.pictllp.eu/download/en/teaching-material/9\\_PICT-teaching\\_Realia-in-travel-brochures.pdf](http://www.pictllp.eu/download/en/teaching-material/9_PICT-teaching_Realia-in-travel-brochures.pdf)). The lesson/session plan for this starts, as can be seen below, by specifying the sub-dimension which the session and materials are intended to teach/develop, although the sub-dimension is there termed 'learning outcome'. In this case the focus is once again sub-dimension 2.3 within the textual dimension 'Recognition of problems of non-equivalence and applying strategies to address them'. It has though been made slightly more specific to context within the lesson plan by specifying that the focus will be on cases where 'culturally specific items' generate the linguistic non-equivalence which constitutes the intercultural challenge for the translator. The full lesson plan and worksheets, as they appear on the PICT website, are included below —

### **Session Plan: Realia in travel brochures**

#### **Learning outcomes**

Textual: 3 (recognition of culture-specific items of one's own culture and knowledge of strategies to deal with them in translation)

#### **Stage: I**

#### **Preparation needed**

Travel brochure(s) in students' mother tongue of their hometown or other area in their own country. Tourism-oriented web pages can be used as well; in that case, sufficient amount of PCs is necessary.

#### **Groups**

Pairs or groups of three.

#### **Time (total suggested time)**

1.5 hours

#### **Background for lecturer (bibliography, anticipated difficulties)**

#### **Central concept: realia**

The term realia is Latin for 'real things' and in translation studies, is used to refer to concepts which are found in a given source culture but not in a given target culture (Leppihalme 2011:126). This is due to the fact that cultures construct reality in different ways. According to Leppihalme (2001: 139), "lexical elements (words or phrases) that refer to the real world 'outside language'". Leppihalme, however, also points out that the distinction between extra- and intralinguistic is somewhat artificial, for when we deal with words, we necessarily also deal with language, even if the words themselves refer to the world outside" (Leppihalme 2001: 139).

According to Florin (1993: 123), realia are words and combinations of words denoting objects and concepts characteristic of the way of life, the culture, the social and historical development of one nation and alien to another. Since they express local and/or historical color they have no exact equivalents in other languages.

Parallel terms: culture-bound problems, culture-specific items, extralinguistic cultural references or culture-specific references.

### **Classification of realia provided by Nedergaard-Larsen (1993)**

#### *Extralinguistic culture-bound problem types*

Geography etc

geography

meteorology

biology

mountains, rivers

weather, climate

flora, fauna

cultural geography

regions, towns

roads, streets etc

History

buildings: monuments, castles etc

events: wars, revolutions, flag days

people: well-known historical persons

Society

industrial level: trade and industry, energy supply etc

social organization: defence, judicial system, police, prisons, local and central authorities

politics: state management, ministries, electoral system, political parties,

politicians, political organisations

social conditions: groups, subcultures, living conditions, problems, ways of life, customs, housing, transport, food, meals, clothing, articles for everyday use, family relations

Culture

religion: churches, rituals, morals, ministers, bishops, religious holidays, saints

education: schools, colleges, universities, lines of education, exams

media: TV, radio, newspapers, magazines

culture: leisure activities, museums, works of art, literature, authors, theatres, cinemas, actors, musicians, idols, restaurants, hotels, nightclubs, cafés, sports, athletes

#### **Potential translation strategies for realia (Leppihalme 2001); examples from English into Finnish.**

- ◆ Direct transfer: pub — *pubi*
- ◆ Calque: ginger beer — *inkivääriolut* (ginger ‘inkivääri’, beer ‘olut’)
- ◆ Cultural adaptation: Hyde Park Corner — *Esplanadinkulma* (Esplanadi is a park in Helsinki, corner, ‘kulma’)
- ◆ Superordinate term: Spotted dick — *jälkiruoka*, ‘a dessert’
- ◆ Explication: the Blitz — *Lontoon pommitukset*, ‘the bombing of London’
- ◆ Addition: translator’s note, glossary, preface, etc.
- ◆ •Omission: realia left out completely

These seven strategies for realia do not cover all the possible ways of dealing with realia in translation, but “offer quite comprehensive coverage”. Leppihalme remarks that a combination of strategies is also possible. For example, direct transfer or a calque may be complemented by addition (2001: 145).

For more detailed accounts, see e.g.:

Florin, Sider 1993. Realia in translation. In: Zlateva, Palma (ed.) *Translation as Social Action. Russian and Bulgarian Perspectives*. London: Routledge, 122—128.

Leppihalme, Ritva 2001: Translation strategies for realia. In Kukkonen, P. & Hartama-Heinonen, R. (eds.) *Mission, Vision, Strategies, and Values: A Celebration of Translator Training and Translation Studies in Kouvola..* Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, p. 139—148.

Leppihalme, Ritva 2011: Realia. In: Yves Gambier & Luc van Doorslaer (eds): *Handbook of Translation Studies*. John Benjamins: Amsterdam. ss. 126—130.

Nedergaard-Larsen, Birgit 1993. Cultural factors in subtitling. *Perspectives: Studies in Translatology* 2, 207—241.

## Activities

### 1. Lead-in: 15 minutes

Students form ‘marketing teams’ and are asked to brainstorm and write down ten things that make their country/hometown sound special (see the student worksheet, task 1). Alternatively, students can be asked to list the items they would miss most if they were to leave their hometown/country for a long period of time. Once the lists are compiled, they are written on the blackboard or smartboard for everyone to see.

### 2. Discussion on the concepts of realia and culture-specific item, teacher-led, 15 minutes

The teacher introduces the concept as a possible instance of non-equivalence in translation and provides a few definitions for them. Examples of realia are sought out among the items listed on the blackboard. At this point, students are encouraged to consider these items from a certain target culture’s point of view (see the student worksheet, task 2).

### 3. Analysing the brochure, time 30 minutes

Students are given a brochure for analysis. In small groups, students are asked to read it and pinpoint all instances of realia in them. This is done for the purpose of translating the text into a foreign language; thus, to be able to see whether an item is “culture-specific” or not, it must be reflected on the target culture in question. Students are also asked to ponder on the possible ways to translate those items into the target language(s, if there are several first foreign languages in the group). (The student worksheet, task 3.)

### 4. Discussion plus introduction of strategies, time 30 minutes

Group discussion on items found in the text and proposed ways of translating them. In the end, introduction of e.g. Leppihalme’s translation strategies for realia. (The strategies can be introduced at an earlier point as well; however, this task is designed to encourage students’ creative thinking and therefore, no ready-made categories are given beforehand.)

Adaptations for an integrated approach This exercise can be easily be integrated in a practical course of translation; after exercises 1—4, students are asked to translate the brochure (the same or another one) as homework.

## STUDENT WORKSHEET: Realia in travel brochures

1. You are a member of a marketing team of your home region (town/country), planning to participate in an international tourism fair. You are at the initial stage of de-

signing promotional material for the fair; to get you started, you are asked to brainstorm in a group and come up with TEN things that might allure tourists to your home region. Write the down in the box below.

2. Take a look at the items in your list and consider them from the translation point of view. Does any of the items pose of problem for translation into your first foreign language(s, if there's variation in the group)? You may make notes in the box below.

3. Now analyse the brochure you are given. What kind of instances of realia can you find in it? How would you translate them into your first foreign language(s)?

4.

### **End of PICT sample material ‘Realia in Travel Brochures’**

Adaptation of these materials in a range of directions, whilst still focusing on the key sub-dimension of the recognition of non-equivalence and the development of strategies for dealing with it, is not difficult to carry out whilst maintaining the same theoretical framework. The version above is at the student-centred end of the spectrum, but a more teacher-centred presentation of Leppihalme’s (or another theorist’s) strategies for dealing with non-equivalence could be used as a first teaching phase whilst still concluding with setting a translation task full of challenges created by references to realia. The key point pedagogically about this session, from the point of view of the project, is, however, that it devotes time *explicitly* to the intercultural challenges of translation rather than picking up examples of intercultural challenges as they occur by chance in a range of texts which are being translated with a focus on other important skills which a translator needs to develop. In this session the focus is *exclusively* on intercultural challenges and translator skills.

### **Assessment materials**

As we have just seen, the project produced samples of teaching materials to aid in the teaching of intercultural skills to Translation students, materials corresponding carefully to the areas of intercultural skill (sub-dimensions) identified in the curriculum framework. At the same time, the project also produced eight ‘assessment’ tasks designed to make it possible to assess the achievement of Translation students’ intercultural abilities in these same areas ([www.pictllp.eu/en/assessment-material](http://www.pictllp.eu/en/assessment-material)). Each task could then be used, together with the relevant descriptors which form a part of the curriculum framework, to assign a student an approximate mark in relation to one or more of its 12 sub-dimensions.

In line with the teaching materials, each ‘assessment material’ comprises, in addition to an instruction sheet or text to be handed out to students, the following ‘guidance notes for teachers’ specifying —

- ◆ The sub-dimension(s) the task is meant to assess
- ◆ The stage of the students training at which the material might be used. It is also specified whether the assessment is ‘formative’ or ‘summative’ — that is, whether its main purpose is to provide students during a specific course with feedback on their progress highlighting where they need to improve or instead to assign them a mark for formal purposes at the end of the course.
- ◆ Whether the assessment task involves students working on their own or in a group
- ◆ The time students have
- ◆ The length of whatever they are expected to write
- ◆ What students are allowed to access (e.g. online or paper/book resources)

As with the teaching materials all assessment tasks are freely available on the project website and are downloadable as Microsoft word documents or PDF files. Once again, flexibility was viewed as paramount. In some cases types of texts for use as part of assessment tasks were recommended rather than provided so that the tasks would be

viable whatever the source or target language. Equally where texts are supplied they could easily be replaced by something more suitable to context whilst maintaining the instructions as to what students are required to do with that text. The task and the time allowed could also be adapted to fit institutional norms and adaptation towards an exam-based version of the task or away from it could usually be made to fit with context.

As in the previous section I will try to clarify this by including below an example from the project website entitled ‘Assessment Task – recipe’ which involves translating part of a recipe from English into another language whilst paying particular attention to the intercultural challenges it poses and providing two forms of analytical commentary upon it ([www.pictlp.eu/download/en/assessment-material/7\\_PICT-assessment\\_task\\_recipe.pdf](http://www.pictlp.eu/download/en/assessment-material/7_PICT-assessment_task_recipe.pdf)). The guidance notes for teachers start by specifying the sub-dimensions the task allows to be assessed which are all within the textual dimension and one of which we encountered in the previous section ‘Recognition of problems of non-equivalence and applying strategies to address them’. The full guidance notes for this assessment task plus the sheet to be given out to students follow —

**Main competences assessed**

textual 1, 2 and 3

**Type**

Formative (Assessment during the course, stages I and II) x

Summative (Assessment at the end of the course, stage III)

**Student working format**

Individual x

Pairs

Groups

Other (describe)

**Task description**

Translation with a commentary/text analysis for translation

**Time**

24 hours

**Length (break down by task)**

translation of a 130-word text chunk, translation commentary of appr. 250 words, comparative analysis of specific features, appr. 300 words

**Other constraints**

Access to library (with cookbooks)

**Assignment Task** The text below is a recipe from the book *English Food* (Penguin/Jane Grigson 1992). Since British cooking has recently become a trend in your home country, the book gets translated into your language, and you have been commissioned to do it. (Before you start, browse the Internet for more information of the original work to get an idea of the audience it is targeted at.)

1. Read the introductory part of the recipe (the bit before the list of ingredients). The paragraph is clearly targeted at a British reader. How would you modify the content for a reader in your country? Please translate the paragraph into your lan-

- guage. In addition, justify the modifications you choose to make due to cultural reasons in a short commentary (appr. 250 words).
2. Have a look at similar recipes in cookbooks written in your language (i.e. recipes of meat dishes with a target audience that is comparable to the one of the source text). Analyse and compare the following features of this recipe and the ones in your language: overall style, structure, and the level of precision, i.e. how detailed the instructions are. On the basis of your analysis, is there a need for modification *due to cultural reasons* with regard to these three aspects? Justify your answer with examples.
  3. Cooking terminology is also a culture-specific issue. Identify at least five cooking terms or phrases in the recipe and translate them into your language. Ignore the introductory text and focus on the ingredients and cooking instructions.

### **BRAISED BEEF AND CARROTS**

A GOOD VERSION OF BRAISED BEEF AND CARROTS that I had from a young Irish friend, Carmel O'Connell, who used to work with that splendid chef, Colin White. She recommended using brisket – I bought a piece of well-hung Aberdeen-Angus — but topside could be substituted, or that muscle that runs down the shoulder blade, sometimes called salmon or feather cut, if you can persuade your butcher to cut it for you. English butchers are loath to do this, preferring to cut across several muscles rather than removing and trimming one nicely shaped piece of meat, but people living in Scotland, or who are lucky enough to have a butcher who understands French cuts, may be able to manage it. If more convenient, the dish can be cooked in a low oven.

For 6—8

2—2 1/2 kilos (4—5 lb) piece rolled brisket

Lard

6—8 fine large carrots, peeled

Up to one litre (1 3/4 pts) poultry stock, unsalted

Generous sprig of thyme

Salt, pepper, chopped parsley

CHOOSE a flameproof pot that holds the meat closely. Brown the beef in a little lard and put it into the pot. Slice carrots thinly, in the processor or on a mandolin. Arrange a quarter of them around the beef. Pour in stock to come 5—7 cm (2—3”) up the pot and tuck in the thyme. Bring to the boil and cover. The lid need not fit very tightly, as a certain amount of evaporation is desirable.

Keep the pot at a gentle bubble, checking it every half hour, adding the rest of the carrots in three batches and topping up the liquid level with more stock. After 2 hours it should be cooked, but be prepared to give it a further half hour. The dish will come to no harm if it has to be kept warm for a while, so allow plenty of time.

Transfer the beef to a hot serving dish, and surround with the drained carrots which will be extremely succulent. Season them, sprinkle with parsley and keep warm. Strain



liquid into a shallow pan and boil down to concentrate the flavour. Season, pour a little over the beef and carrots, and the rest into a hot sauceboat. Boiled potatoes go well with this dish.

NOTE: The original recipe suggests cooking the dish one day and reheating it the next for an even better flavour. If you do this, chill the pot fast in ice cubes and water, refrigerate overnight and reheat thoroughly.

As with the teaching materials, adaptation whilst still focusing on the assessment of the same sub-dimensions, is not difficult to carry out. Most aspects of the task could, for example, be done under examination conditions although access to comparable recipes in students' first language would need through some medium to be provided. The word guidelines are also easy to amend and the forms of comparative analysis and commentary justifying translation choices can be brought into line with local theoretical perceptions and institutional practices. It would also be possible to assess these sub-dimensions of intercultural competence at the same time as a whole range of other translation competences less intercultural in nature if students were asked to translate the whole text. A key principle of the project was, however, the belief that if the task is to be modified in this kind of integrated way a number of marks would still need to be awarded *specifically for intercultural performance* and that students should be made fully aware that they will be assessed for these specific intercultural skills at the same time as being assessed for other kinds of translation skill.

### **Potential limitations of the project's outputs**

Having introduced the three core contributions of the PICT project I want to comment on some of the potential limitations of each which could impact on anyone wishing to make use of them.

#### Curriculum framework

This, as we have seen, identifies and prioritises three broad areas in which students need to develop interculturally. It is, however, inevitable that some of the enormously varied staff involved in teaching Translation in Higher Education in very different contexts will not have completely the same perception of what the key intercultural areas for their students are. Some may find that having only one dimension devoted to theory, and to the link with Translation Studies, is 'theoretically light'. Others, more focused on teaching Translation in a way that is heavily focused on practical skills needed in text production, may find the textual dimension thin. Both may challenge the need for the third 'interpersonal dimension' seeing it as not specific to the role of the Translator or as going too far in the direction of 'professional training'. Others, at the practical and professional end of the spectrum, may question how far students tend to be interested in theory. All of these concerns have already been expressed in one country or another about PICT.

There is no magic answer to these potential limits, only perhaps the following weaker type of response. It has been repeated throughout this article that it was always

understood within the project team that there is huge variety in perception and practice in relation to the teaching of Translation generally and to its intercultural element in particular. As a result, all of its key outputs were designed to be used flexibly and to be adapted to context. This could involve colleagues locally in selecting only those outputs or parts of them that work in their context. Someone, then, teaching on a programme at the theoretical end of the spectrum might simply omit the third interpersonal dimension of the curriculum framework judging it perhaps as an area to be developed once a Translator is working. More generally, any sub-dimension judged to be low priority can simply be omitted. The framework can also, of course, be refined or supplemented. Staff might, for example, feel that a key area of theory is missing in the PICT curriculum framework and add an extra sub-dimension within the theory to fill the gap. Equally, they might, as was discussed earlier under ‘assessment’, feel that four levels of achievement, rather than the three of the project, need to have descriptors provided for them, given the way their grading system works — the descriptors could then be adapted accordingly. Feedback on all of these aspects of the project has already suggested that such modifications are often neither time-consuming nor difficult to make.

But no less a limitation is the fact that the PICT curriculum framework, like any pedagogical document, carries its own inevitable forms of subjectivity. That subjectivity, naturally, is the product of a range of factors. One of those was the nature of the survey, the results of which were one element which fed into the shaping of the outputs of the project. Like any survey, the PICT survey of staff and students on Translation programmes concerning current and future priorities and practice in the intercultural realm had limits imposed by resources. As a result the survey only took place in seven EU countries and within a limited number of universities providing translator training within some of those countries, so representativity clearly had its limits even if, as described earlier, an attempt was made in creating the project team to incorporate diversity. Where the curriculum framework is concerned, the survey did ask staff and students to try to identify the areas of intercultural competence they felt to be most relevant to translator training and this fed into the creation of the curriculum framework. Yet such methodology itself has its limits. It can be particularly hard for students, with often very limited experience of professional practice as a translator, to identify what intercultural skills they would need when practising — such awareness only grows over time, often through intercultural education and professional or personal experience. This limited the impact the information generated by the survey was able to have on the formulation of the curriculum framework and placed more emphasis on the project team itself, on *their* perceptions of the intercultural dimension of translation and on the theorists and research to whom they were inclined to turn – and this, naturally and unavoidably, created another layer of subjectivity. And, to cite just one more of the inevitable layers of subjectivity potentially affecting any international project, it was a simple reality that, even though the project’s outputs were ultimately made available in seven languages, English was, as so often, the working language and all outputs were translated from English language base texts, with all the forms of bias this risks carrying.

None of these forms of subjectivity rob the project of its value. But they do mean that some institutions will have to do more by way of selection or modification of the PICT outputs than others. One example of this subjectivity and its consequences might be as follows. It has already been fed back, quite justifiably, that the PICT curriculum framework puts the emphasis heavily on skills at the expense of *knowledge*, making the framework less suitable to those who prioritise in their teaching up-to-date knowledge of the source and target cultures. If this is perceived to be the case then clearly the dimensions and sub-dimensions would need some local reworking although this is not necessarily very difficult to do — a new dimension could in fact be added entitled ‘knowledge of source and target cultures’ or something similar and tailored sub-dimensions could be provided.

A final potential limit to the curriculum framework is common to frameworks of this kind. It consists in the fact that resources have not permitted any systematic empirical confirmation of the PICT framework’s accuracy — that is to say that the possession of a high degree of competence in relation to the identified intercultural sub-dimensions has not been fully shown to have an impact on translation quality within relevant professional contexts. It is not that this is methodologically difficult to do. But to look systematically at how far translators’ professional performance is enhanced by possession of the intercultural competences identified in the curriculum framework would be resource intensive. And, as is very common with curriculum frameworks, such an investigation has not taken place. Once again, this does not deprive the framework of value — far from it — but it does constitute a potential limit to its accuracy.

#### Teaching materials

What potential limitations are there, then, to the PICT teaching materials? The underlying principle of the need for flexibility in their use has already been strongly emphasised — the likely need for contextual modification was always anticipated. The materials produced tend, as has already been mentioned, to be student-centred and activity or text-based rather than to be purely focused on theory delivered in a lecture format with less space for the practical application of that theory. This did reflect the survey findings and doubtless to some degree the overall orientation of the project team, two factors which, as with the curriculum framework, reflect the inevitable subjectivity of any project. And, here again, more work in terms of modification may be needed to be carried out by colleagues working in environments where this student-centred orientation goes against the prevailing pedagogical practice. A further limitation in relation to the teaching materials, which does not apply to the curriculum framework, is that they are conceived of as *sample* materials only – that is to say they are not conceived of as sufficing to teach fully all of the sub-dimensions of the curriculum framework. They are intended to give only an indication of what kind of materials might be used to do this.

#### Assessment materials

The assessment materials produced by the project suffer from parallel limitations. If the orientation of the teaching materials tends towards the student-centred, the orientation of the assessment materials is towards assessment via coursework, out of class tasks

or portfolio-production, rather than assessment via tests or exams. The orientation is also towards assessing intercultural skills separately rather than towards assessing intercultural skills as just *one* assessed aspect amongst others when a student produces a translated text. Once again, those working at a greater distance from these pedagogical approaches will need to do more to modify the assessment materials than those working closer to them. And, as with the teaching materials, the assessment materials are samples only and would not suffice to allow evaluation of a student's level of skill in relation to all of the sub-dimensions in the curriculum framework. A final limitation of the assessment materials perhaps worth mentioning is the fact that whilst all of them were piloted and amended in the light of the piloting process, it proved much harder, for purely practical and logistical reasons, to carry out extensive piloting than with the teaching materials. As a result minor problems may occur in the use of the assessment materials which are less likely to occur with the teaching materials.

The project never had the incoherent ambition to produce a course in intercultural competence for translation students with universal applicability. As its title suggests, the project is concerned to contribute to *promoting* the development of intercultural skills in translators – with selective contextualised use, modification to suit local needs and supplementation or extension in line with institutional perceptions and practice, there is every reason to believe it can do this.

### CONCLUSION

In this article I have tried to provide an introduction to the contributions an EU project has attempted to make to improving the teaching of intercultural skills to students of Translation pointing out, at the same time, some of the unavoidable limits these pedagogical contributions have and the consequent need to use them flexibly. I have also tried to explain the broad lines of the methodology used in producing those contributions, emphasising in particular the underlying pedagogical theory, principles and traditions of practice, within which the pedagogical outputs of the project are located.

As mentioned in the introduction, there are a number of signs within Higher Education in many countries that a significant number of researchers within Translation Studies and teachers of Translation have a growing sense of the importance of intercultural facets of translation processes and of the consequent need to make intercultural skills one explicit aspect of translator education and training. Where then does the main focus of research need in the near future need to be? Inevitably, opinions on this will differ. In my view, however, the most important area of research will not be directly pedagogical. I say this because, whilst translator education naturally has its pedagogical specificities, improvements in the pedagogy in this area will, I believe, come from the continued application of *general* pedagogical principles already established to the particular context of teaching intercultural skills to translation students. The PICT project in fact did no more than this. The pedagogical principles underlying the construction of the curriculum framework, plus the teaching and assessment materials, are common amongst many

existing communities of educational and professional practice and were simply borrowed from language teaching and applied to the teaching of intercultural skills to translation students.

If the most pressing need is not then currently for pedagogical research in this area where should research in the short and mid-term be focusing? In my view everything turns around the refinement of the curriculum framework for whilst this is, in the context of the PICT project, a central pedagogical tool it is *also* an extremely condensed summary of potential research findings — it is bound to have omissions in places and to lack detail or refinement in others. It attempts to capture very succinctly the range of ways in which cultures, and the ability of a translator to manage their relationship to those cultures, can affect all aspects of the professional performance of a translator. In reality, however, the range of ways in which this can happen, many of them very subtle and requiring extremely careful analysis, is only gradually being better understood. That research is likely to go hand-in-hand with more general research on intercultural competence but also with specific debates within Translation Studies of which attempts to articulate in what translation quality consists are just one example (cf. House, 2014, 2015). Such research needs however to move beyond *a priori* attempts to articulate in what intercultural competence in a particular professional domain consists. It needs also to have an empirical element in which the actual impact on translator performance, including translation quality, is ascertained so that articulated frameworks of intercultural competence of the kind which the PICT curriculum framework embodies actually have some solid confirmation.

The limits to such formal empirical confirmation take nothing away, however, from the more fragmentary evidence which underlies the increasingly widely-shared sense that intercultural skills are extremely important within the education of translators. It is as a contribution both to practice and debate within this area that both the PICT project and this article are conceived.

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## **ПРЕПОДАВАНИЕ МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНОЙ КОММУНИКАЦИИ ПРИ ОБУЧЕНИИ ПЕРЕВОДУ**

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Статья рассматривает систематическое развитие навыков межкультурной коммуникации в процессе обучения переводу в университете. Представлены методы исследования и результаты проекта ЕС «Развитие межкультурной компетенции переводчиков». Автор описывает цели, участников, временные рамки проекта и методы работы. Также дается объяснение основных теоретических принципов, лежащих в основе проекта и представленных в заключительном практическом руководстве. Результатом проекта стали рабочий план, учебные материалы и тесты, выложенные в свободном доступе на сайте проекта. Эти материалы имеют теоретические и методические обоснования и призваны помочь преподавателям перевода в вузах развить навыки межкультурной коммуникации у студентов. В конце статьи автор приводит размышления о масштабах проекта, его контекстуальной адаптации и потенциальных областях дальнейших исследований.

**Ключевые слова:** межкультурная коммуникация, межкультурная компетенция, перевод, педагогика, учебный план, учебные материалы.

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# TRAINING TRANSLATORS FOR A SUPERDIVERSE WORLD. TRANSLATORS' INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE AND TRANSLATION AS AFFECTIVE WORK

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This article discusses how translation as one form of intercultural language work, is complicated by what has recently been discussed under the title of superdiversity, that is, the increased linguistic, ethnic and cultural hybridity of our societies. Superdiversity forces us to acknowledge the affective nature of translation work, thus foregrounding the role of empathy. The author argues that many traditional Translation Studies approaches need to be refined to remain valid in contemporary superdiverse societies, and that translator training and translation research alike would benefit from a critical reassessment of their underlying culture concepts.

**Key words:** intercultural, translators' intercultural competence, superdiversity, affective work, empathy, translator training.

## 1. INTRODUCTION: TRANSLATION AS INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

An Internet search with the string “translation as intercultural” gives an endless list of hits. Translation is discussed as intercultural communication; intercultural communication tool; intercultural mediation; intercultural intermediation; intercultural exchange; intercultural transfer; intercultural practice; intercultural event; intercultural action; intercultural activity; and intercultural conflict. Indeed, it has become a truism in Translation Studies to say that translation is a form of intercultural communication (for details, see Katan 2009). It feels safe to argue that most translation scholars would agree with this notion, and that many practitioners would agree. But it is another question entirely whether we have a well-defined and uniform understanding of what is meant by this truism.

A recent EU project on intercultural competence in translator training conducted a situational survey among translation teachers and students in seven European countries (PICT 2012). The results depicted a rather varied field across the countries involved, but generally high levels of awareness of intercultural issues both among teachers and students. A vast majority of respondents, students and teachers alike, considered intercultural competence to be *crucially important* for translators. A closer look at the survey results, however, reveals a less optimal scene. The most important area was, in responses from most countries, considered to be “general knowledge of ‘Culture’ (e.g. institutions, politics, current affairs, religion, geography, the arts)”. This emphasis on cultural knowledge is a traditional stronghold in many translator training institutions. Undoubtedly, it is indeed valuable knowledge for any aspiring translator, but one can question whether

this is the core of *intercultural competence*, and whether a more fine-grained differentiation between *cultural competence*, *cross-cultural competence* and *intercultural competence* would actually be needed\*. Intuitively and individually, many teachers have surely already found ways of teaching both cultural knowledge and intercultural competence in a critical and reflexive manner, but I argue that the distinctions and their implications are not very well-formed in translation pedagogy nor in translation theory.

In this article, both translation theory and translator training are reviewed critically from the point of view of intercultural competence. Recent global developments make this review and revision task even more pressing, as translation as one form of intercultural language work is increasingly often complicated by what has recently been discussed under the title of superdiversity, that is, the increased linguistic, ethnic and cultural hybridity of our societies (Blommaert 2010, 2013; Blommaert and Rampton 2011). To function competently in increasingly superdiverse contemporary contexts, translators need to be trained to approach their professional practice reflexively. They need to learn to repeatedly ask (Piller 2011: 13):

who makes culture relevant  
to whom  
in which context  
for which purposes?

Superdiversity also highlights the affective nature of translation work. Communication is not only a matter of transmitting content, but also about issues such as inclusion, empowerment, belonging and identity. The more superdiverse and heterogeneous the recipients of translated texts become, the more translators need to let go of their assumptions of pre-existing cultural knowledge and develop their skills of empathy, compassion and flexible decision-making. The emphasis on empathy is all the more relevant because it runs contrary to two dominant trends in professional translation: the traditional expectations of impartiality, particularly for interpreters (Hokkanen, in press), and the increasing pressure towards machine-dominated translation, side-lining human actors capable of judicial decision-making and cultural adaptations (Kenny 2011).

## 2. CULTURES, INTERCULTURES AND SUPERDIVERSITY

Reflexivity is not only necessary for individual practicing translators. It needs to start with the discipline itself, and we need to ask who makes culture relevant to whom, in which context, and for which purposes *in Translation Studies*. The discipline has not fully begun to discuss the inherent binary nationalism in translation practice, translator training and research alike, as cultures tend to get conflated with nationalities. In many other fields in social sciences and humanities, a long tradition of critical discussions

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\* Similarly, David Katan's otherwise insightful overview of the role of intercultural competence in translator training (2009) seems to make no distinction between cultural competence, cross-cultural competence and intercultural competence.



on the effects of building research and practice on the assumption that the nation-state is a, or even the, natural unit of analysis exists under the rubric of “methodological nationalism” (see, e.g., Wimmer & Glick Schiller 2002). Whereas many other fields have engaged in debates on overcoming this nationalistic myopia and essentialist notions of culture in their disciplinary inheritance, similar discussions have been less common in Translation Studies. Some methodological nationalism may well be inevitable in a practice that is built on crossing a barrier between two languages and cultures — both core concepts firmly entangled in nationalist discourses — but its non-reflexive adoption leads to rigid categorisations that are less and less helpful and potentially even harmful in contemporary social situations.

It is evident that issues related to culture(s) run to the core of the discipline and its identity, and this may have functioned as a barrier to critical discussions. Indeed, it can be argued that a heightened understanding of the crucial role of cultural issues in real-life translation acts was the driving force behind the efforts to build an independent discipline of Translation Studies in the early 1980s. This move away from linguistic theories of translation is now often labelled as the cultural turn. To be more precise, it was largely a turn to the *target* culture, to the target culture's and target readers' translation needs and constraints, norms and systems (Toury 2012; Vermeer 1996).

As the pioneering translation scholars turned away from linguistic comparisons of the source text and the translation, they also turned their attention away from the source culture. This pendulum movement between source text/culture orientation and target text/culture orientation is a constant feature of theoretical discussions of translation, and one can easily discern an ancestral lineage of source orientation from 19<sup>th</sup> century romantic nationalists such as Friedrich Schleiermacher to the contemporary spokesman of foreignising, Lawrence Venuti (1995; Koskinen 2000). Debates over a suitable method of translation have tended to highlight the nature of translation as *cross-cultural* movement and the corresponding need for the translator to choose which way to bend. This has left the discipline with a dualistic legacy. In a well-known quotation, Schleiermacher summed it as follows:

Either the translator leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, and moves the reader toward him. Or he leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the author toward him (Friedrich Schleiermacher 1813/1977: 74).

It is also well known that Schleiermacher favoured the former method, and considered the latter unsuited for serious literature. He also continued by also warning against attempts to search for a balance between the extremes, and stated that each person needs to choose where they belong, to avoid remaining forever in the unfriendly middle ground. Anthony Pym's (2011) rereading of Schleiermacher turns the idea up-side down as he argues that this unhappy middle ground is precisely where translators always already are, and where they also should be. This middle ground he renames *interculture*. According to him (2000: n.p.), “‘inter-’ is not to be confused with things that go from one culture to another (‘cross-cultural’ seems an adequate adjective for that), nor with heterogeneity within a social space (‘multicultural’ would suffice there)”. Rather, intercul-

tures are formed in the intersections or overlaps between two (or more) cultures. This reorientation allows him to challenge both fidelity to the source culture and a loyalty to the target culture. He places translators in a specific locale that draws from several cultures but is not wholly determined by any (ibid.).

This in-between space has structures and dynamics that are similar to those of cultures themselves; it functions as a social space with its own membership rites, norms of behaviour, ideologies and ethics (Pym 2000). It is a culture, but not a homogenous and monolithic one, and definitely not a national one. This intercultural space is inhabited also by other middlemen: international businessmen, diplomats, smugglers, human traffickers, and spies. This motley crew consists of “Blendlinge”, i.e., individuals with mixed origins, feared by Schleiermacher but celebrated by Pym (2011).

I have not seen Pym discussing intercultural spaces in terms of intercultural communication, but we could at least tentatively argue that the rites, norms, ideologies and ethics of this hypothetical intercultural space are products of intercultural negotiation, and that living in such a space requires and enhances intercultural competence, that is, the knowledge, skills and attitudes required and valued among those who work and live in such multicultural intersections. The notion of interculture thus offers a more functional basis for translators’ intercultural competence than Schleiermacherian romantic dualism that presumes cross-cultural movement and avoids the middle ground. In contrast, the notion of interculture emphasises constant negotiation, flexibility and mutual acceptance, and it eschews ideas of fixed and monocultural identities and side-taking.

### 3. SUPERDIVERSITY AND INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

In Pym’s categorisation, intercultural spaces are different from multicultural societies, and the difference seems to mainly reside in how self-contained versus dialogic the culturally heterogeneous community is, as intercultural spaces are seen to develop in intersections of constant movement between two or more cultures. This distinction may be increasingly difficult to maintain in real life. Social scientists and sociolinguists have drawn our attention to the increasingly complex cultural set-up in contemporary societies and the growing difficulties in categorising inhabitants in any fixed categories. Steven Vertovec (2006: xx) has labelled this new quality of societies as *superdiversity*, describing it in terms of an “increased number of new, small and scattered, multiple-origin, transnationally connected, socio-economically differentiated and legally stratified immigrants”. He emphasises that new migrants are diverse across a wide range of variables including ethnicity, immigration status, rights and entitlements, labour market experiences, gender and age profiles, education levels, and language repertoires (Vertovec 2007). In superdiverse societies, one does not need to be a spy or an interpreter to lead an intercultural life; paperless refugees, second-generation immigrants and transnational families may feel the tensions of interculturality much more concretely and painfully in their everyday lives than professional translators and interpreters.

Superdiversity takes many forms. The interculturality experienced in major metropolises such as London or New York is very different from the life and work in Krakow

or Joensuu. Superdiversity in African and Asian societies is not similar to that in Western societies. It is also not only new: people with multiple cultural and linguistic origins have always cohabited with one another. But it seems to capture a dominant feature of our lives, and it is increasingly observable almost everywhere in our contemporary world.

The more we accept some degree of superdiversity as a valid and recognisable image of contemporary societies, the more it becomes evident that the either/or legacy in Translation Studies, with its dualistic discussions of domestication and foreignisation for example, is not a sufficient basis for translational action. Pym's notion of intercultural is much easier to accommodate with superdiversity, and it allows us to rethink some traditional axioms of translation and to realise and appreciate the cultural and linguistic diversity of the world. The intercultural is in fact not a special case; it is more often the monoculture which is an exception. It follows that translators' intercultural competence needs to accommodate superdiversity, and that the nationalistic, cross-cultural and knowledge-based approach of traditional Translation Studies and translator training is increasingly insufficient in explaining and directing translation work.

Obviously, superdiversity poses similar challenges to intercultural communication as it does to Translation Studies and translator training. Indeed, the three phases of intercultural communication research identified by Ingrid Piller (2011: 76—95) seem to contain an element of moving away from monolithic national cultures that Translation Studies also needs to take. According to Piller, intercultural communication research 1.0 focused on large-scale comparisons of monolithic and measurable *national* cultural traits (Hofstede was a key reference). Phase 2.0 brought to the fore fieldwork studies in multinational *companies* (organisational cultures), and during the current phase 3.0, focus has shifted to *individuals*, to questions linked to communication, linguistic capital and the commodification of multilingual proficiency. Of course, there are many explanations for these shifts in focus, but looking at individuals and their idiosyncratic competencies rather than searching collective cultures is in line with the notion of superdiversity which implies individual differences rather than cultural homogeneity.

#### **4. TRANSLATION AS AFFECTIVE WORK**

I have argued above that traditional models in Translation Studies are insufficient on dealing with superdiversity. How, then, should we interpret the notion of translation as intercultural communication in the framework of superdiversity, positing both translators and their clients, authors and readers within an intercultural space or in-between such spaces? It seems evident that in order to accommodate the emergent new diversity, a new phase, similar to that identified in intercultural communication research, needs to take place in Translation Studies. In training, the focus needs to shift away from discussions of how source texts represent their cultural origin, and of how target texts need to be made to adapt into theirs. We need to learn to read more carefully *the individual text* we are dealing with, and to recognise and to value the unique network of cultural affiliations it develops, and to grasp the intended and equally unique affiliations

of the target text which we need to learn to draft creatively and emphatically into each context of use. Similarly, we need to learn to become attuned to the individual authors and equally individual users of translations (see Suojanen et al. 2015). All this requires a new set of methods, but even more so, it requires a new sensitivity to the affective nature of translation work.

There is a strong emotional element involved in language choice and language use, and languages are directly linked to issues of identity and belonging. I therefore argue that while translation is often seen and evaluated in terms of efficiency, adequacy and consistency, it is, fundamentally, affective work that requires intercultural sensitivity, reflexiveness and empathy. Recent rapid developments in translation technology may have contributed to obscuring this quality, as the new technological tools build on repetition and routinisation, eschewing any necessity of rewriting and restyling texts in the translation process. Indeed, it may well be that computers may eventually take over those translation tasks where the stakes on misunderstanding and emotional dissonance are low, but in the near future artificial intelligence is not likely to develop the sensitivity and empathy required for successful multilingual communication in superdiverse contexts. In these contexts, issues such as style, stance and tone of voice can be more important than accuracy in delivering content.

All this has repercussions to translator training. Cultural knowledge can be taught and assessed, the complexities of intercultural encounters can be described and discussed, and the students can be provided with enhanced skills of overcoming intercultural boundaries, but without intercultural sensitivity and a will to operate as an intercultural agent, these teachable and assessable competences are of little practical use. The more superdiverse our societies become, the less support ready-made rules and taught patterns of behaviour provide, as each encounter requires a recalibration of the cultural code. A core element to be included in the training of interculturally competent translators is in fact *empathy*, that is, an ability to identify, understand and relate to the emotions of others (for more on empathy see, eg., Coplan & Goldie eds. 2011). This ability allows translators to make informed and moral choices in communicative situations even when they contain unknown or unexpected elements. Empathy is and will be the crucial difference between human and machine translators, and the need for empathetic translation will keep humans involved in multilingual communication in the foreseeable future. Translation as a mechanistic transfer of meaning may become fully automated, but translation as affective work will remain the task of human translators.

## **5. TRAINING FOR EMPATHY IN SUPERDIVERSE SOCIETIES**

The students not only need to be able to understand superdiversity. They also live in it. In the training context, the notion of intercultural should alert us to a realisation that in our classrooms we do not have a unified mass of students, but individuals with their personal pathways and family backgrounds.

For different kinds of students the training task is also different. Some students still come from a fairly monocultural background, and they need to be helped to acquire

cultural knowledge and to internalise professional intercultural competence which is alien to them. Some of our students have a bi- or multicultural background, i.e., their various cultural affiliations are compartmentalised and kept apart. They need to be helped to harness these cultural resources into professional practice and to develop an understanding of intercultural interplay as well as to recognise the gaps in their cultural knowledge. Finally, some students are already intercultural, and come from a superdiverse background. For them, the training needs to focus on reflexivity and on enhancing their understanding of their own identity and how to develop their personal history into a professional competence. Although these three kinds of students obviously possess very different skills and resources at the outset, and they consequently need to be trained differently, the optimal situation still is to have them in the same classroom, where they can learn from one another.

As discussed above, the hidden curriculum in translator training tends to over-emphasise national cultures and may easily lapse into a dualistic world view and stereotyping. As global mobility increases, and societies become more and more superdiverse, the risks of inadequately preparing the students to function in their professional role become greater. To remedy, increased transparency is urgently needed in classroom discussions of how the following affect translating, and how translating and interpreting are implicated in them:

- ◆ cultural belongings and identity
- ◆ internalised culture
- ◆ institutionalised cultures and translation cultures
- ◆ nationalism, (language) politics and power
- ◆ inclusion and exclusion.

Intercultural competence is traditionally seen to consist of knowledge, skills, attitudes and critical cultural awareness (Byram 1997). All of the elements in the above list can be taught theoretically, as knowledge components. As a pragmatic field, translator training also has a long-standing emphasis on skills. However, the list also reveals a strong emphasis on attitudes and values, patterns of thinking and self-reflexivity, indicating that a competence based on knowledge and skills alone is not enough. Most fundamentally, superdiversity calls for empathy, conviviality, compassion and flexibility. Compared to knowledge and skills, these are much harder to teach, and even harder to assess.

Translation pedagogy needs to be developed into directions that enhance students' abilities for continuous *intercultural learning*. That is, they need to develop their "ability to gain, adjust and apply cultural and linguistic knowledge in real-time communication" (Messelink & ten Thije 2012: 81). To do so, the students need to be able to both tap on their existing cultural knowledge but also to have sensitivity and flexibility to adjust and to adapt to new and unexpected situations, and creativity to find new solutions to unforeseen communicative situations. This is a challenge for course design, but new thinking may sometimes be easier for the students than for the teachers. Many of the students

already live in a superdiverse world, whereas many of their teachers are still mentally bound by the dualistic world view and the reified notions of national cultures they have internalised in training and at work.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

In this article it was argued that factual cultural knowledge, a traditional stronghold of translator training, is not equal to intercultural competence, and that this difference needs to be clearly acknowledged. This necessity is all the more relevant as our contemporary world is becoming increasingly superdiverse, and this superdiversity unsettles ideas of monolithic nation-based linguacultures many translator training programmes have traditionally been based on.

Superdiversity alerts us to rethinking translation as one form of intercultural language work. Since superdiversity unsettles any preconceived ideas of cultural belongings, the role of reflexivity grows. In each new translation situation, the translator needs to work to understand the participants' positions and to consciously develop her abilities for empathy. Successful professional performance requires that she also reflects her own position, and how that position affects her decisions, and the decisions of the other partners.

All this has repercussions for training. First, it needs to foster students' reflexive approach to their own attitudes and internalised cultures and to hierarchies of communication as well as different participants' needs, abilities and motivations. Second, training needs to hone students' skills of social positioning and empathy, and to increase their ethical thinking and critical cultural awareness. In training, too, the students and teachers alike need to constantly ask who makes culture relevant, to whom, in which context, and for which purposes. Sometimes, this questioning may well lead to a rethinking of the very foundation this paper started with: in some cases, many other aspects may be much more salient for a translating or interpreting task than the assumed cultural differences and the ensuing perception of translation as primarily intercultural work\*. Letting go of the sometimes lazy explanations of cultural difference may make us more able to see issues such as commodified and non-commodified linguistic competences, social inequality and injustice (Piller 2011: 173). This, in turn, will increase our understanding of the processes translators and interpreters participate in by means of their work.

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\* As Messelink and ten Thije (2012: 81) point out, *lingua franca* uses of English are a well-known example of the complexities involved in connecting languages with particular cultures.

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## **ОБУЧЕНИЕ ПЕРЕВОДЧИКОВ ДЛЯ РАБОТЫ В УСЛОВИЯХ КУЛЬТУРНОГО МНОГООБРАЗИЯ МИРА. МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНАЯ КОМПЕТЕНЦИЯ ПЕРЕВОДЧИКОВ И ПЕРЕВОД КАК ЭМОТИВНЫЙ ВИД ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТИ**

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Статья рассматривает перевод как одну из форм межкультурной языковой деятельности в свете обсуждаемого в последнее время феномена культурного многообразия мира, то есть возросшей лингвистической, этнической и культурной мозаичности (гибридности) нашего общества. Культурное многообразие мира заставляет нас признать эмотивную природу переводческой деятельности, таким образом, подчеркивая роль эмпатии. Автор утверждает, что многие традиционные концепции переводоведения требуют пересмотра для того, чтобы оставаться актуальными в рамках культурного многообразия мира. Таким образом, критическая переоценка основополагающих культурных концепций внесет вклад как в методiku преподавания перевода, так и в исследование в области переводоведения.

**Ключевые слова:** межкультурная коммуникация, межкультурная компетенция переводчика, культурное многообразие, эмотивность, эмпатия, обучение переводу.



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# CHRONICLE

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## ***BOOK REVIEWS***

**REVIEW OF GEOFF THOMPSON AND LAURA ALBA-JUEZ  
(EDS.) 2014. *EVALUATION IN CONTEXT*  
(PRAGMATICS & BEYOND NEW SERIES, VOLUME 242),  
Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 418 pp.**

Geoff Thompson and Laura Alba-Juez have put together an excellent volume in the study of evaluation in context, presenting some of the most recent developments in the field. As the authors state in the preface of the volume, the book is intended as a sequel to the seminal work in research on evaluative language, Susan Hunston's and Geoff Thompson's volume "Evaluation in text: Authorial stance and the construction of discourse" that laid the foundations of the field when it was published in 2000. Almost 15 years later, Thompson and Alba-Juez aim to take the field further by providing readers with a collection of papers by renowned academics that aim to provide new and fresh perspectives on research at the interface of text, context, and discourse. As such the book not only appeals to scholars and students of pragmatics and text analysis, but also bridges research on evaluative language informed by both multimodal approaches and a variety of perspectives on linguistic theories such as politeness, semantics, as well as functionalism. Intentionally or not, the book mainly encompasses research from scholars with a background in Spanish academia, yet from a closer perspective this is plausible, as much of the volume is based on research conducted within the framework of the *FunDETT Functions of language: Evaluation in Different Text Types* project funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation with Laura Alba-Juez as the principal investigator.

Contributions within the volume are organized around three overarching themes or sections that include 1. a broad overview by the two editors that addresses "the many faces and phases of evaluation", 2. *Theoretical considerations and approaches to evaluation*, as well as 3. *Evaluation in different contexts*. While the introduction contextualizes the field and highlights the innovations and paradigmatic changes the field witnessed since the publication of Hunston's and Thompson's seminal volume "Evaluation in text",

the second part points towards recent theoretical developments in the field with the help of a number of articles that provide a helpful overview on the current state of research on evaluative language. I would highly recommend contributions by Thompson (chapter 3) and Macken-Horarik and Isaac that problematize a number of theoretical and methodological questions that relate to research on evaluative language based on appraisal theory, applying this model of functional linguistics to the study of text (chapter 3). Most notable is a phenomenon Thompson labels as the “Russian doll syndrome” (p. 59) that occurs in instances when an evaluative expression is recursively related to other categories. This, as well as the other examples provided by the author will surely be beneficial to those conducting research in the field, making analyses based on the appraisal model more conclusive, methodologically sound, and reproducible. Macken-Horarik and Isaac (chapter 4) equally found their research on the appraisal model, convincingly addressing a number of challenges that come along the analysis of text. This incorporates questions on how to account for implicit evaluation and, more importantly, the oftentimes complex relationship between text and (cultural) context within the framework of their approach. In the following chapter (5), Alba-Juez and Attardo base their analysis on spoken data rather than focusing on narrative texts. In their research the authors examine two groups of L1-speakers of English and Spanish to determine whether or not (verbal) irony is fundamentally related to the contrast between negative and positive evaluation. In sum, the authors state that it is in fact related, yet they also carve out to establish shared feelings of likeness simply to amuse the receiver. Moving on to chapter 9, Estebas-Vilaplana focuses her attention on spoken interaction in English and Spanish, precisely on the effect of pitch-range variability. She concludes that English speakers identify utterances produced with a high pitch as neutral and rather positive, whereas low pitch utterances are seen as impolite. In contrast to that, high pitch utterances are perceived as overstressed and intrusive by Spanish speakers while low pitch utterances are regarded as polite. In the third part of the volume, authors present largely empirical work and as such provide readers helpful insights and ideas for own research projects while at the same time allowing to reflect on methodological problems that may surface in empirical work. Most notable are chapters 12, 15, and 16. Chapter 12 by Degaetano-Ortlieb and Teich presents corpus-based research on expressions of epistemic and attitudinal stance in academic texts, in this instance scientific research papers from a number of different fields. They suggest that in each scientific field types of evaluative meaning differ with regard to frequency. Chapter 15 by Breeze on the other hand puts research on evaluative language within a more explicit context, highlighting the ways religious groups in the United Kingdom are represented and evaluated via textual and visual resources. The corpus-driven approach that draws from excerpts from the British media reveals a disconnection between largely neutral tones in articles, but an (overwhelmingly) evaluative one with regard to both images and headlines. Chapter 16 is also based on media discourse and highlights different patterns of evaluative language used in the newspapers ‘Times’ and ‘The economist’, assessing that aspects of evaluation can be studied by carefully identifying recurring lexical and grammatical patterns, being based on the notion of ‘local grammar’ put forward by Hunston and Sinclair (2000).

In sum, the book presents readers an insight into the study of evaluative language also for those with little knowledge of the field so far. For students and scholars alike, all chapters present original, interesting and inspiring research that may help to better understand the core issues of the field. In that respect, Thompson and Alba-Juez have compiled a well-written reference work for everyone interested in the study of evaluative language. It is furthermore novel, as it moves on from a strictly textual level towards multimodal research and the study of interactional data in general. However, despite the richness of the data presented in the volume and occasional references with regard to cultural contexts, the volume would benefit from a thorough discussion on the relationship between the study of text, (critical) discourse analysis, and even sociolinguistics. After all we may argue that language is socially constructed.

**Sebastian Muth**

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**REVIEW OF ISTVAN KECSKES. 2014.  
INTERCULTURAL PRAGMATICS.  
Oxford: Oxford University Press. 277 pp.**

**SYNOPSIS**

The present volume, authored by Istvan Kecskes, explores a range of issues revolving around the notions of communication and interculturality, approaching them from the perspective of socio-cultural pragmatics. It opens up with *Introduction*, followed by 10 chapters: 1. *Current pragmatic theories*; 2. *The socio-cognitive approach*; 3. *Pragmatic competence*; 4. *Encyclopedic knowledge, cultural models and interculturality*; 5. *Formulaic language use*; 6. *Context*; 7. *Common ground*; 8. *Saliency*; 9. *Politeness and impoliteness*; 10. *Methods of analysis*. Concluding sections of the volume are *Epilogue*, *References* and *Index*.

Having provided the reader with a succinct, yet comprehensive introductory section, outlining the goals of the volume and defining and contextualising the key concepts, the author goes on to provide a critical review of the current pragmatic theories (Chapter 1), starting with Gricean pragmatics, the “major source of development” (p. 21) for intercultural pragmatics. Pragmatics is defined as a study field exploring “how the language system is employed in social encounters by human beings” (p. 21) in an attempt to answer two main research questions: “why do we choose to say what we say?” (p. 21) and “why do we understand things the way we do?” (p. 21). In other words, when engaging in a communicative act the participants “manipulate language to shape and infer meaning in a socio-cultural context” (p. 21). Developing his argument further, Kecskes discusses the Gricean Cooperative Principle, explaining that what happens far more frequently is *egocentric* communicative behaviour, “rooted in the speakers’ and hearers’ own knowledge instead of their mutual knowledge” (p. 33). Interlocutors’ prior experience, knowledge and their own understanding of the world takes priority in language production and comprehension in communicative encounters, being firmly “anchored in the assumption that that what is salient or accessible to oneself will also be accessible to one’s interlocutors” (p. 33; also Giora 2003; Kecskes 2007, etc).

Chapter 2 elaborates on the socio-cognitive approach (SCA) to intercultural pragmatics, “tak[ing] into account both the societal and individual factors including cooperation and egocentrism that [...] are not antagonistic phenomena in interaction” (p. 42). SCA is an anchor point in intercultural pragmatics, “emphasiz[ing] the complex role of cultural and private mental models, how these are applied categorically and/or reflectively by individuals in response to socio-cultural environmental feedback mechanisms, and how this leads to and explains different meaning outcomes and knowledge transfer” (p. 46). Additionally and rather importantly, SCA moves away from the traditional approach to intercultural communication as the study field analysing communicative misunderstandings and failure and shifts the focus on “how people with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds act and react in intercultural discourse, how common-ground or intercultural understanding is established, and what new discourse structures result from intercultural communication” (p. 59).

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 discuss and elaborate on several important concepts, including pragmatic competence, encyclopedic knowledge, cultural models and formulaic language use from the viewpoint of socio-cultural pragmatics. Thus, pragmatic competence in this context is seen as “a very dynamic and flexible phenomenon whose development and functioning depends on several different variables including [...] age, individual motivation, quality and quantity of input, and socio-cultural environment” (p. 80). The interdependence of language and culture is quite central to SCA. Culture is characterized by fuzzy boundaries, changing constantly along both the synchronic and diachronic axes. Language, on the other hand, is deeply rooted in the conceptual system, the two inseparable pillars of which are encyclopedic and linguistic knowledge, “both playing a profound role in how human beings make sense in communication” (p. 81). In addition, cultural models, defined as “cognitive frames [...] of assumed or implicit knowledge that assist individuals in interpreting and understanding information [...]” (p. 87), become collectively internalized and shared, but it is important to note that in SCA individuals are not seen as mere “cognitive clones of culture” (p. 88). Instead, “collective cultural models are internalized and privatized by individuals through their own experience and developed into private mental models” (p. 88). They are prototypes that help us “interpret and assess conduct” (p. 88), but they are neither guiding it, nor directing it (p. 88). Finally, formulaic language use, still rather underrepresented in pragmatic research, is discussed at length specifically in the context of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), addressing in particular how ELF speakers deal with the difference between literal and non-literal meaning of the chosen aspects of formulaic phraseology (pp. 119 ff; also Kecskes 2007).

Central to research in intercultural pragmatics are three major concepts — context, common ground and salience — which are elaborated on in Chapters 6—8. In SCA context is “a dynamic construct that appears in different formats in language use both as a repository and/or trigger of knowledge” (p. 129), representing both sides of world knowledge: prior context, i. e. the knowledge in our mind, and actual situational context, existing in the outer world independently (p. 129). When interlocutors try to understand each other, they largely depend on background knowledge they share as their common ground. Defined by Clark (2009: 116) as the “sum of all information that people assume they share”, common ground in intercultural communication cannot simply be assumed, but it actually emerges “in the process of creating intercultural” (p. 168). Salience, as the third major representative of the “big three” in intercultural pragmatics, can be defined as “the most probable out of all possible” (p. 176). It is highly culture-specific, therefore highly relevant to SCA, which distinguishes three important types of salience, namely inherent, collective and emergent situational.

Chapter 9 explores issues in politeness and impoliteness in the context of socio-cultural pragmatics, critically reviewing the state of the art in (im)politeness studies research and outlining relevant research questions for the current (im)politeness-SCA interfaces and integrations. The volume concludes with relevant methodological and analytical considerations (Chapter 10), suggesting that whichever approach the researcher chooses to analyse intercultural discourse, their “main focus should be on the discourse process rather than just on culture” (p. 219).

### EVALUATION

The volume, being the first book-length publication on intercultural pragmatics, truly blazes a trail for researchers and practitioners in the field, defining the boundaries and profiling intercultural pragmatics in the context of tangent fields, as well as locating the place and identifying the role of the subject within and across a range of disciplines dealing with communication, culture and society. Having emerged as a field of inquiry in its own right just over a decade or so ago, intercultural pragmatics has already managed to attract a lot of spotlight within relevant scholarly circles, largely due to the efforts and activities of Istvan Kecskes, widely recognized as the founder of the discipline. *Intercultural Pragmatics* will, no doubt, become an indispensable reference to a range of scholars and practitioners alike. Written in clear and very accessible language while dealing with complex concepts, the volume engages the reader, allowing them to achieve deeper insights into the intricate interdependence of communication and interculturality. There will certainly be many more monographs on the subject in the years to come, but Kecskes' volume is quite possibly set out to become the manifesto of intercultural pragmatics.

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**Svetlana Kurteš**

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**REVIEW OF O.A. LEONTOVICH, E.V. YAKUSHEVA. 2014.  
PONIMANIYE — NACHALO SOGLASIYA:  
MEZHKUL'TURNAYA SEMEYNAYA KOMMUNIKACIYA  
(UNDERSTANDING IS THE BEGINNING OF ACCORD:  
INTERCULTURAL FAMILY COMMUNICATION).  
Moscow: Gnosis, 224 pp.**

It is due to the current boost in international relations, politics, economy, culture, and sports that the theory of intercultural communication holds a well-deserved place on the cutting edge of today's social sciences research. Olga Leontovich is one of the eminent scholars who have made a contribution to the Russian version of intercultural communication theory and continue to develop it as both an academic and applied field of knowledge.

The new monograph "*Understanding is the Beginning of Accord*": *Intercultural Family Communication* by Olga Leontovich and Ekaterina Yakusheva focuses on an array of issues concerning multiethnic marriages and is another step forward in intercultural communication research.

Structurally, the monograph is composed of an Introduction, three Chapters, a Conclusion, a Bibliography, three Appendices, and an Alphabetical Index. Vital components of the monograph's formal structure are the epigraphs prefixing several sections of the monograph and giving the text a special poetic touch.

The research is centered on intercultural family communication, which involves a wide scope of subjects ranging from family psychology to semiotics. An attentive reader of the book will appreciate comprehensive answers to a great variety of questions dealing with the peculiarities of verbal and non-verbal communication in an intercultural family.

Chapter One offers a fundamental analysis of such notions as 'family', 'interethnic / interracial / multicultural marriage', as well as the way these notions are viewed in sociology, psychology, ethnology, culture studies, communication theory, linguistics, semiotics, and a variety of other fields. The authors point out that the idea of "family" has undergone certain changes at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Chapter Two deals with the social, territorial, temporal and functional dimensions of intercultural family communication, as well as its other constituent features.

Chapter Three describes the intercultural family's communication space, the peculiarities of verbal and non-verbal interactions between its members, touches upon the problem of bilingualism, looks into the causes of communication failure in social discourse and many other arguable points.

In the Conclusion the authors point out that the number of multicultural marriages is steadily growing. They focus on the essentials of successful intercultural family communication stressing that, first and foremost, "love is the most reliable basis for building a united and lasting family" (pp. 197—198).

The monograph by Olga Leontovich and Ekaterina Yakusheva will attract the reader's attention for a variety of important reasons. First, the findings of the research un-

der review will contribute to the information currently available in communication studies regarding the linguistic personality in general and in the contexts of an intercultural family in particular. Second, the facts collected by the authors and the manner in which they are presented may appeal to the scholars working in the adjacent research areas. Third, the study relies on an extensive practical material and provides a comprehensive analysis of interpersonal relations between spouses and other family members from an intercultural perspective.

We believe that this monograph will be appreciated by the reader of any profession, age, and social background seeking the ways to bridge the gap between different languages and cultures.

**Elvira Sorokina and Eugenia Matveeva**



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**REVIEW OF I. MITROFANOVA. 2015. *LANGUAGE  
AND COMMUNICATIVE PERSONALITY*  
San Francisco, California: B&M Publishing, 132 pp.**

The monograph deals with the use of the language in the process of speech communication.

One of the major focuses of contemporary linguistics is the study of how speech peculiarities of any person in any situation fit within the overall language system. Mastering the appropriate language is a prerequisite for personal socialization. Modern sociolinguistics has come a long way to englobe various aspects at the crossroads of social and language sciences, e.g. the heterogeneous level of civilizational development in different parts of the world, the discrepancy between personal communication needs and the needs of society, the logic of development of science per se and its place in the knowledge paradigm, the influence of vernacular linguistic traditions and research interests of individual scientists). The research touches upon the forms of language functioning as a semiotic and communication system, socialization as a measure of personal intellectual, moral and cultural development. All of the above emphasizes the relevance of the monograph.

The structure of the monograph complies with its objectives: it consists of two chapters, where the author studies the speech communication process and introduces the concept of “communicative personality” as the research object.

The first chapter gives a review of the historical study of language built on the comparison of several descriptive data. When considering several language families, the author reveals that the processes of linguistic changes are the same for all languages, regardless of their grammatical structure. The use of inductive generalizations makes it possible to consider convergences and divergences between various languages from different points of view, including grammar. A speech act can change the listener’s predisposition to further reactions. Intensive language interaction makes the listener more sensitive to the perception of subsequent stimuli and provides for the person’s response that is largely dependent on the level of education and culture. The author analyzes the speech segment making a special emphasis on the elements of the statement and their hierarchy.

In the second chapter, the author highlights the characteristics of communicative needs which are reflected in the specific mechanisms of the speech and cogitative activity. The socio-psychological problem is also dwelt on. Irina Mitrofanova addresses the issue of communicative competence in the process of interpersonal communication and classifies the types of situations influencing people’s behavior. The use of speech as a means of thinking, and not just communication, is stressed. The author reveals basic syntax characteristics of internal speech. She shows the inextricable connection between language and human intelligence, the essence of natural intelligence and natural language generated by it, the role of the subconscious as well as functional interdependence between human intelligence and language.

Particular attention is paid to the topical problem of the impact produced by the language on any individual in various aspects: emotional, verbal, informational and logical thus revealing the essence of the socialization process. The social roles are also taken into account, including interpersonal communication and the internal factors, which predetermine success and efficiency of communication in different spheres of life.

The author characterizes the speech activity by demonstrating robust links between communication and generalization. The monograph offers a detailed analysis of the essence of communication, forms of speech, communication act parameters and demonstrates deep intertwining of the processes of thinking and speaking.

The paper provides important information about the relationship between functional varieties of a language, i.e. literary language, vernacular language, social and territorial dialects, and linguistic processes.

The method of linguistic analysis used by Irina Mitrofanova can also be applied in other areas of research. This is due, in particular, to the researcher's behaviorist stance. The paper introduces new techniques and principles of the study of speech mechanisms and allows to take a broader look at the phenomenon of language as a form.

Human interaction is based on the use of language as an instrument of knowledge and as a tool for thinking thus ensuring socialization. The diachronic research of a language is a premise for understanding history of the nation that speaks it as it is in the language evolution that historical changes can be observed. It is as simple and natural for native speakers to communicate in their language as walking and breathing, they do not feel any restrictions and consider their tongue to be the most beautiful, rich and expressive. Therefore, the native language system serves as a reference for them.

Language is not just a system of signs, but that of communicative behavior rules in a particular culture and society. So, the expression "language is endless, and it is impossible to fully learn it" is not unreasonable. This is why the monograph will certainly be of interest to the teachers of foreign languages as well as to philologists, journalists and translators.

**Luisa Gishkaeva**

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## **CONFERENCES**

### **XIII MAPRYAL CONGRESS ON “RUSSIAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN THE SPACE OF WORLD CULTURE”, Granada, 13—20 September 2015**

The XIII MAPRYAL Congress “Russian language and literature in the space of world culture” was held from September 13—20, 2015, in Granada, Spain. The Congress was organized by the International Association of Russian Language and Literature Teachers (MAPRYAL) and the University of Granada (Spain), and saw the presence of more than 1200 teachers of Russian language, literature and culture from 60 countries. This event takes place once every four years, and is the largest international forum for Russian-language philologists. Participants included Russian language teachers working at all levels of learning, literary scholars, linguists, students and graduate students, publishers, public figures, journalists and all those working towards the study and popularisation of the Russian language.

The official opening ceremony took place on 15 September, in the Palacio de Congresos in Granada but many delegates had arrived earlier to register themselves for this grand event and enjoy the beauty of the city. Participants from all over the world — Germany, Austria, China, USA, Netherlands, Kazakhstan, Finland, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Russia, Spain, Slovakia, Poland, India, Italy attended the conference, the delegation from Russia being the largest.

The Congress was opened by the Russian ambassador to Spain Yuri Korchagin, the President of MAPRYAL and Russkiy Mir Foundation Trustees Board Chairperson Lyudmila Verbitskaya and other dignitaries. Spain was represented by the Mayor of Granada Jose Torres Urtado, and the General Director of Higher Education of the Government of Andalusia Dolores Ferre Cano.

In her opening remarks Lyudmilla Verbitskaya heartily welcomed all the delegates and thanked them for assembling in such large numbers to discuss the role and future of Russian in today’s world. She spoke of the growing world-wide interest in the Russian language that has been observed over the last decade and maintained that those studying the language has doubled in recent years in many countries across Europe and even in countries such as Mongolia, India, Japan, China etc.

The Mayor of Granada, while welcoming the audience, recounted the unique beauty and regalia of Granada and invited the delegates to explore the city, even if they had to miss a few academic sessions. His speech was punched with many funny anecdotes, making the audience laugh and clap in appreciation.

Co-chairperson of the organising committee for the forum, Rafael Guzman Tirado, recalled the importance of the city of Granada for Russian-language teachers and said that the city is the centre of Russian-language teaching in Spain.

The opening ceremony was followed by the Plenary with presentations by three speakers.

In her plenary speech entitled “The role of language in society”, Lyudmila Verbitskaya lay emphasis on the importance of language in the lives of people not only as a means of everyday communication but also as a preserver of culture and values. Her speech was interspaced with famous quotations of Humbolt, Fortunatov and Shakhmatov on language and society. Further, while elaborating specifically on the Russian language, she informed the audience that Russian is spoken by about 200—300 million people in the world, out of which it is the mother tongue for about 160 million people and a language of communication for about 120 million. Lyudmila Verbitskaya also made a special mention on the active role that the Russki Mir Foundation has been playing not only in providing support to foreign teachers of Russian Language to enhance their teaching expertise and keep abreast of the changes that are taking place in modern Russian language, but also in creating new text books for the future generation. She informed that there are around 100,000 teachers of Russian language within the country actively working in imparting and preserving the richness of the language.

The second plenary speaker Aneta Pavlenko from Temple University, USA, delivered a speech entitled “Russian friendly: Russian language in the European sphere of services”. In her well-researched presentation, Aneta Pavlenko highlighted another aspect of language use, the study of which has gained importance in West European sociolinguistics: commodification of language and its manifestation in different spheres of the service industry. Drawing on her own field work and some other data, Aneta Pavlenko argued that forms of language are symbolic capital which turn into economic capital under various circumstances. In today's globalized world where there is free movement of people and commodities across nations, it is not only English, but other languages as well which acquire their own importance. Aneta drew the attention of the teachers to the significant place that Russian occupies in this aspect and urged them to take this into account in their teaching practice and research.

The third Plenary speaker's speech was dedicated to literary translation as a means of literary influences and borrowings in another literature. Zhen Tiu from Shanghai University of Foreign Languages, China, talked concretely about the Chinese experience and illustrated how Chinese literature benefited through the translated works of Pushkin and other writers of XIXth century. Chinese literature imbibed new ideas and trends which gave birth to new styles and genres in Chinese literature over a period of time.

The Congress agenda covered 14 research areas, including Modern Russian language and sociolinguistic aspects of research, Russian culture and globalization, Systemic-structural analysis of Modern Russian language, Diachronic and synchronic aspects of research, Language, mind and culture, Modern Russian lexicography; theory and practice, Communicative pragmatic aspects of research, Russian language in intercultural communication, Methods of Russian language teaching, Comparative study of Russian and other languages, Translation as a tool for intercultural dialogue, Russian in World Wide Web, Russian literature and the world literary process and Methodology of teaching Russian literature: theory and practise. Each session was overflowing with

participants and the halls were full. In many sessions, because of the large number of presenters and the paucity of time, the delegates were asked to cut short their presentations and emphasize just the key points.

The roundtable sessions also witnessed large participation and active discussions. Eight roundtable sessions were spread over two days and were devoted to topical issues of functioning of Russian language in the contemporary world. Russian language in the Bologna process, Distance teaching and learning, Russian in the system of bilingual education, Theory and practice of language textbook writing, Russian phraseology in the contemporary world were some of the topics that were covered. Of special interest to both literary scholars and all Russian language enthusiasts was the roundtable discussion, 'Contemporary Russian literature in the context of the XXI century,' anchored by the prominent Russian writer, philologist and literary historian, Alexei Varlamov.

A number of cultural events added extra flavour to the Congress. A monument to Alexander Pushkin was unveiled in the public garden of the University of Granada on September 15, the opening day of the Congress. Other interesting exhibitions were also on display. 'Russia in the library'; 'Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Chekhov; Sergei Yesenin and Federico Garcia Lorca: Russian Slavists in exile', 'Pushkin and Spain', 'Memorable places of Augustine Betancourt in St. Petersburg,' etc. were a treat for the viewers and opened up new aspects of each theme respectively.

Musical performances were another highpoint of the Congress. Galina Trofimova, a professor at the Peoples Friendship University and a renowned piano artist enthralled her audience in both the concerts she gave on different days. The famous Russian singer Oleg Pogudin was the surprise element and mesmerized the audience with his voice and his songs. In addition, there was also a performance by the orchestra of the University of Granada.

Soon it was time for the concluding session. Lyudmila Verbitskaya took to the floor and summed up the results of the many working groups and general assembly discussions of the forum. In her speech she cautioned the audience about problems that the world of Russian language teaching is likely to face in the coming years. She said that while there are more than 273,000 teachers of Russian language and literature in the world, this impressive figure is accompanied by the more worrying statistic that the average age of these teachers is around 50. She suggested that MAPRYAL should establish a youth-wing of the organisation which would actively work towards attracting more young people into the profession and supporting them later in their endeavours. She thanked all the teachers who had assembled for the Congress for taking the effort of coming from faraway places, and above all, for loving the Russian language and working hard to preserve it and pass on the legacy to the future generations.

The closing ceremony ended with the conferring of a special award to one of the greatest legends of Russian language teaching Serafima Alekseevna Khavronina from the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, whose book 'Russian in Exercises' is used by teachers and students all over the world. Marking her 85th birthday, it was indeed an emotional moment for her as well as the others present in the hall. The standing ovation and continuous applause was indeed a befitting tribute to her.

Lyudmila Verbitskaya was unanimously re-elected to the post of President of the MAPRYAL and the location of the next conference, which will take place in Kazakhstan, was announced.

Finally, the Congress ended with an evening banquet. The venue for the farewell dinner was perfect with the beautiful lawns leading into a spacious hall. The tables were laid out lavishly with seating arrangement for everyone to relax and enjoy the company of the others. Food, drinks, laughter, chatter, music, dance, and the constant clicking of photographs — it was indeed a perfect way to say goodbye to the XIIIth Congress of MAPRYAL with promises to meet once again in Kazakhstan for the XIVth festival to celebrate Russian language, literature and culture.

**Neelakshi Suryanarayan**

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## **ON THE CONFERENCE “KUSKOVSKIE READINGS 2015” Moscow, 20—22 September 2015**

It was a privilege to be present at this international conference, my first in Russia, guest of the Department of Foreign Languages at Moscow City University of Psychology and Education. Themes of the conference were Russian language and literature, philology, pedagogy and linguistics. Conference languages were Russian, English and Italian. There were many presentations by distinguished Russian scholars, on a variety of topics. Attention was paid, in the presentations on Russian themes, to moral and spiritual questions in current and older Russian literature. Marina Scherbakova, who headed a panel on problems of textual criticism, discussed St. Theophan, the giver of the library of the Greek theological school on the island of Halki. Ludmila Silina, who headed a panel on the spiritual and moral foundations of current Russian literature, gave a talk on Athanasius of Brest in the context of the literary tradition of the XVII century. Elena Konyavskaya headed the panel on moral searching in Old Russian literature, and gave a talk on the initial stage of the Old Russian book learning, in which she discussed the traditions established by V.V. Kuskov. Vladimir Voropaev discussed the origins of certain prayers in the Russian orthodox tradition. Another stimulating talk on Old Russian literature was given by Andrei Ranchin, who discussed the tale of Prince Igor Svyatoslavich's campaign against the Polovtsians from the Laurentian chronicle. Finally, Vladimir Kirillin discussed Isichasm and Russian literature of the XIV—XVI centuries. All of the talks were characterised by depth the intrinsic interest of the subjects, as well as by the lively presentations which gave rise to animated discussion in the question and answer sessions that followed their delivery.

On the linguistics side, Alla Minjar-Beloruicheva headed a panel on the Russian conceptosphere and the linguistic image of Russian in the world. Her own presentation covered the role of the concept in national political discourse. Talks from international guests covered various topics: firstly, middle-eastern politics, in the presentation of Yue Yang. She discussed the role of China in foreign affairs, arguing for the need to subject representations of the Asian giant to a closer analysis. Natalia Bludilina then discussed images of Poland in the works of a Russian nobleman, B.D. Sheremetyevo, who travelled in Poland at the end of the 17th century. Marinella Mondaini described the imaginary of Venice in Russian poetry, underlining the romantic but also fatal attraction for Russian authors of that particular Italian city. Paolina Mulé's talk on pedagogy traced the development of modern thinking from John Dewey to the present day, and was an attempt to engage her audience in a potentially fruitful dialogue on this topic. Finally, Douglas Ponton discussed metaphors in British political discourse, arguing for the importance of a critical linguistic approach. Metaphors are not neutral from the ideological point of view, he suggested, but rather tools inevitably involved in processes of political persuasion.

One of the special features of the conference related to the presentation of a book by the Italian Slavonic scholar Marcello Garzanitti «Biblical quotations in Church

Slavonic literacy». Professor Garzanitti also found time to accompany the foreign visitors on a visit to the State Historical Museum, where his illuminating commentary brought the exhibits to life.

At the conference, the sessions were ably chaired by Irina Dergacheva, dean of the Foreign Language faculty, and the organisation and facilities were first class. Translation services were provided for the benefit of guests, such as myself, lacking an adequate knowledge of Russian to follow the talks. The social programme included a visit to the museum-reserve «Kolomenskoye», the Tsar's summer residence, where guests were given a highly informative talk by an expert guide, in full Russian costume, explaining the religious significance of the many valuable relics on display. Many thanks to the organising committee: Irina Dergacheva, Ludmila Silina, Olga Rubtsova, Gulnara Baimurzaeva and Anna Sasim for their welcome, and for organizing a rich and varied social programme which gave us a real taste of Russian hospitality, culture and tradition, as well as helping us to find our feet in Russia's fascinating capital city. We are hopeful that this will be the first of many fruitful exchanges between scholars at our university, Catania in Sicily, and scholars from Russia. I was encouraged by the reception afforded some of our ideas, and I am sure that we have much to learn from Russian approaches to our various disciplines. I look forward to welcoming some of our new friends on their return visit to Italy in the near future, an invitation extended to Russian scholars from all institutions of further education, including the People's Friendship University of Russia.

**Douglas Mark Ponton**



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## 15-TH ANNUAL ALEKSANTERI CONFERENCE “*CULTURE AND RUSSIAN SOCIETY*”, Helsinki, 21–23 October 2015

The Aleksanteri Conference is an annual, multidisciplinary, international conference organised by the Aleksanteri Institute, the Finnish Centre for Russian and Eastern European Studies, affiliated with the University of Helsinki.

*The Aleksanteri Institute* functions as a national centre of research, study and expertise relating to Russia and Eastern Europe, particularly in the social sciences and humanities. The Institute promotes cooperation and interaction between the academic world, public administration, business life and civil society, both in Finland and abroad. It coordinates *the Finnish Centre of Excellence in Russian Studies — Choices of Russian Modernisation* which was funded by the Academy of Finland for the years 2012–2017. In the *Centre of Excellence*, modernisation in Russia is understood as a set of choices made under certain structural conditions. As the traditional frameworks and theories of individual disciplines are clearly inadequate for analysing the contradictory developments in Russia, the Centre of Excellence strives to redefine the agenda of Russian modernisation. The multidisciplinary research conducted in the Centre of Excellence will produce a new paradigm for Russian studies. At the same time, it will also provide a new platform for policy implications at the most basic level of EU-Russia relations. As well as researchers from the Aleksanteri Institute, it consists of researchers from the Department of Modern Languages (Russian language and literature) at the University of Helsinki and the School of Management (Politics) at the University of Tampere. In addition, several distinguished scholars from both Finland and abroad are involved as associated partners, including those from CEMAT (Aalto University) and the European University at Saint Petersburg, Russia.

Aleksanteri Conferences have attracted widespread interest among researchers and policy-makers in a wide variety of disciplines, both in Finland and abroad, interested in the development of post-socialist countries.

In keeping with the Aleksanteri Institute’s multidisciplinary research agenda and the Academy of Finland Centre of Excellence’s “Choices of Russian Modernisation”, the 15th Aleksanteri Conference invited proposals focusing on the cultural challenges and intellectual choices Russia and its diverse population face today. The conference welcomed scholars from all fields of humanities and social and political sciences to contribute to the investigation of the role of cultural analysis in enriching our understanding of recent developments in Russia.

The 15th Aleksanteri Conference was held on the theme “*Culture and Russian Society*” and included more than 400 participants from all over the world. To be precise, there were 406 individuals who registered for participation, and many more attended without registration. All the major Finnish universities were well represented at the conference. Besides the University of Helsinki, there were representatives from the Univer-

sity of Tampere, the University of Eastern Finland, the Finnish Institute of International Affairs and others. Great interest in the conference was shown by scholars from many Russian universities, such as Moscow State University, the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, Moscow Pedagogical State University, Moscow State Linguistic University, the Russian State University for the Humanities, Saint Petersburg State University, Saint Petersburg State University of Economics, the Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia, the Nizhny Novgorod State Pedagogical University, the Northern (Arctic) Federal University, Omsk State University and many others. Alongside the Finnish and Russian scholars, many appeared from the Post-Soviet states (e.g. Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan) as well as from all the mainline states of Europe (France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK). In addition, many arrived from farther afield, coming from countries like Canada, India and the USA.

There was a pre-conference round table, chaired by Professor **Tomi Huttunen** from the Department of Modern Languages, the University of Helsinki, and **Maria Petersson**, journalist at Helsingin Sanomat with the participation of Irina Prokhorova, publisher (New Literary Review publishing house, Moscow), Roman Senchin, writer (Moscow), journalist and writer Kalle Kniivilä (Malmö) and journalist Artemy Troitsky (Tallinn).

The conference was opened by **Dr. Sanna Turoma**, Chair of the Organising Committee, Aleksanteri Institute, University of Helsinki, and State Secretary to the Prime Minister of Finland **Paula Lehtomäki**,

The conference had five keynote speakers. **Catriona Kelly**, Professor of Russian at the University of Oxford, UK, and one of the foremost cultural historians of modern Russia, who has published widely on Russian culture, entitled her talk "*Russia and Europe, 1991—2014 La grande disillusion*". **Vera Tolz**, Sir William Mather Professor of Russian Studies at the University of Manchester, UK, presented the paper "*Projecting the Nation: Media Events and Changing Narratives of Nationhood in Putin's Russia*". Her current, AHRC-funded project, 'Mediating post-Soviet difference: an analysis of Russian television representation of inter-ethnic cohesion issues', addresses the Russian state television's approach to ethnic tensions. Tolz's interests include nationalism and ethnic politics in modern and contemporary Russia; oriental studies and national identity in imperial and early Soviet Russia; and comparative imperial history. **Evert van der Zweerde**, Professor in Political Philosophy at Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands, devoted his talk to the analysis of democracy in Russia — its perspectives, expectations, and concepts, pointing out both negative and positive aspects of this complicated process. **Elena Vartanova**, Professor and Dean of the Faculty of Journalism of Moscow State University, Russia, discussed the role of mass media in contemporary Russian culture in her substantial talk "*High or Low? Mass Media as a Driving Force of Contemporary (Russian) Culture*". **Vlad Strukov**, Associate Professor in Digital Culture at the University of Leeds, UK, presented the paper "*The Conservative Turn: Culture as Politics in Putin's Russia*".

64 panels concerning different topics were held during the three days. Among them there were "Media and Conflict"; "Communicative Aggression — the Cultural Platform

and Political Choice”; “Narratives and Origins of Contemporary Russian Patriotism”; “Russian Orthodox Christians as Cultural Entrepreneurs”; “Managing Creativity in Contemporary Russia”, “Discourse of Power in Contemporary Russia” and many others.

A few panels were dedicated to the Russian language. **Oxana Issers** from Omsk State University presented the results of her research aimed at the analysis of ‘the word of the year 2014’. **Tatiana Krihtova** from the University of Eastern Finland described the language situation in Christian churches of Joensuu in a context of a migrant’s choice. **Elena Shmeleva** (Vinogradov Russian Language Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences) presented the paper “*Language of Russian Orthodox Church at Present: a Mixture of Stylistic*”. **Irina Levontina** from the same Institute talked on the evolution of key words of Russian power discourse. **Levon Saakyan** from the Pushkin State Russian Language Institute presented a paper entitled “*Texts and Subtexts in Modern Russian Informational Broadcasting: Euphemization, Dysphemization and Other Ways of Semantic Dominance Forming*”.

One of the panels organised by scholars from Saint Petersburg State University was dedicated to the language of Mass Media, viewed as a means of culture transmission. **Liliya Duskaeva** discussed conceptualization of the values of national culture in the semantic and stylistic category of evaluative language. **Yulia Konyaeva** analysed speech genre in her “Portrait of a Creative Personality” in Russian journalism. **Alexey Goryachev** presented a paper entitled “*Promotion of Cultural Projects in New Media: Communicative Scenarios and Speech Acts*”.

Cultural Factors in the Modernization Process of Russia were discussed at the panel chaired by **Arto Mustajoki**, Dean of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Helsinki and Vice-President of the International Association of Teachers of Russian Language and Literature (MAPRYAL). Among the participants there were **Nadezhda Lebedeva** from the Higher School of Economics (Russia) with the paper “*Cultural Barriers of Russian Modernization*“, **Tatiana Larina** from the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, whose topic was “*Cultural Values as Accelerators and Decelerators of Modernization in Russia*” and **Ekaterina Protassova** from the Department of Modern Languages of University of Helsinki, who talked on the interculturality of Russianness.

The panel “Russian Culture in Central Asia: the Own or the Alien?” included the presentations “*Russian Language in the Material Culture of Tadjikistan*” by **Noora Khudoikulova** (University of Helsinki, Finland), “*Russian-Language Cultural Behaviour in the Urban Context of Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan*” by **Natalya Kosmarskaya** (Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences), “*Russian Language in the Mirror of the Kazakh Language Culture*” by **Almagul Maimakova** (Kazakh National Abai Pedagogical University), “*Russian Language and Culture as Mediators in Indirect Translation from English into Kazakh*” by **Leila Mirzoyeva** and **Aigul Zhumabekova** (Demirel University, Kazakhstan). The discussant **Damina Shaibakova** from the Kazakh National Abai Pedagogical University talked over the concept of pluricentrism in language use.

Professor **Nikolai Vakhtin** from the European University of St Petersburg problematized public debates in Russia as “Public Muteness Syndrome”. **Kapitolina Fedorova** from the same institution entitled her talk “*Distances of Vast Dimensions. Official*

*versus Public Language*” which was based on material from meetings of the organizing committees of mass events, January–February 2012. **Aleksandra Kasatkina** (Kunstka-mera) elaborated on the topic “*In Search of a New Meaning: Current Public Discourse in Russian Allotment Associations*”.

All the presentations were followed by interesting discussion, which continued during coffee breaks.

The conference was closed by Professor **Markku Kivinen**, Director of the Aleksanteri Institute. In his inspiring speech, he emphasised the importance of contacts and discussion on all levels including academia, in order to build understanding and overcome disputes and contradictions in Europe and all over the world.

On behalf of the conference participants, we would like to thank the Aleksanteri Institute, the organising committee and particularly Sanna Turoma for the perfect organisation of the conference, for their hospitality and the warm atmosphere which made it a fruitful and interesting academic event.

**Tatiana Larina, Miikka Piironen**

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## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **7<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON INTERCULTURAL PRAGMATICS AND COMMUNICATION INPRA 2016**

**10—12 JUNE 2016, SPLIT CROATIA**

The International Conference on Intercultural Pragmatics and Communication (INPRA) is a well-known biennial meeting and this would be its 7th edition. The main aim of the conference is to bring together researchers from around the world who have diverse scientific backgrounds but share the same field of interest — pragmatics, being perceived as a cognitive, philosophical, social, and intercultural perspective on language and communication.

This conference should promote connections between pragmatic theory and its application in practice, theoretical perspectives (philosophical, cognitive, societal) and intercultural, cross-cultural and societal aspects of pragmatic research.

**Linguistic Fields:** Pragmatics, Sociolinguistics, Applied Linguistics, Discourse Analysis, Semantics, Cognitive Sciences, Philosophy of Language

#### **Keynote Speakers**

Wayne Davis (Georgetown University, USA)

Rachel Giora (Tel Aviv University, Israel)

Laurence R. Horn (Yale University, USA)

Istvan Kecskes (State University of New York at Albany, USA)

**Deadline for Abstract Submission: 20 January 2016**

The conference is supported by the University of Split and the Intercultural Pragmatics Journal (Mouton de Gruyter) and will take place in **Split (Croatia), 10—12 June 2016**.

The INPRA 2016 website contains detailed information about the conference: [www.unist.hr/interculturalpragmatics2016](http://www.unist.hr/interculturalpragmatics2016)

On behalf of the Scientific Committee, we invite all interested scholars and researchers to take part in this international conference.

Please feel free to circulate and forward this email to other researchers.

#### **Conference Co-Chairs**

*Jagoda Granic* (University of Split, Croatia)

*Istvan Kecskes* (State University of New York at Albany, USA)

The INPRA 2016 website contains detailed information about the conference: [www.unist.hr/interculturalpragmatics2016](http://www.unist.hr/interculturalpragmatics2016)

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## **9<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LANGUAGES & LINGUISTICS**

**4—7 July 2016, Athens, Greece**

The Athens Institute for Education and Research (ATINER), a world association of academics and researchers, organizes its 9<sup>th</sup> Annual International Conference on Languages & Linguistics, **4—7 July 2016, Athens, Greece**.

A 300-word abstract should be submitted before **7 December 2015**, by email (atiner@atiner.com), addressed to Dr. George Poulos, Vice-President of Research, ATINER & Emeritus Professor, University of South Africa, South Africa or Dr. Gilda Socarras, Head, Languages & Linguistics Research Unit, ATINER & Associate Professor, Auburn University, USA.

The submission should contain: Title of Paper, First Name, Family name of all co-authors, Current Position of all co-authors, Institutional Affiliation (University/Organization) of all co-authors, Country of all co-authors, an email address of all co-authors and at least 3 keywords that best describe the subject of your submission. Decisions will be reached within four weeks of your submission.

Should you wish to participate in the Conference as a chair of a session, evaluate papers which are to be included in the conference proceedings or books, contribute to the editing of a book, or any other contribution, please send an email to **Dr. Gregory T. Papanikos, President**, ATINER & Honorary Professor, University of Stirling, UK (gregory.papanikos@stir.ac.uk).

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## **CRITICAL APPROACHES TO DISCOURSE ANALYSIS ACROSS DISCIPLINES CADAAD 2016**

**5—7 September 2016, Catania, Sicily**

CADAAD 2016 will take place **5—7 September 2016** and will be held at the Università di Catania, Sicily.

The conference website can be found at [www.cadaad2016.unict.it](http://www.cadaad2016.unict.it).

The organisers of the panel '**Critical approaches to sustainability**' invite papers from a broad range of academic disciplines to reflect critically on the notion of sustainability, across an equally broad spectrum of social contexts, whether from the fields of business, politics or human culture in its most general sense, as long as papers make a contribution to the field of Critical Discourse Studies. Panel Organisers: Barbara Loester, University of Winchester Douglas Ponton, University of Catania Franco Zappetini, Royal Holloway, University of London 'Sustainability' is a buzz word in current corporate parlance, also found in the languages of government departments and advertising agencies, serving a variety of functions across a wide variety of media sources. When used in its environmental sense, the term refers to an important aspect of 'clean' energies; to the fact that these energy sources, over the long term, represent real opportunities for humankind to meet its energy requirements without compromising the future of the planet, as may be the case with either fossil fuels or nuclear power.

In conjunction with an increased interest in ecological sustainability, public discourses of ‘social sustainability’ have also emerged which have raised important questions about the need to make our societies more equitable. Amid this scenario, we have seen that terms from the discourse of ecology, such as ‘carbon footprint’, ‘eco-friendly’, ‘renewable’, etc. and from the discourses of ‘social sustainability’ (such as ‘responsible production/consumption’) have been recontextualised in the discursive practice of ‘greenwashing’, performed by companies and governments that wish to portray their activities in an environmentally friendly light (Zappettini and Unerman, 2015). Thus, the term ‘sustainable development’ risks becoming a glittering generality, one that can be used to evoke a positive response in material not necessarily related to the environmental context. In the business world especially, it can be a synonym of ‘long-term’, referring to decisions that, for example, plough profits back into the firm in the form of investment.

Critical attention to eco/linguistic issues has steadily grown since the 1990s. In a study that was to be important in the expanding field of ecolinguistics, M.A.K. Halliday (2001) argued for critical engagement of linguists with the environmental problems of the world: global warming, climate change, population growth, and so on. The intention of this panel is to rise to Halliday’s challenge by putting the word ‘sustainability’, as he termed it ‘in the dock’ (2001: 197).

Prospective contributors should send an abstract of up to 350 words excluding references as MS Word attachment to: [dmponton@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:dmponton@hotmail.co.uk) with object: sustainability-panel-cadaad-2016 before 30 November 2015. Further information on the panel can be requested at the same email address.

#### References

Halliday M.A.K. 2001 New ways of meaning: the challenge to applied linguistics. In Fill, Alwin and Muhlhausler, Peter (eds.) *The Ecolinguistics Reader: Language, Ecology and Environment*. London and New York, Continuum. 191—193.

Zappettini F., Unerman J. (2015) ‘Mixing’ and ‘Bending’: The Recontextualisation of Discourses of Sustainability in Integrated Reporting. Paper presented at the 26th CSEAR UK Conference 25—27 August 2015, Royal Holloway, University of London.

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## **FORMULAIC LANGUAGE RESEARCH NETWORK (FLARN ) 2016 CONFERENCE**

**28—30 June 2016, Vilnius, Lithuania**

The seventh FLARN Conference will be hosted on 28—30 June 2016 by the Department of English Philology and the Faculty of Philology of Vilnius University. The Conference has developed out of the Formulaic Language Research Network (FLARN) whose purpose is to co-ordinate research in the field of formulaic language, to share ideas and resources, and to create a sense of community among researchers who are not necessarily in geographical proximity. The network has been the focal point for postgraduate conferences in Cardiff 2004, Twickenham 2005 and Nottingham 2008 and three full conferences for researchers at all stages of their academic career in Paderborn (Germany) in 2010, Tilburg (Netherlands) in 2012 and Swansea (UK) in 2014. The 2016

FLaRN Conference in Vilnius will be a full conference open to both novice and mature researchers. To learn more about FLaRN, please visit its website: [www.cardiff.ac.uk/encap/research/networks/flarn](http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/encap/research/networks/flarn) **Venue:**

Vilnius University was established in 1579 and is one of the oldest universities in Eastern Europe (<http://www.vu.lt/en/>). It is a major tourist attraction in Vilnius and its campus features several university faculties. The conference will take place in the Faculty of Philology located at the very heart of the Old Town of Vilnius.

Faculty of Philology  
Vilnius University  
Universiteto g. 5  
LT-01513  
Vilnius  
Lithuania

#### **Plenary speakers:**

- ◆ Dr Magali Paquot, Université catholique de Louvain (Belgium)  
<http://www.uclouvain.be/magali.paquot>
- ◆ Professor Rūta Petrauskaitė, Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas (Lithuania)  
<http://rutapetrauskaite.vdu.lt/en>
- ◆ Professor Alison Wray, University of Cardiff (UK)  
<http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/encap/contactsandpeople/profiles/wray-alison.html>

#### **Submissions**

Abstract submissions for 20-minute full presentations (+10 minutes for questions) and for poster presentations (format A0) are invited on any aspect of formulaicity in language and literature. This includes research on any type of formulaic expressions (collocations, clichés, idioms, lexical bundles, multi-word chunks, proverbs, recurrent sequences, etc.) in any theoretical framework and area of linguistics, e.g. comparative and contrastive research, corpus linguistics, language acquisition and teaching, translation etc., and literature. All abstracts should be written in English and submitted by email to [flarn2016@gmail.com](mailto:flarn2016@gmail.com) with the subject “Submission”. The authors should indicate in their email whether they wish to be considered for a paper or poster presentation, or both. The deadline for submissions is **1 February 2016**.

Format: Maximum 300 words (excluding references) in MS Word, Times New Roman, 1 line spacing, size 12. Name and save the document as follows: `surname_name_FLaRN2016.doc`, e.g. ‘`juknevicene_rita_FLaRN2016.doc`’.

- ◆ Please provide your details: name(s), title/position, affiliation, contact information.

**Conference fees:** Early bird fee: 90 EUR Regular fee: 100 EUR

#### **Important dates:**

- ◆ Deadline for the submission of abstracts: **1 February 2016**
- ◆ Notification of abstract acceptance/rejection: **8 March 2016**
- ◆ Deadline for early bird registration and payment: **18 April 2016**
- ◆ Deadline for registration and payment: **9 May 2016**

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## **THE SEVENTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND MIND**

**Hunan University, Changsha, China  
1st–4th June 2016**

The 7th international conference on language, culture and mind will be held at Hunan University, Changsha, China, 1<sup>st</sup>–4<sup>th</sup> June 2016. The Language, Culture and Mind conference series provides an international and interdisciplinary forum for the integration of biological, cognitive, social and cultural perspectives in theoretical and empirical studies of language and communication.

The keynote theme for LCM 7 will be:

### **Signs of Life: Cultural contact — change and continuity in language, thought and identity**

There will be two round table subthemes:

1. Diversity, endangerment, revitalization of cultures and languages.
2. Intercultural and transcultural dynamics.

(Contact: LCM\_VII@126.COM)

### **Keynote Speakers:**

Linda Martín **Alcoff** Hunter College and the CUNY Graduate Center, City University of New York

<http://www.alcoff.com>

Naran **Bilik** Institute of Anthropological and Ethnological Studies, Fudan University, China

<http://ice.ssdpp.fudan.edu.cn/naran-bilik>

Colette **Grinevald** Laboratoire Dynamique du Langage, Université Lyon 2, France

<http://www.ddl.ish-lyon.cnrs.fr/Annuaire/Index.asp?Langue=FR&Page=Colette%20GRINEVALD>

Erik **Mueggler** Department of Anthropology, University of Michigan, USA

<http://www-personal.umich.edu/~mueggler>

Natasha **Tassell-Matamua** Department of Psychology, Massey University, New Zealand

<http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/expertise/profile.cfm?stref=830930>

### **Young Researchers' Workshop**

30<sup>th</sup>—31<sup>st</sup> May, 2016

(Contact: yrw2016@126.com)

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## CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

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**Tatiana Larina (e-mail: [tatiana@larina.tv](mailto:tatiana@larina.tv))** — Professor of Linguistics at the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia and Moscow State Linguistics University. Her main research areas are Intercultural Pragmatics, Discourse Analysis, Interactional Sociolinguistics, Theory of Politeness, and Intercultural Communication. Her numerous publications include 4 monographs focused on politeness in English and Russian and English vs. Russian communicative styles and over 170 articles published in Russia and abroad. She has been a member of Advisory Board of European Network for Intercultural Education Activities (ENIEDA) since 2010.

**Olga Leontovich (e-mail: [olgaleo@list.ru](mailto:olgaleo@list.ru))** — Ph. D. (Advanced Doctorate), Professor and Chair of the Department of Intercultural Communication and Translation at Volgograd State Socio-Pedagogical University. She has authored over 170 papers and books published in Russia and abroad. Her current research interests deal with linguistic anthropology, communication studies, and narratology. She has been member of the Coordination Committee of the Russian Communication Association since 2000.

**Steven A. Beebe (e-mail: [sbeebe@txstate.edu](mailto:sbeebe@txstate.edu))** — Regents' and University Distinguished Professor of Communication Studies at Texas State University teaching courses in interpersonal, group, and instructional communication and public speaking. He served as Chair of the Department of Communication Studies for 28 years. Professor Beebe is author and co-author of 12 books (with multiple editions totaling more than 75 books) that have been used at hundreds of colleges and universities throughout the world, including Canadian, Russian and Chinese editions. He has also authored or co-authored 60 articles and book chapters and 150 professional papers. Dr. Beebe served as president of the National Communication Association, the largest academic professional communication association in the world, in 2013.

**Donal Carbaugh (e-mail: [carbaugh@comm.umass.edu](mailto:carbaugh@comm.umass.edu))** — Professor of Communication at University of Massachusetts. His research interests are Cultural Discourse Analysis; Ethnographic Approaches to Communication and Language Use; Intercultural Interactions; Environmental Communication. Number of Publications:

9 books (5 authored books, 4 edited books), 120 articles and chapters. He has received his university's highest honor for research as Samuel Conti Research Fellow; and been awarded for his mentoring and teaching of students. His research in Intercultural Communication has been honored repeatedly. His newest books on Intercultural communication are, *Reporting cultures on 60 Minutes: Missing the Finnish Line* (appearing in 2015), and *Communication in Cross-cultural Perspective* (appearing in 2016).

**Svetlana G. Ter-Minasova (e-mail: [president@ffl.msu.ru](mailto:president@ffl.msu.ru))** — President of the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Area Studies at Lomonosov Moscow State University, Russia, and Professor Emeritus in the University. She holds a Doctorate of Philology from the University, and has published more than 200 books and papers on Foreign Language Teaching, Linguistics and Cultural Studies, and has lectured widely throughout the world. She is chairperson of the FLT Council (Ministry of Education, Russia) since 1987. She has been the founding President of both National Association of Applied Linguistics (NAAL, Russia), an affiliate of the International Association of Applied Linguistics (AILA) since 1989 and the founding President of National Association of Teachers of English (NATE, Russia), a collective member of the International Associations TESOL (the USA) and IATEFL (the UK); since 1995 the chairperson of the FLT Council (Ministry of Education and Science, Russia). She holds the Lomonosov Award, Fulbright's 50th Anniversary Award, and was named Doctor Honoris Causa by the University of Birmingham in the UK, the State University of New York in the USA, the Russian-Armenian University, in Armenia and the Visiting Professor by the National Research Tomsk State University. She is a member of IAFOR International Advisory Board.

**Anna Gladkova ([angladkova@gmail.com](mailto:angladkova@gmail.com))** — Ph.D., Lecturer in Linguistics at the University of Brighton and an Honorary Lecturer in Linguistics at the Australian National University. She received her PhD in Linguistics from the Australian National University. Her major research interests are in the areas of semantics, linguistic anthropology, cross-cultural communication and intercultural pragmatics. She has published a book on Russian Cultural Semantics and more than thirty research articles, book chapters and encyclopedia and handbook entries.

**Arto Mustajoki (e-mail: [arto.mustajoki@helsinki.fi](mailto:arto.mustajoki@helsinki.fi))** — Professor, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, University of Helsinki, Finland, Vice-President of the International Association of Teachers of Russian Language and Literature (MAPRYAL). During his long career, he served in many prominent academic positions both in Finland and in Europe. He is a world-renowned expert in Russian language, functional grammar, contrastive cross-linguistic studies, and linguistic methodology. He has also published upon the cross-cultural communication, miscommunication and linguistic tolerance where he is one of the leading persons in the field.

**Ekaterina Protassova (e-mail: [ekaterina.protassova@helsinki.fi](mailto:ekaterina.protassova@helsinki.fi))** — Ph.D., Docent of Russian Language in the Department of Modern Languages, University of Helsinki, Finland. She has studied multilingualism in Russia and abroad, Russian-speaking diaspora in the world (especially in Finland, Germany, Estonia, Latvia, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan), the use of the modern Russian language and intercultural communication and participated in numerous international projects upon bilingual education and language revitalization. She is widely publishing on related topics both research papers and student manuals.

**Jean-Marc Dewaele (e-mail: [j.dewaele@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:j.dewaele@bbk.ac.uk))** — Professor of Applied Linguistics and Multilingualism at Birkbeck, University of London. He had published widely on individual differences foreign language acquisition and use. He is Vice-President of the *International Association of Multilingualism*, Convenor of the *AILA Research Network Multilingualism*, and former president of the *European Second Language Association*. He is General Editor of the *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*. He won the Equality and Diversity Research Award from the *British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy* (2013) and the Robert C. Gardner Award for Outstanding Research in Bilingualism (2016) from the *International Association of Language and Social Psychology*.

**Israa Qaddourah (e-mail: [israaqaddourah@gmail.com](mailto:israaqaddourah@gmail.com))** — Teaching Fellow in Arabic at St Andrews University. She teaches Arabic language modules to undergraduate students at all levels. She holds BA in education studies from London Metropolitan University, as well as a Certificate in Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language (CTAFL) from SOAS, University of London and an MA in Applied Linguistics from Birkbeck, University of London. Her academic interests are in modern Arabic linguistics as well as the Arabic grammatical tradition.

**John Parrish-Sprowl (e-mail: [johparri@iupui.edu](mailto:johparri@iupui.edu))** — Ph.D., Professor, Communication Studies Director, Global Health Communication Center Faculty, Russian and Eastern European Institute Adjunct Professor, Informatics Visiting Professor, South East European University. His research interest is communication processes that enable intentional transformation and change in relationships, communities, countries, and cultures. Most recently he has focused on this process as it relates to health as defined by the WHO. In the past he has looked at organizational and cultural change. He has over 50 publications in various journals and books, published in multiple countries. Much of his work is international, having taken him to over 30 countries.

**Zohreh R. Eslami (e-mail: [zeslami@tamu.edu](mailto:zeslami@tamu.edu))** — Ph.D., Associate Professor of ESL Education at Texas A&M University in College Station in the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Cultures teaching courses in Pragmatics and Language Learning, Task-based language teaching and technology, and English in intercultural

tural and international settings. Dr. Eslami has more than 20 years of experience in ESL/EFL teaching and teacher education both in the USA and overseas. She has numerous publications in the area of Persian Pragmatics and politeness, Intercultural Pragmatics, Instructional Pragmatics, L2 content literacy development, and linguistic development and assessment of English language learners. She has authored or co-authored over 100 articles and book chapters. Her publications appear in journals such as, *Journal of Pragmatics*, *Intercultural Pragmatics Journal*, *International Review of Pragmatics*, *Bilingual Research Journal*, *ESP Across Cultures*, *Asian EFL Journal*, *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication*, *Modern Language Journal*, *System*, *English Language Teaching (ELT) Journal* and *TESL EJ*.

**Shaun Weihong Ko (e-mail: shaun37@tamu.edu)** — third-year doctoral student at the Department of Teaching, Learning and Culture at Texas A&M University. His publications include a paper on nonnative English speaking graduate students' pragmatic development in email communication and a chapter on gender-role stereotyping in Qatari schools. He has several presentations at international conferences such as *Pragmatics and Language Learning* and *TESOL*. His research interests lie in interlanguage pragmatics, computer-mediated communication, second language acquisition and language and gender and.

**Chantal Claudel (e-mail: chantal.claudel@univ-paris8.fr)** — Ph.D., Senior Lecturer of General and Applied Linguistics at the University Paris 8-Vincennes-Saint-Denis. She is a permanent member of the Research Group “CLESTHIA — EA 7345: Language, Systems, Discourse”, University Paris 3-Sorbonne Nouvelle. Her main areas of research are Contrastive Discourse Analysis (French and Japanese), Pragmatics and Language Teaching. Among her recent publications is a collective book: *Cultures, discours, langues, Nouveaux abordages* (2013. Lambert-Lucas, Limoges) and a range of articles on the relation between language, discourse and culture, French language teaching and teacher education and Discourse analysis on empirical data.

**Oxana Issers (e-mail: isserso@mail.ru)** — Professor, Dean of the Faculty of Philology and Media, the Head of the Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics at Omsk F.M. Dostoevsky State University, Advanced Doctor of Philology. Her research interests are Communication Studies, Critical Discourse Studies, Modern Political Rhetoric, Intercultural Communication. She has published more than 250 academic papers and books, including the monographs “Russian Speech Strategies and Tactics”, “Modern Discourse practices” and others. She is also known for her courses on Speech Persuasion. She is a participant of Fulbright Program with the project “American and Russian Communicative Strategies and tactics: Comparative Aspect”.

**Sandra Halvorson (e-mail: shalvorson@pc.fsu.edu)** — Ph.D., Instructor for the College of Communication, Florida State University, since 1998. Her research

interests include theoretical and applied approaches in such areas of communication as speech apprehension, interpersonal communication, nonverbal communication, gender communication, research methods and training & development. She teaches Interpersonal Communication, Strategic Speech Making, Interviewing, Interracial/Intercultural Communication, and Communication for Organizing. She is recipient of University Teaching Awards, and Top Paper Awards, and contributes a lot to the Communication Community by presenting numerous papers at national, regional and local communication conferences.

**Robin Cranmer (e-mail: R.P.Cranmer@westminster.ac.uk)** — Ph.D., Senior Lecturer in Language Education and Intercultural Communication at the University of Westminster in London. His recent research focuses on intercultural aspects of language teaching and translation. He has published articles on the training of language teachers, the role of intercultural development within language teaching and on the intercultural challenges for museums and galleries when communicating with international visitors. His current teaching focuses primarily on the professional intercultural needs of translators, interpreters, mediators and language teachers. Robin also recently served as joint co-ordinator of a successful EU-funded project ‘Promoting Intercultural Competence in Translators’ (PICT).

**Kaisa Koskinen (e-mail: kaisa.koskinen@uef.fi)** — Professor of Translation Studies at the University of Eastern Finland in Joensuu. She has published over 40 articles, and she is the author of *Beyond Ambivalence. Postmodernity and the Ethics of Translation* (2000, PhD), *Translating Institutions. An Ethnographic Study of EU Translation* (2008), co-author with Tytti Suojanen and Tiina Tuominen of *User-centered translation* (2015), editor of *Tulkattu Tampere* (2013) and the co-editor (with Tuija Kinnunen) of *Translators’ Agency* (2010). Her current research interests include usability and translation, translation and affect, literary retranslations in Finland, and the city of Tampere as a translational space.

**Sebastian Muth (e-mail: sebastian.muth@unifr.ch)** — Ph.D., Senior Researcher at the Institute of Multilingualism at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland. His current research addresses the commodification of language in medical tourism and the global circulation of patients, focusing on the management of multilingual resources and the reproduction of social inequalities in healthcare. His research interests also include the sociolinguistics of post-Communist countries, in particular language ideologies and questions of language policy in the South Caucasus, Moldova, and the Baltic Republics. He has published a number of scientific papers in international journals and with renowned publishers.

**Svetlana Kurteš (e-mail: svetlana.kurtes@enieda.eu)** — Ph.D., UK-based scholar with a wide international experience in the area of linguistic and intercultural education. She is currently affiliated with the University of Madeira (Portugal), where

she is Invited Professor in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. The focus of her research clusters around interdisciplinary approaches to communication, culture and society and issues surrounding their pedagogical applications and practical implications. Since 2010 she has been Vice-President of the European Network for Intercultural Education Activities (ENIEDA), having initiated, coordinated and convened a significant number of its activities. A member of several professional and scholarly associations and editorial boards of academic journals, she is also a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, UK. She regularly presents and publishes internationally.

**Elvira Sorokina (e-mail: [ellasor@mail.ru](mailto:ellasor@mail.ru))** — Ph.D. (Advanced Doctorate), Professor, Professor of the English Philology Department at Moscow State Regional University. She has authored over 200 papers and books published both in Russia and abroad. Her current research interests lie in the fields of general and special lexicology, the theory of languages for specific purposes, terminological science and the theory of intercultural communication.

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