"That's not me"

Learning to Cope with Sensitive Cultural Issues

Michael Berry, Donal Carbaugh,
Caecilia Innreiter-Moser,
Marjatta Nurmikari-Berry & Walter Oetsch

THAT'S NOT ME has a lot to offer
to students of intercultural matters.
Experienced scholars,
as well as newcomers to the field,
will find in this book
a set of theoretical views
and practical approaches
that will allow them to
considerably advance their insights
into the (mine)field
that intercultural studies
has become in the past two decades.

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THE MORE WE REALIZE
how we talk about ourselves
when talking about others
the more we begin
to better understand
ourselves and others

"That's not me"

LEARNING TO COPE WITH SENSITIVE CULTURAL ISSUES

**An intercultural learning approach,
drawing on examples from Austrian intercultural trauma,
as well as from Finnish 'comfort with quietude'
full of active silence often invisible
to others uncomfortable with silence.**

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EDITOR:
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:
Appreciation to Richard Babcock, Timo Berry,
Lu Anne Halligan Carbaugh, Martin Gannon, Jane Honka,
Anni Paalumäki, Zsuzsanna Vincze and Carl Wieck
for their support.

PDF, 2010
ISBN 978-952-92-7817-6

PAPERBACK, 2ND ED. 2009
ISBN 978-952-92-5091-2

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Preface

TEACHERS AS LEARNERS AND LEARNERS AS TEACHERS

That's not me has a lot to offer to students of intercultural matters. Experienced scholars, as well as newcomers to the field, will find in this book a set of theoretical views and practical approaches that will allow them to considerably advance their insights into the (mine)field that intercultural studies has become in the past two decades.

Indeed, the long-standing debate between theory and praxis – typical of academic disciplines (such as Translation Studies) that have emerged in the latter part of the 20th century – has not spared the domain of intercultural studies.

A corollary of this debate is the necessarily multidisciplinary nature of intercultural studies. Studying cultures at the crossroads where they meet (or fail to do so) necessarily calls for a variety of (oftentimes disparate) fields to (possibly) provide understanding.

These two factors (i.e. the tension between theory and praxis and the wide variety of potentially relevant disciplines) contribute to creating a haze around intercultural work. '*What is it all about*?' and '*How academically serious is it anyway?*' are questions that keep being raised. The authors of this book would probably put the question like this: *Is this me?*

With the advent of the *International Association for Languages and Intercultural Communication* (founded at Leeds Metropolitan University in 1999), the mist started to clear up. In a (to this day ongoing) series of international conferences, adventurous courses are charted and new goals keep being set. And the association's journal, *Language and Intercultural Communication*, is very clear about its editorial policy: it intends to promote 'an interdisciplinary understanding of the interplay between language and intercultural communication. (...) It is also receptive to research on the frontiers between languages and cultures (...)'. This kind of 'understanding' and 'research' is precisely what *That's Not Me* has to offer. Austrian cultural trauma, on the one hand, and Finnish comfort with quietude, on the other hand, are two 'frontiers' that are explored (and eventually settled) by the authors of this book.

Their approach is a very lively one. In the first two chapters, the reader actually listens in on the debates among students, and between students and teachers. This entails a particular 'closeness' for the reader and constitutes the first of three main distinctive features of this book: a true *partnership* is established between authorship and readership! The highly informative Appendices contribute to this deep 'involvement' as well.

Secondly, there is a remarkable balance in this book between theory and praxis: neither is given clear preference over the other. Rather, all interlocutors speak in turn – with mutual respect. The result is a rich (and well-informed!) dialogue typical of any truly intercultural encounter.

Thirdly, this work excels in accessibility. The authors have left no stone unturned to meet one of the most important conditions for (and goals of) intercultural understanding: to make information readily available *everywhere* to *all* parties concerned. As such, they truly practice what they preach!

I wish to conclude my introductory notes to this book by quoting Margaret Parry. In her *Introduction* to the Proceedings of the 1999 IALIC conference, she wrote:

(...) the teacher is also challenger, counsellor, facilitator, the creator of or pointer towards culturally rich spaces of intentional and meaningful interaction (...) a mirror which wilfully reflects or distorts but never allows the image to become static.

At the time, Margaret Parry's words were prophetic. Today, books like *That's Not Me* fulfil that prophecy: teachers should (always) remain learners, and learners are (always) teachers!

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Introduction

DISCOVERING RESPONSIBILITY AND OPPORTUNITY FOR COPING WITH SENSITIVE CULTURAL ISSUES

Communicating with people from other cultures is often like walking in a mine-field of sensitive cultural topics. Sometimes unpleasant or sensitive topics are on the surface with everyone aware of and burdened by them. At other times we are unaware of them and don't realize that they can trigger negative reactions.

This book is about learning to cope with inherited sensitive topics that are often under the surface in everyday life but can easily create discomfort in intercultural contexts. Addressing these sensitive topics can be difficult for cultural actors. The intercultural approach to learning adopted by the authors and developed in this book contributes to transforming invisible and unmanageable cultural issues into responsible and emotionally controllable discussions. The transformation becomes possible through a discovery process which brings local and exchange students into dialogue as they share their intercultural challenges.

This approach is introduced through two specific examples of learning to cope: 1) an Austrian trauma inherited from the Second World War and 2) a Finnish preference for 'quietude' which is often subjugated to some other cultures' 'discomfort with silence'. It is hoped that this book will contribute to intercultural, multidisciplinary discussions about ways to discover, confront and cope with previously overlooked and unmanageable sensitive intercultural challenges.

Three Chapters and Three Main Themes

The three chapters in the book are part of an integrated whole; each chapter containing examples of how a participant observer can learn along with students. The first chapter provides an example of coping with inherited trauma in an intercultural management course at an Austrian university. The second chapter offers an example of finding ways to cope with stereotypes that privilege speaking over silence and quietude in an intercultural communication course at a Finnish university. The third chapter introduces a teacher's reflections about pragmatic and theoretical lessons learned

when students became resources in studying the above-mentioned problems.

The examples of coping with sensitive cultural issues in the Austrian and Finnish cases take up approximately ten percent of the teaching time spent in the intercultural business-related courses. The two cases do not suggest that the challenges are limited to those cultures or that final pedagogical solutions have been discovered and implemented. They do suggest, however, that these approaches have added dimensions that helped minimize unpleasant feelings for local and exchange students. Thus, modified approaches might also be useful elsewhere in our globalizing world, not only for students and teachers but also for people with different religious frames of reference, immigrants, national minorities, international business people, etc.[1]

Three overlapping themes are integrated into the first and second chapters The first theme moves beyond a traditional focus on bicultural/bilingual communication competence to emphasize the role of 'false friends' – words or phrases a speaker believes carry a universal meaning but which the cultural other(s) interprets differently – when using English as a shared international language.

These lexical terms can transmit invisible cultural meanings when the interactants do not realize that they often subconsciously translate the cultural meanings of their use of 'proper' English back into their own cultural frames of reference (Berry, Carbaugh & Nurmikariberry 2004; Berry 2006). The phrase 'lexical terms' is used throughout this book but should also be understood as 'cultural terms' since these terms bear not only traditional semantic significance but transmit implicit deep meanings related to cultural practices.

The second theme is related to academic mobility, a factor which has given rise to multiple intercultural opportunities for developing 'local internationalization'. Creating points of contact for intercultural interaction can bring awareness of opportunities that have been overlooked. Exchange and local students often float past each other (Dervin, 2008; Taajamo, 2005), thus missing an opportunity to participate in the creation of a Third Space: a semi-coherent social, learning space, inhabited by people in transformation who are creating shared frames of reference in order to explore the diversity and commonality of their taken-for-granted cultural assumptions about oneself and others. The interactive learning goal of the Austrian and

1 Development of the intercultural business courses was strongly influenced by awareness that international companies often fail to employ their expatriates for creating intercultural company knowledge (Reber & Berry 1999).

Finnish courses in chapters 1 and 2 is to take full advantage of international exchange programs. In the process, local and exchange students represent cultural resources who can learn from each other if the teacher operates as an observing–participant learner.

The third theme focuses on implicit sensitive cultural issues which can come to the surface when local students interact with exchange students. The students become able to develop some competence in coping with their explicit and implicit interpretations of negative stereotypes that easily lead to uncomfortable intercultural miscommunication. Practical implementation of this theme is introduced in the first and second chapters. The first chapter demonstrates how difficult it was for a guest professor and a local Austrian colleague to deal with any reference to the Second World War in an intercultural management course. Fortunately, cooperation with another Austrian colleague eventually provided an opportunity to integrate a modified therapeutic approach into the process and thereby improve ways to address intercultural communication challenges. The second chapter demonstrates the challenges of, as well as the opportunities to cope with, discomfort on both sides when others' 'discomfort with silence' interacts with a Finnish 'comfort with quietness'. The third chapter offers a teacher's reflections on how teachers can gradually become aware of both a responsibility and an opportunity to learn with students about the various backgrounds all are bringing into an educational environment.

The Goal: Movement from poverty points to rich points

Identity is a very complex concept (Carbaugh 1996; Pavlenko & Blackledge 2004) which will centre here on two questions. To what extent do people in different cultures identify themselves independently? To what extent do they often use terminology created by others, e.g. a 'mainstream majority', when describing themselves to others? Regardless of one's culture, everyone can benefit from interpreting stereotypes as naïve information that can trigger irrational responses. Movement from externally and self-imposed perplexity and discomfort towards a rational discussion of cultural convergence and divergence is one way to help oneself and others to benefit from successful intercultural communication.

An unexpected intercultural challenge is related to a lack of awareness of how positive taken-for-granted presumptions about one's own culture can overshadow the cultural richness in a stranger's culture. When reference is made to silence and shyness in the Finnish case and the Anschluss/WWII in the Austrian case,

this can initially lead to the discovery of intercultural poverty points. These negative misinterpretations can result when one conceives of and evaluates another's cultural ways through one's own cultural prism of living and communicating, and conversely when one is influenced by self-imposed external standards of communication and identity.

A never-ending awareness discovery process: Moving towards asking 'what is hidden in me/us and in him/her/them that I'm unaware of or don't understand?' can bring (1) awareness of one's own cultural richness that has been taken for granted, (2) awareness of the positive aspects of the strangers' different ways of living and communicating, (3) awareness of how one's own cultural richness has imposed a negative interpretation on the stranger's taken-for-granted cultural richness, and (4) *awareness of how one can also hide positive aspects of one's own cultural ways from oneself.*

Discovery of intercultural rich points comes via helping one another to better understand what is taken for granted in the cultural 'logic' of the other's culture. For example, in the Austrian chapter, (1) the Austrian students become more aware of how national cultural learning from the mistakes prior to and during WWII created a basis for the post-war Social Partnership; and they also begin to realize how their taken-for-granted discomfort with reference to WWII is self-imposed and misleading when exchange students make any reference to that period in Austrian history. (2) The exchange students become aware not only of how their reference to WWII can be misinterpreted but also of how they need to reflect on their own cultural traumas. In the Finnish chapter (1) the Finnish students discover how their taken-for-granted comfort with quietness is linked to the multiple positive cultural dimensions of quietness, and (2) American and French students become aware of how their discomfort with silence is linked to the multiple positive dimensions of 'verbal connecting openness'.

Poverty points are converted into rich points during the students' discovery process about themselves and each other during the courses. In the Austrian and Finnish cases developing competence to begin to explain 'what/who I am' and to begin to understand 'what/who you are' comes via awareness of how identity can often be an invisible mishmash of internal and external perceptions of oneself and others. Movement from an uncomfortable 'that's not me' towards a comfortable 'this is me' is a challenge but can open the way to a possible step forward.

Intercultural collaboration and ethnographic discovery

The approach described in this book is the result of more than a decade of intercultural collaboration and ethnographic discovery. The students involved found that they had much to learn as well as teach about their cultural backgrounds, while the participating teachers discovered how to draw on the rich cultural resources that students represent.

The three chapters include data that were generated by an international, interlingual, and intercultural research team. The data that European and American students produced were typically outcomes of multilingual group discussions, resulting in reflective essays for group members and, subsequently, more polished final papers. The process included (1) integrating teaching, development of courses and research into a focus on students' reflections about their multicultural learning experience; (2) becoming aware of issues related to intercultural discomfort that were typically ignored; and (3) discovering useful theoretical insights by turning to academic disciplines that can contribute to coping with complicated intercultural communication challenges.

Notes about the authors

Michael Berry is a Docent (Adjunct Professor) of Intercultural Relations at the Turku School of Economics. His teaching and research focus on intercultural communication. One of his courses was recently designated as the exceptional Finnish intercultural business course for 2007 by the Finnish Association of Graduates in Economics and Business Administration. Berry serves as a member of the Research Advisory Group for the Security Needs Assessment Project of the United Nations, Geneva, Switzerland in cooperation with Donal Carbaugh, the Chair of the Advisory Group.

Donal Carbaugh is a Professor of Communication at the University of Massachusetts (Amherst). His extensive research is summarized in *Cultures in Conversation* which in 2006 was designated the Outstanding Book of the Year in Intercultural Communication by the National Communication Association.

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Chapter 1 is based on cooperation between Michael Berry, Caecilia Innreiter-Moser and Walter Oetsch. Chapter 2 has been strongly influenced by cooperation between Michael Berry, Donal Carbaugh and Marjatta Nurmikari-Berry.

Discovery of whole-part cultural relationships

During the courses, students and teachers become more aware of whole-part relationships between particular word-images, particular cultural actions and the larger system of practice of which each is a part. Culturally rich/dense lexical terms resonate in a speech community but are difficult to communicate via translation to people from other speech communities. Discovery of the misleading intercultural role of culturally dense terms is an experience which the students do not expect or even understand during the first part of the course; and reference to culturally dense terms can easily trigger discomfort if the local and/or exchange students have stereotyped a word or phrase in a way that is unacceptable to one or both sides. The focus here will now turn to intercultural cases in Austria (chapter 1) and Finland (chapter 2). These demonstrate how local and exchange students can play an essential role when intercultural discomfort is introduced into discussions. Movement forward comes only as the teacher learns with the students what is involved in this process from the vantage point of the different cultures of the participants.

Chapter 1

THE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION BURDEN OF INHERITED CULTURAL TRAUMA

This chapter is dedicated to Gerhard Reber[2]

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Introduction

Sixty years after the Second World War cultural trauma often remains a silent part of national cultural myths throughout Europe. This chapter offers one example of how a teacher-learning process led to the challenge of coping with inherited cultural trauma in an Austrian context. Similar challenges exist in other countries and cultures. The Austrian example presents trauma associated with the consequences of 'Anschluss' and WWII. Reference to Anschluss, the 1938 political union between Germany and Austria (which was the de facto annexation of Austria by the National Socialist German Reich), is interpreted in multiple ways inside and outside Austria. Among Austrians, this facilitates avoiding to reveal to others whether 'Anschluss' means 'forced' and/or 'voluntary' cooperation with Nazi Germany. In intercultural contexts, reference to the Austrian association with Nazi Germany often triggers intercultural discomfort, placing Austrian students on the defensive when they assume that exchange students are 'loaded' with a negative view of Austria's role during the Second World War. Insights from therapeutic approaches dealing with personal trauma can thus be integrated into efforts to help students develop intercultural communication competence when emotional issues related to traumatic aspects of national identity are active but often ignored – even in their mother tongue – by locals.

Developing intercultural communication competence by discovering, interpreting and communicating cultural meanings has been

2 Professor emeritus Gerhard Reber's creation of intercultural pedagogical space at Johannes Kepler University provided an opportunity for the discovery process described in this chapter.

the goal of the Managing Intercultural Relations course at Johannes Kepler University in Linz during the past decade. An ethnographic discovery approach constitutes the basis for the course. In this chapter Michael Berry has been an outsider in all contexts and the Austrian teachers, Caecilia Innreiter-Moser and Walter Oetsch (who has recently introduced a modified therapeutic approach), have been insiders vis-à-vis Berry but outsiders vis-à-vis students. Austrian students have been insiders and exchange students have been outsiders in all contexts associated with Austrian cultural trauma, but exchange students have been insiders associated with their own cultural trauma. All reference to dealing with cultural trauma is limited to data produced by insiders and outsiders associated with the pedagogical development during the past decade.

During the course, exercises are related to gender roles in business and society, participation in decision making, groupthink negotiation challenges, multiple cultural meanings hidden in leadership strategies, creation of an Austrian cultural myth, etc. (Berry 2002). Each year the teachers (Berry & Innreiter-Moser) returned to a modified version of exercises after weighing what they had learned from the students during the previous courses. During the course the teachers experienced multiple unexpected discoveries related to cultural issues and found more appropriate ways to cope with them.

Analysis of this learning experience by the teachers has produced three articles, one of which focuses on business vs. cultural frames of reference in group decision making (Auer-Rizzi & Berry 2000)[3]; the second focuses on cultural dimensions of gender-related issues (Berry & Innreiter-Moser 2002); and the third offers an overview of cooperative teaching (Berry 2002). During these courses approximately ten percent of the time has been concentrated on the often implicit role of cultural myths in social arrangements, contemporary speech, and intercultural communication.

Approximately 16 Austrian and 16 exchange students have participated in the course each year. The majority of the students have been advanced bachelor's or master's degree business students. Students form intercultural groups (5–7 members), write reflective email to group members after each session, and respond to as well as create critical incidents. Students from different cultures become the learner-teachers and the teachers become the teacher-learners. Students write reflective essays after each session, compare their group dynamics with required reading, and write a final reflective essay after reviewing all the course material. During the course, students begin to ask themselves this: What is there in the way I/we have been socially primed that leads to an implicit logic that strangers might not share or understand? Eventually, the following partial answer emerges: Once we begin to become aware of how our use of English is embedded in what is taken for granted in different cultural spheres of coherence, we start to make explicit (to ourselves and others) the social meanings of the words that we would use in our own languages when using English as a shared international language (Berry 1999a).

During the course, students who use English as a shared international language move back and forth between English and their native language. In so doing they discover previously invisible linkages between their local languages and their taken-for-granted local norms that had been 'hidden' in their use of so-called 'proper' English. They also discover that translated lexical terms can lose part of their local cultural meaning when translated into English, especially when other non-native speakers implicitly translate the English terms back into the meanings in their cultural spheres of comprehension. This discovery process, which was active in all the business-related course activities, was also active during the creation of an Austrian cultural myth, and in efforts to cope with cultural trauma interference in intercultural communication.

Creation of an Austrian cultural myth

Creation of a version of an Austrian cultural myth has been one of the core objectives in the intercultural management course mentioned above with multiple critical incidents related to management, intercultural communication and contemporary interpretations of history. It has helped the students and teachers (Berry & Innreiter-Moser) become more aware of the role that multiple implicit interpretations of history can play in contemporary speech.

A cultural myth is understood here to be an abstraction, a superstory about a people that resonates in a cultural landscape, thereby providing elements and plot lines that are used in individual ways to facilitate (or minimize) communication. It is a story about how a society got to where it is – a symbolic 'cultural script' that contains explicit and implicit models for personhood, community, and appropriate ways of organizing relationships between persons and community (Philipsen 1987, 1992; Tonkin 1992). "Narrative forms and discursive formats that are provided by culture and used in certain social events ... [suggest] that narrative is a central hinge between culture and mind" (Brockmeier & Carbaugh 2001: 10). Identities are constructed and related to place and space from a historical and contem-

3 Werner Auer-Rizzi also co-operated during the business related parts of the course.

porary perspective (Johnstone 1991). Any version of a cultural myth, whether personal or associated with a social group, is thus embedded in a specific system of cultural meaning, for the dynamics of history are active, and often implicit, in contemporary life when interacting with locals and with strangers.[4]

During the first five years of the above-mentioned course, students wrote short histories describing how Austria became what it is today and listed basic Austrian values. A guest professor who had developed a similar approach in Finland (Berry 1997) summarized common points that the students had brought up during the initial course in Linz. This summary served as the first version of a potential Austrian cultural myth. The Austrian teaching-research partner (Innreiter-Moser) suggested possible modifications and discussed those possibilities with Austrian colleagues inside and outside the university. As it turned out, none of the feedback differed from the students' suggestions. During the following academic year, students in the same course were given the first version of an Austrian cultural myth to modify and discuss with exchange students; and each year thereafter students were given a new version to discuss and modify.

During each course, the guest professor and the local Austrian partner acted as participant observers when interacting with the Austrian and exchange students. This modified version of a participant-observer ethnographic strategy continued for five years with an ongoing framing process before reaching rather extensive agreement among students and Austrian colleagues that the cultural myth sounded Austrian, even if everyone communicated their feeling that it needed a little more or less of 'this or that' to capture what was active in their minds. The text below will therefore focus on the relationship between the development of an Austrian cultural myth and the multiple attempts by the teachers to find ways to help Austrian students cope with cultural trauma that they often associated with any reference to Anschluss and WWII. That process required an additional five years before emotional communication became more 'controllable' and rational in the multicultural group discussions.

Cultural Trauma, a Challenge for Intercultural Communicators

Cultural trauma is a collective trauma which is often associated with individuals who live in or lived during a traumatic period in their country's history (Alexander et al. 2004). A cultural trauma is also an inherited collective burden, one which does not necessarily bring emotion to the surface in everyday life but which can constitute an obstacle to intercultural understanding despite the linguistic and intercultural competence of the interactants. Cultural trauma, which is combined inevitably and implicitly with questions of social moral responsibility, is easily stereotyped via the history of one's own country and pushed aside or emotionally denied. This dimension of language use and intercultural communication is rarely made explicit in theoretical and pragmatic discussions relating to pedagogical development.

Sixty years after the end of the Second World War cultural trauma inheritance is present in many European countries and recent publications offer important insights into this problem. *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity* (Alexander et al. 2004) deals with psychological trauma and cultural trauma (Smelser), American slavery (Eyerman), the Holocaust (Giesen & Alexander), post-communist societies (Sztompka) and September 11, 2001 (Smelser). The theoretical approach employed emphasizes that "cultural trauma applies ... to any and all instances when societies have, or have not, constructed and experienced cultural traumatic events, and to their efforts to draw, or not to draw, the moral lessons that can be said to emanate from them" (Alexander 2004: 27). Articles in the *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* offer pragmatic insights into cultural trauma and its impact on contemporary speech in European countries, with a multidisciplinary focus on the relationship between languages and emotions, e.g., how emotion-laden words and concepts are encoded and processed emotionally in intercultural contexts (Dewaele & Pavlenko 2004; Wierzbicka 2004).

The European-oriented trauma-related literature often focuses on Germany. One article, 'Perceptions of Germany and the Germans in Post-war Britain' (Wittlinger 2004), demonstrates how British people have retained a negative image of Germany in an effort to deal with the decline of Great Britain as a global power after the Second World War and the fear that post-war German economic growth would weaken British influence even more. Self-serving 'auto-images' can easily, often implicitly, be imposed on the 'hetero-images' of others. Hence, when exploring ways to deal with the cultural trauma of the 'other', everyone, not only British people, can benefit from becoming aware of how their 'loud' reference to the other can be a hidden silent way to ignore their own trauma. Unfortunately, this rather common 'loud' approach to ignoring one's own cultural trauma often contributes to a silent or defensive response from others. We will return to this point when discussing some of the results of the therapeutic procedure used below.

4 For the role of cultural myths in Austrian and Finnish gender-related issues, see Berry & Innreiter-Moser 2002.

This chapter aims to supplement the insights of the literature cited above with an example of a development process. The challenge was to help students cope with the ways in which an inherited collective trauma had been interfering with intercultural communication. During the first five years of the international management course, the teachers gradually became aware that they were failing to help Austrian students go beyond the beauty of the Alps into the deep valleys of cultural trauma to cope with the 'silent suffering' caused by cultural trauma in intercultural situations. This teacher-learning process provides an Austrian example, which can hopefully be beneficial for intercultural communication development in other cultures within and outside Europe.

Reference to Austria's association with Nazi Germany constituted the greatest challenge during the creation of an Austrian cultural myth. In an attempt to encourage students to discuss the importance of critical, if unpopular, points in history, excerpts from a few student essays that emphasized Austrian association with Germany during WWII were integrated into the first version of the cultural myth. This approach unexpectedly supported a student preference to 'silently skip past' the topic during intercultural group discussions.

The subsequently modified version of the cultural myth we employed moved away from a 'confrontational' approach, with only limited reference to this period in Austrian history. Austrian students took the initiative in one intercultural Austrian-Swedish group and explained that the Anschluss-related period in Austrian history should not be ignored. The Swedish students joined in to explain that Swedes often ignore the Swedish non-military role in the war. It was encouraging to observe how the openness of one group of Austrians opened the door to rather rare Swedish reflection during the course. In contrast, the other five multicultural groups remained silent about that period in Austrian history.

A modified version referring to 'cooperation (some say voluntary, others forced) with Germany' was presented during the following course. The result was complete agreement among the Austrian students and no discussion in subgroups about this period in Austrian history. At that stage the teachers had not yet realized in what way the reference to 'voluntary vs. forced' cooperation in English corresponded to the two options in the minds of many Austrians when hearing a reference to Anschluss.

In the Austrian social environment there is a consensus that Anschluss was linked to a cultural trauma but hidden interpretations about 'voluntary' or 'forced' cooperation facilitate keeping silent. Translating Anschluss into 'voluntary vs. forced' interpretation options for Austrian students corresponded to the reference to Anschluss among Austrians themselves. Many Austrians can easily be in agreement that any Austrian reference to Anschluss is negative, as long as everyone remains silent about whether the negative side of Anschluss was 'voluntary' or 'forced'. Perhaps the 'good' translation of Anschluss was influenced by the teachers' efforts to implicitly encourage students to discuss traumatic aspects of a cultural myth by putting the two silent alternatives on the table.

Even though the Austrian students and the colleagues of the Austrian teacher generally agreed that the English version of the cultural myth seemed to capture many aspects of Austrian history that are often implicitly embedded in Austrian minds when communicating and interpreting contemporary issues, an Austrian-German version was created prior to the sixth time the course was given. The conversion process shocked the Austrian teacher and her Austrian colleagues, all of whom had considered the English version an appropriate one. As they discussed ways to transmit the 'same' nuances in German and then to see if the English version really captured the meanings of the German one, they realized that they had been imposing Austrian interpretations on the English text.

The multiple versions of the translation process are no longer available but two examples of cultural interference remain active in the teachers' minds: reference to 'leaders' and to 'rights'. English reference to 'leaders' after the Second World War required '*politischen Fuehrern*' and English reference to 'rights' of individuals, which reflected an Anglo-American liberal connotation, was modified to 'interests'. Later discovery of hidden aspects of the translation process are introduced below.

When the German and English versions were 'ready', students in the next course were given both versions. Austrian students were asked to explain to the exchange students if there were any differences in the German and English versions. They explained to exchange students that they did not notice any differences in the two versions, and discussion in all the subgroups remained very limited. The teacher outsiders finally understood how the word Anschluss in the German version and the reference to 'voluntary vs. forced' cooperation in the English version provided an opportunity for students to once again remain silent about this period in Austrian history during their group discussions.

The teachers finally decided that 'controllable confrontation' was the only way to move forward. Confrontation is understood here as an active "bringing together of ideas, themes, etc., for comparison" (*Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary* 2001). The following year "voluntary vs. forced" was dropped from the English version. The German version of the cultural myth related to association with Ger-

many read: "*Nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg führten ein Gefühl der Unsicherheit, hohe Arbeitslosigkeit und politische Unruhe zum politischen Extremismus der 30er Jahre und zum Anschluss an Deutschland während des Zweiten Weltkrieges*", and the English version read: "*After the First World War a sense of insecurity, high unemployment and political unrest led to political extremism of the 1930s and cooperation with Germany during the Second World War.*"[5]

Creation of the German version in the Anschluss part of the cultural myth suggests that the Austrian teacher and the other Austrians with whom she consulted, both inside and outside the university, had been primed to assume a limited or non-existent gap between Anschluss and the Second World War. Austrians with a 'German forced' interpretation, or an 'Austrian voluntary' interpretation, or a 'not enough Austrian resistance' interpretation, or 'it's the Austrian leaders' fault' interpretation tend to identify Anschluss with the beginning of the Second World War, even if they have 'knowledge' that history books refer to Anschluss in 1938 and the 'beginning' of WWII in 1939.

Everything related to Austrian interpretations of Anschluss and a preference for silence is the result of multiple lifelong encounters in which each encounter reinforces or weakens previous priming. "As the word is learnt through encounters with it in speech and writing, it is loaded with the cumulative effects of those encounters such that it is part of our knowledge of the word that it co-occurs with other words" (Hoey 2004: 386). Historical knowledge is not as powerful in everyday contemporary life as the multiple, often traumatic, semantic contexts within which a person encounters a reference to Anschluss.

After the Austrian students had read the German version of the cultural myth they told the exchange students that they agreed with all parts of the myth. They were then asked to read the English version and to explain if the English version captured the meanings in the German version. In-depth discussion and emotional responses came to the surface for the first time. The Austrian students debated emotionally among themselves for some time before explaining their views to group members in a rather emotional way.

5 See Appendix 1 for the German version and Appendix 2 for the English version of the cultural myth.

Austrian student interpretations of 'cooperation under difficult circumstances'

Examples of student-produced emotional disagreement:

- Cooperation voluntary because of difficult situation ("*The group supported that it was a cooperation, which was not forced because the economic situation was very bad and people hoped that Hitler could make it better.*")
- Anschluss neutral ("*The word Anschluss is a neutral word; it neither says we were forced nor it says it was voluntary. What the class has shown is that this is still a relatively hot topic where we have basically two factions. I think by choosing the word Anschluss everybody is avoiding the problem.*")
- Connection, not cooperation ("*Cooperation is a very positive thing because all actors search for a solution, which will be understood by both sides – all actors want to find a solution together.... [therefore], there was no cooperation between Germany and Austria. It was more a connection because Austria had no choice or no alternative to act different. In my opinion connection is only a combining tool, like the connection of two trains.*")
- Government cooperated, people didn't ("*I think the word cooperation is not the right word from the view of the Austrian people but maybe the right word of the government, but the government was Hitler and his friends. I would say connection would be better because it is more neutral.*")

Contemporary meanings imposed on historical meanings?

Reference to 'connection' was very popular among the Austrian students. It was considered 'more neutral' than 'cooperation', implying that being connected to another train (an einen anderen Zug angeschlossen werden), to changing trains (Zuganschluss), to computer connection (Computeranschluss) or an electrical power system (Stromanschluss) was simply a neutral act rather than one related to the reasons for or the nature of the connection. It is also interesting that no reference was made to a verb associated with Anschluss, 'sich jemandem anschließen', which can mean 'I would like to come with you'. Students who argued on behalf of a neutral 'connection' translation of Anschluss did not want to refer to cooperation.

The discussions related to Anschluss also revealed that many Austrian business students tend to associate reference to 'cooperation' with voluntary cooperation among people or business units which are at the same level of power. This kind of speech probably reflects a recent emphasis in contemporary society and management-related literature about the need to move towards more 'equality' in organizational relationships. During the emotional Anschluss discussions, Austrian students often insisted that 'cooperation' was a pos-

itive term based on voluntary and equal relationships. In contrast, their discussions about boss-subordinate relations and joint-ventures during other exercises often associated cooperation with unequal relationships in which there was potential for fair/mutual benefits within and between organizations. The students' contemporary interpretations of cooperation and connection had influenced their choices between options in contemporary speech when interpreting and discussing reference to cooperation under difficult circumstances in a traumatic historical context.

Pragmatic perspectives for dealing with cultural trauma in intercultural contexts

A multidisciplinary approach that integrates the insights of ethnography, language, culture and communication has opened the door to a discovery process that brought awareness of previously ignored issues. Whenever interactants (students and teachers alike) in an intercultural setting have become aware of a difference between themselves and someone from another culture, they have discovered boundaries that interfere with comprehension of cultural meanings embedded in the shared use of English. The concept of culture is limited here to "those resources (patterns of symbolic action and meaning) that are deeply felt, commonly intelligible and widely accessible" (Carbaugh 1988a: 40), even if swept under the rug. Dell Hymes' concept of communication competence within a speech community involves four sectors of competence:

> Whether and to what degree something is formally possible; whether and to what degree something is feasible given the means of communication available; whether and to what degree something is appropriate (adequate, happy, successful) in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated; and whether and to what degree something is in fact done, actually performed and what its doing entails (Hymes 1979: 281).

Discussion about Anschluss is formally possible and feasible given the means of communication available. However, it is rarely considered an appropriate topic and rarely discussed. An inherited cultural trauma can easily become a personal burden in intercultural communication situations. The Hymes insights led the authors to the Victor Turner (1980) concept of "social drama" (Berry & Innreiter-Moser 2002), which has been modified in this chapter to deal with intercultural cultural traumatic communication. The authors thank Donal Carbaugh for this suggestion.

A four-phased social trauma model provides a frame of reference that can facilitate interpretation and communication related to social aspects of cultural trauma.

Figure 1

Social Trauma Model
(Related to Social Traumatic Communication)

Social traumatic communication is:

1. *initiated by a breach or violation of a code (e.g., events leading up to Anschluss after the collapse of the Austrian empire), followed by*
2. *a phase of crisis (e.g., WWII consequences of Anschluss for Austria), followed by*
3. *efforts to redress and correct the violation (e.g., postwar creation of the Social Partnership – the Austrian system of Social Partnership to create a democratic social welfare state to prevent future divisions within Austrian society), and then*
4. *if 3 is successful, a reintegrated social order (e.g. development of a social-welfare democracy), or if not, a continuing schism (e.g. failure to deal with a political cultural trauma).*

This model highlights what people deem traumatic (1–2), ways of addressing the traumatic (3), as well as the results that are produced (4).

The Austrian 'social partnership' was founded in the early 1950s to reconstruct Austrian politics and relationships between capital and labour by providing a framework for the development of social democracy and the carrying out of rather extensive welfare reforms. Resolution of social conflicts before they get out of hand became a societal goal for the future.

Rarely, if ever, did Austrian students make reference to the creation of the social partnership in their multicultural subgroup discussions, even though they took for granted that it symbolized learning from mistakes and had created a way to avoid mistakes in the future. Therefore, they remained interculturally trapped by the 'continuing schism' of cultural trauma in phase four of the social trauma model.

Movement forward with therapeutic insights

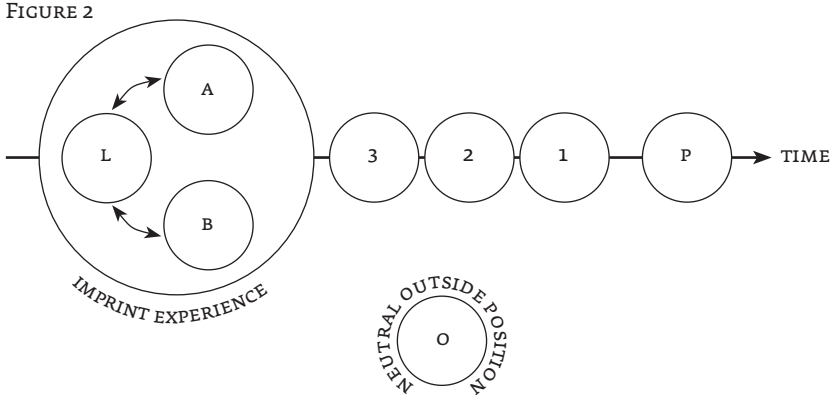
Pedagogical development based on integration of multidisciplinary approaches to intercultural communication had succeeded in helping Austrian students confront and discuss the trauma in English with exchange students but had failed to help them rationally discuss a social trauma that they had inherited from their culture. Developing competence for discovering, interpreting and communicating cultural meanings also requires a practical and theoretical emphasis on coping with emotional cultural issues.

After becoming aware of how the social trauma model might be beneficial in the future, Berry benefited from being introduced to Innreiter-Moser's colleague, Walter Oetsch. During their discussion about different intercultural challenges and possible opportunities, Oetsch also referred to Neuro-Linguistic Programming (nlp) training. When Berry learned how a person suffering from personal trauma can be taken back into his or her personal history to discover ways to neutralize a problem, he realized that perhaps a modified approach could be implemented to take Austrian and exchange students back into their cultural histories to benefit from similar results. Discussion about a possible relationship between the insights of the social trauma model and a nlp approach encouraged the three teachers to integrate a modified therapeutic approach into their next course.

Efforts to 'escape' a political cultural trauma can benefit from modification of successful approaches for escaping the history of a personal trauma. Most of the therapeutic approaches are based on cognitive behaviour therapy, psychoanalysis and therapies with point dissociation procedures. A moderate and short-time version of nlp is a technique called 'reimprinting' (Robert Dilts 1990; Oetsch & Stahl 2002). The text below introduces a modified version of the approach and describes the results of cooperative efforts to integrate therapeutic insights into an international management course. Oetsch's approach offers the possibility to better cope with the continuing schism related to cultural trauma and its impact on intercultural communication. This chapter does not suggest, however, that a short-term implementation of a therapeutic approach will always work for everyone in all intercultural contexts at either the individual or the collective level.

A three-hour session dealing with cultural trauma begins with one student volunteering to play the role of John, an intelligent, socially balanced adult, who has difficulties when he is confronted by older men who speak in a loud voice. He becomes inhibited and does not even argue against exaggerated demands or unjustified accusations. It could be (just a hypothesis) the outcome of a traumatic (and probably unconscious) experience many years previously. In therapeutic terms, it is a (moderate) post-traumatic stress disorder which is triggered by the stimulus of the loud voice of an older man; it leads to an automatic process during which John feels uncomfortable and reacts inadequately. The reimprinting procedure can help individuals like John become aware of the origins of their problem and help them cope with similar triggers in the future. This procedure uses a so-called timeline – a line drawn or laid out on a floor where different positions in space are given different meanings in time (fig. 2).[6] Oetsch, who created the story and steps below, helped John, the student volunteer, to demonstrate the value of going back into personal history.

Figure 2



Stage 1: *The trainer begins by establishing a time-line and assigns it the meanings of present, future and past. John is then placed in the present position of the time-line (P in fig. 2) and asked to explain what is bothering him.*

Stage 2: *John goes back one step to the recent past in his life (situation 1 on the time-line) and imagines a concrete experience in which his problem actually occurs. The trainer helps him to detect the specific stimuli (anchors) which led to his problem in the conceived situation (in our example: the angry voice of an older man). John is to then concentrate on his feelings associated with that experience.*

Stage 3: *John should keep in contact with his feelings and walk on the time-line slowly into the past (to situation 2). He should try to remember situations in which*

6 Different versions of these steps can be found in the data bank of the NLP dictionary (in German) at www.nlp.at, which is managed by Walter Oetsch.

he had the same feelings when reacting to the loud voices of older men (e.g. situation 2, five years ago, or situation 3, twelve years ago in fig. 2).

Stage 4: *As he remembers the past, John becomes younger and younger and finally can detect a situation in which he had these intensive bad feelings for the first time in his life. (In most cases clients had memories which were repressed before.) This is the 'imprint experience', as shown in figure 2.*

In our example John eventually, gradually or finally becomes aware of a situation in which Little John (L) was physically abused by his uncle (person A) who yelled in a loud voice while John's father (person B) did not protect him.

Stage 5: *At this stage John would experience intensive negative feelings. The trainer helps him to minimize deep emotional feelings. When the 'imprint' situation has become clear to John, the trainer leads him to a neutral outside position (0 in fig. 2) where John can neutrally observe his whole life. This process usually requires time since John has to control and move away from the negative emotions and the related physical reactions. The trainer can help him by talking about neutral themes and directing his attention, e.g., to the weather outside the room. When John is in a more neutral state, he can begin to observe his life from the outside position (looking at the time-line). Here John can (a) detect the linkage from the imprint experience to all the other situations (like 3, 2 and 1 in fig. 2) up to the present and (b) explore the imprint experience from a distance in detail: Which persons were involved? What did they do? Why did the uncle abuse the young child? Why didn't his father help him? How did the little boy react? What did he learn in that situation about older men with loud voices?*

Stage 6: *At this stage the trainer provides suggestions which may alter the memory of the reimprint situation and influence the feelings with respect to it. This can be done in many ways. For example, John could go from the outside position to the Little John position (L in the imprint experience) and give Little John the needed support (he imagines he is with Little John and giving him the support that Little John did not have in the past), or he (as an adult) could speak with the boy and explain how he will become a fine adult man in the future, despite that painful experience. Or the trainer could lead John into the positions of persons A or B, which could help John understand why A and B reacted in the way they did. The result of all these actions should create an improvement of the conceived situation in such a way that John can now understand (perhaps realize) that Little John (L) feels better than before.*

Stage 7: *This can be tested in position L on the timeline. John simulates an altered experience, e.g. where the uncle tries to abuse him but his father now intervenes and protects Little John. In this conceived version Little John can react to the loud voice in a different and more appropriate way. When acting out this version, John 'learns' to react differently to the same stimulus. This can be a deep experience for him and therefore requires the proper help from an experienced trainer. (If it is not possible to 'improve' the memory with respect to the imprint experience, stage 5 must be repeated in a new way.)*

Stage 8: *Now John's feelings and reactions to the loud voice of an older man are changing. John steps into the position of Little John (L), experiences the altered situation, and goes slowly 'back to the future'. He moves along the time-line (now in the opposite direction, from the past to the present) and re-experiences all the situations (like 3, 2 and 1) which he had detected before. Now it is likely that John 'sees' (or perhaps 'enters') slightly modified versions: his memory of these situations has changed in some ways. His conceived reactions to the imagined stimuli will be less emotional and he gets the impression that he is able to handle loud voices of older men more appropriately.*

After stage 8 students are asked to discuss how they understood the example of how John moved into a position to deal more rationally with his 'silent suffering'. After this, students have group discussions, ask the teachers questions and then take a short break.

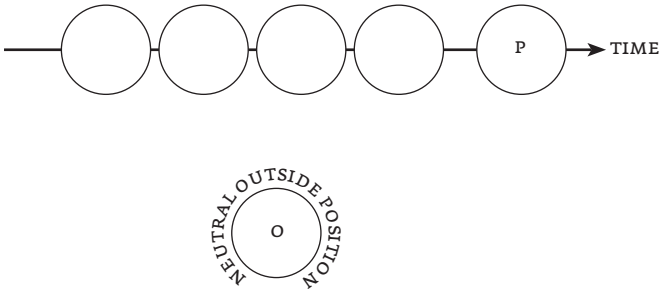
The basics of this procedure have been transformed below into a modified classroom experience, which applies four therapeutic principles:

1) In dealing with a trauma it is helpful to have the uncomfortable inner images of the past become clear in one's mind, and
2) It is important to be able to dissociate unemotionally from them and to look at them from an outsider position without strong feelings being involved.
3) Taking this position can allow one to detect the linkages in the history from the trauma situation up to the present: how the history developed and why one automatically reacted to a distinct stimulus in the way one did. Thus while the personal example above belongs to personal history, it can be applied in a modified way for dealing with an inherited cultural trauma and the time period extending from when it happened up till the present.
4) The goal of employing a neutral outsider position is to create in this manner the possibility for liberating those concerned from their improper reactions and to form a basis for behaving differently in the future.

Students going back into their cultural history

During the break the teachers prepare a historical time-line with dates going back 100 years marked along the classroom wall (with P for the present as in fig.3). After returning to class and joining their multicultural subgroups, Oetsch introduces the students to a modified version of the personal trauma procedure.

Figure 3



Step 1: *The students are asked to think about 'inherited' periods from the history of their country that they feel uncomfortable about and are hesitant to discuss. They are asked to silently and independently write down what they think about these periods, to imagine typical scenes and the feelings produced by them.*

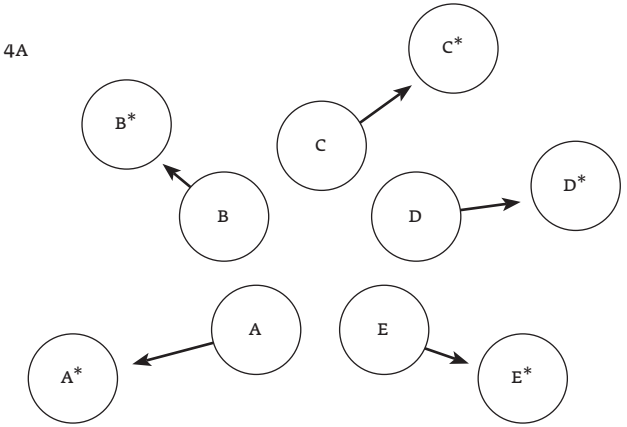
Step 2: *All the students are asked to go silently to the period marked on the historical timeline that they associate with the most traumatic period in their country's history and to stand there silently. After every student is standing at his/her chosen period by the timeline on the classroom wall, they are asked to close their eyes and to imagine that they were living in that period. What experiences, feelings and emotions would they have had? This can be a deep emotional experience for some students, who might want to verbalize their emotions to the person next to them. Therefore, the teacher must be prepared to gently and thoughtfully maintain a silent atmosphere.*

Step 3: *Students are then asked to silently step back from the wall into a neutral outside position (O in fig. 3) in order to neutrally observe this period in their national history. They are then asked to think about the following questions in order to detect from the outer position common reactions their culture had established: How was this traumatic history dealt with in the succeeding years and decades? What happened? Why did it happen? How did it happen, and at which points in history? What kinds of positive developments did their culture experience after the traumatic period? What is the societal commitment to preventing a similar problem occurring in the future? Also: What are their automatic reactions when people from other cultures want to talk with them about this encumbered period?*

Step 4: *Students from the same culture who gathered at the timeline at the same point in history are asked to discuss the questions in step 3 as they stand together. Their discussion might include references to communicating with people from other cultures about this period in history.*

In the future, step 4a should be included if the teacher notices emotional discussions within the cultural groups. Before students from the same culture return to their multicultural groups, they are asked to leave their place in their cultural group and to stand a few steps back. (student A goes to position A*, B to B*, etc.) This defines a new neutral outside position with respect to the group discussion. They can then look back at the historical position chosen by their group and ask themselves if they acted and communicated rationally or emotionally during the discussion in their cultural group.

Figure 4a



Step 5: *Students then return to their multicultural groups to discuss their inherited cultural trauma experiences in their respective cultures. The realization that students from all the cultures had also been reliving a traumatic period in the history of their countries helps students to speak more rationally about their inherited cultural trauma.*

Step 6: *Prior to group discussions, students are introduced to the four-phased social trauma model (see fig. 1) with an emphasis on cultural learning from mistakes, e.g. the Social Partnership in Austria. They are also reminded that the introductory example is from Austria because the course is in Austria, and that group*

members from other cultures can also benefit from making reference to the four-phased social trauma model.

Step 7: *Students are then introduced to the multiple roles of stereotypes that might be implicitly active in their minds. In the therapeutic example Little John suffered from an old man who 'attacked' him with a loud voice. After that experience any loud voice from an older man was implicitly stereotyped as an 'attack'. During the group discussions, Austrian students can begin to detect an interesting parallel: It is common for them to interpret almost any reference to WWII as a 'loud' criticism of Austrians today, even if many, probably most, non-Austrians have no intention of sending a negative message.*

Step 8: *During the group discussions students are given examples of what Austrian students have discussed in the past (see p. 23). After the group reads these examples, Austrian students explain in what ways they agree or disagree with the examples. The exchange students then discuss and respond to questions from the Austrian students about a cultural trauma in the history of their own country. If the discussion becomes too emotional, group members can be asked to move to a neutral outside point (see fig. 4a) and then to return to continue their group discussion.*

Moving forward after group discussions

At the end of the session students are provided with examples of some historical interpretations of reference to Anschluss (Appendix 3), examples of speech by German students (Appendix 4) and guidelines for the reflective email that they send to their group members after this session.

Guidelines for a post-class reflective essay

Austrian students: Reflect on your experience during the session, discuss your experience with friends and family outside of class, and summarize how you understand the historical significance of Anschluss. Also, reflect on the extent to which your views or the group discussion were defensive.

The goal of the session was to contribute to finding ways to minimize how inherited cultural myths can interfere with successful intercultural communication. If such myths are pushed aside, they never go away. If they are put on the table rationally, the interference can be minimized. Rather than being trapped by 'inherited responsibility' vs. 'no responsibility', it is beneficial to focus on what happened, how and why it happened, the responsibility for preventing it from happening again, and an understanding of how a culture can learn from the mistakes of the past.

Exchange students: The same guidelines with reference to their inherited cultural traumas.

Post-class student responses in reflective essays

After receiving copies of the students' reflective essays from group members, the teachers summarize some of the best examples from the essays and give the students an opportunity to read and talk about them in the following session. The reflective essays suggest that multiple dimensions of stereotypes encountered during the group discussions influenced their development process. More is at stake, however, than just what happened in Austria. One possible strategy for everybody, regardless of their culture, is to view stereotypes as naïve information about others and self that can trigger irrational responses. If we believe people from other cultures stereotype us or our culture in a negative way, it is easy for us to stereotype ourselves and others in expectation of criticism.

We might also believe that we need to defend ourselves in intercultural situations rather than to explore and discuss the reasons for naïve stereotypes from the outside and inside. Emotional arguments against, or silence about, a negative stereotype of one's self or one's own culture can easily strengthen the stereotype in the stranger's mind and the frustration in our own minds (Belller & Leerssen 2006; Hilton & von Hippel 1996; Lehtonen 1994a, 2005).[7] Movement from an emotional response to a rational discussion is the only way to help oneself and others to have successful intercultural communication. This process requires creation of a neutral outside position vis-à-vis the sensitive issues, which, in the students' examples below, came via interaction between local and exchange students.

"In my Austrian discussion group … we discussed the question why we should feel guilty for that which happened, which was in fact something cruel and something that should not happen again, but still there are many people who search for a mockingbird and find it in the Germans and Austrians…. We weren't shy at all about the topic; the feeling that came up was more or less anger because of the situation….. In my opinion we should try to live with what happened and learning about it is certainly something that has to be done so something like that can never happen again. But on the other side we should accept it as a part of our history and we should not try to hide it when someone comes up to us and wants

7 This text can also be applied to all kinds of negative stereotypes about everyday ways of living and acting. However, not all stereotypes are negative. Nancy Adler points out in her textbook (1997) that all of us use stereotypes in one form or another, and we can all benefit from helping each other modify them with unexpected new information.

to hear about it. We should not be ashamed and [should] talk friendly about the facts. We all have not been involved the war and we have to find a way to deal with the happened things with our grandparents, etc.... Why can't we find a way to deal with the things with foreigners?"

"I realized a lot of things concerning World War II that I couldn't ever have realized by talking to people from my own culture. When one of our group members who isn't Austrian mentioned that we were involved in WWII, *I felt I had to apologize for that although I really knew that I am not responsible for what had happened then. When I explained [to] her how I felt, she was really astonished about that because she didn't [want to] offend me.... One interesting detail was that I used the word 'we' when I was talking about people in* WWII.

One girl of our group pointed that out and I found it funny somehow that I say that I am not responsible for things that had happened and at the same time I am talking about what 'WE' have done then. However, the point is not who is responsible for things that had happened but how things are handled now in the present and the future. It is important that we have learned of the things we experienced and carry the future responsibility for not letting [it] happen again.... I think it is important to understand that there exist a lot of stereotypes from other countries concerning us but also [from] our own country concerning our own country. So we always think we have to react very emotionally and hard against the happenings; otherwise, other cultures think we [believe] what had happened [was] good. But this is not how it really is, we just think it is that way. So we have to talk a lot to each other and explain things instead of denying it."

*"The Austrians nearly all choose World War II for this simulation. Then we went into groups [Austrians] to try to discuss it [*WWII*] from the outside [neutral position]. I think the problem here was that this discussion became so emotional that we talked more about the content and not the position from the outside ... We tried to explain [to other Austrians] that our problem is that our generation always feels like that we have to defend ourselves for the cruel things that happened during* WWII. *The interesting thing was then when we talked to the exchange students and told them this, they did not really think that [way and did not feel] that we have to defend ourselves [even if] we thought that they would expect that we have to feel guilty.*

Here we could find a real and typical stereotype. When the exchange students told us their point of view, we started to come to a point that was more neutral, especially when they compared our problems to their traumas. They told us about the civil wars in Greece and Spain and their feeling nowadays about it. Sometimes I tried to stay a bit in the background, be silent and listen to ... my group...in these moments I tried to come to the point [neutral position] where little John was when he viewed his problem from the outside.

For me it was easier to do it individually than in the group. Especially it was very difficult in the Austrian group for me to reach that point. The discussion in my [multicultural] group was much more useful for me, my experience and my thoughts, maybe also because the exchange students helped us Austrians to watch it from the outer [neutral] point.... The discussion about our traumas became ... emotional ... I had to divide between my impressions of the discussion and my impressions I got from a position I tried to come into that was more neutral and more outside."

As THE AUTHORS EXPECTED, not all the Austrian students benefited from the three-hour session as much as these students, but the reflective email of most of the students clearly demonstrated movement towards, or partial arrival at, a 'neutral outside' position. These essays also provide examples of movement from an uncomfortable 'that's not me' towards a comfortable 'this is me' and an understanding of 'what/who you are'. This experience will hopefully be beneficial in the future when they hear a reference to WWII from a non-Austrian. It is also to be hoped that they will no longer automatically self-impose an assumed 'loud' criticism from strangers but will simply take the strangers through their own version of the four-phase model for social communication trauma. If successful, they might feel more comfortable in future intercultural situations, and they might even develop competence in helping non-Austrians to begin to reflect on their own country's cultural trauma.[8]

Discussion

"MEMORY MAKES US, WE MAKE MEMORY: ... We are all simultaneously bearers and makers of history" (TONKIN 1992:97). If we ignore the negative aspects of the past, we may also fail to learn from mistakes, e.g. learn about what has made a better Austria today. As a result, we might be less capable of combining preservation of the positive features of today with a commitment to preventing the negative ones of the past. The positive Social Partnership in phase #4 of the social trauma model represents more than a benefit from the past. Linking the Social Partnership to learning from the mistakes in phase #1 in the social traumatic communication model can create awareness of how learning from mistakes can also contribute to escaping from the cultural trauma schism that still exists in phase #4 (see also NEAL 1998; ALEXANDER ET AL. 2004 for other references to learning from traumatic experiences).

8 This was also the case for exchange students. Their role in helping Austrian students become aware of misleading presumed stereotypes, which helped the Austrian students, also led to a process in which the Austrians offered opportunities for the exchange students to discuss cultural traumatic issues that they rarely discuss in intercultural situations.

The NLP procedure cannot be applied directly to non-therapeutic settings but a modified approach has offered hope for developing intercultural communication competence to deal more rationally with cultural trauma. Becoming aware of the negative and positive of the past, being committed to preventing a return of the negative, and beginning to escape, at least minimize, the traumatic burden of the past offers a useful integrated process at the individual and cultural level.

The reflective essays of the Austrian students suggest that they have become aware of ways in which to cope better with their inherited cultural trauma burden. At this stage of important steps forward one of the most supportive aspects of walking 'back into history' was observing students freely locating the most uncomfortable point in their history, seeing that students from other countries were also doing the same thing, and returning to discuss inherited cultural trauma in different cultures. The limited therapeutic approach helped students return to history, reflect on it and discuss cultural trauma more deeply and in a more rational way than had occurred in previous courses. Awareness of the role of naïve stereotypes seen from outside and within reduced the emotional reactions and increased the rational reactions of students.

Public and ethical debates in the local and international cultural domains, which are linked, in turn, to questions of individual, cultural and linguistic identity, should become an important area with regard to integrating language learning into the development of intercultural communication competence. Unfortunately, the challenge of dealing with reaction and resistance to a cultural trauma, and cultural aspects of communication that are active but often ignored, was a goal that went far beyond the teachers' horizons at the initial stages of creating an Austrian cultural myth.

The teachers (Berry and Innreiter-Moser) understood that translated mother tongue "equivalents" in English are loaded with multiple historical and contemporary cultural meanings, and wanted the students to develop some competence in coping with an uncomfortable inherited burden. Nevertheless, they cannot remain silent about their unfortunate continuing efforts to use an easy approach which was influenced, to some extent, by a desire to have a good group spirit during the intercultural management courses. When they finally realized that they had to try a confrontational approach, student discussion came to the surface but the teachers had no 'theoretical' competence to deal with the emotions released. Fortunately they discovered Walter Oetsch who was able to integrate a modified therapeutic approach into the session related to cultural trauma. Confrontation became more controllable and beneficial for the students.

It is now, however, necessary to move beyond the leadership role of the teachers' cooperation to begin to understand the positive dimensions of this development.

Once the students returned to their multicultural groups they took the leadership role in most of their groups in order to help each other move towards cultural comfort. In the example of the reimprinting procedure 'Little John' became aware of the origins of his problem and of ways to deal with it with through the help of his trainer. In the cultural trauma example the teachers helped the students return to an uncomfortable period in the history of their country, but the actual movement to a 'neutral' position only came via interaction with members of their multicultural group. Awareness that discovery of responsibility can create opportunities for coping with intercultural perplexity might help us move forward to cope better with sensitive intercultural issues.

To return to the four dimensions of a cultural trauma in the social trauma model, we can identify with Donal Carbaugh's views that "mythic forms often do for communities what dreams do for an individual". They provide a "great symbolic narrative" (Carbaugh 2001: 116; Philipsen 1987). Here we emphasize the difference between positive and negative dreams (success and failure at the fourth phase of the social trauma model). For instance, the postwar Social Partnership dimension of Austrian history, with its positive approach to resolving conflict by learning from mistakes and building on positive aspects of history, corresponds to the reality in the positive 'dream' that evolved after resolution of the Austrian cultural trauma; but reference to 'Anschluss' remains the 'nightmare' kind of dream – a continuing schism – for many Austrians, especially in intercultural situations.

Our current objective is to introduce ways to "make the telling justifiable", i.e., help students become aware of and begin to escape, or at least minimize, culturally inherited "presuppositions about oneself, one's relation to others, one's view of the world and one's place in it" (Bruner 2001: 35). We are not suggesting that a modified therapeutic approach will automatically work for a cultural trauma in a classroom, but we believe, from a pragmatic and perhaps future theoretical perspective, that we have the responsibility and opportunity to continue our ethnographic assessment of the reflection discovery process. Participant-observer teachers have been privileged learners in a learning environment that has offered an opportunity to bring local, cultural discourse into an active intercultural context.

Our 'dream' is two-fold: (1) to benefit from student-produced responses to the latest stage in our pedagogical development and (2) to cooperate with teacher-researchers in other pedagogical cul-

tural contexts to develop ways to avoid silently skipping past cultural trauma in our intercultural-related courses. It is our hope that academic efforts to improve student intercultural communication competence to discover, interpret and communicate cultural meanings will move forward towards coping with sensitive cultural issues rather than continuing to silently leave the schisms of cultural trauma aside in our globalizing 21st century world.

Chapter 2

'DISCOMFORT WITH SILENCE' IN A CULTURE 'COMFORTABLE WITH QUIETNESS'

This chapter is dedicated to the memory of Kari Sajavaara[9]

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Introduction

In this chapter, Finnish, French and American students demonstrate how they eventually helped each other better understand the challenge of dealing with invisible cultural meanings embedded in (1) their reliance on 'proper' English and (2) their cultural presumptions related to Finnish 'comfort with quietness' and American-French 'discomfort with silence'.

In this instance, Michael Berry has been an outsider vis-à-vis the Finnish and exchange students. Finnish students have been insiders and the exchange students have been outsiders in all contexts associated with Finnish 'comfort with quietude.' However, the exchange students have been insiders associated with their own 'discomfort with silence'. All reference to dealing with intercultural discomfort between cultural communication norms is limited to data gathered during the past decade. When analyzing the commentary produced by Finnish and exchange students in the intercultural communication courses Marjatta Nurmikari-Berry has been a Finnish cultural insider; Michael Berry and Donal Carbaugh have been outsid-

9 Professor Kari Sajavaara created a foundation for pragmatic approaches to language learning and raised important questions about communicating Finnish cultural meanings in English (in cooperation with professor emeritus Jaakko Lehtonen).

ers. Carbaugh's research (1988b, 1996, 2005) has been central, given the fact that it has examined American ways of speaking in great detail. Chapter 2 is strongly influenced by a decade of cooperation.

Coping with the emergence of discomfort

During more than a decade approximately 50 Finnish and 60 exchange students of business participated in introductory intercultural communication courses for business students at the Turku School of Economics each year. The majority of the students have been advanced bachelor's or master's degree students. It should also be noted that the courses have included distance contact with students participating in an American intercultural communication course.[10] During each course students have been given a variety of exercises to help them become aware of their cultural taken-for-granted presumptions when learning to explain their culture's ways of living and communicating.

The courses begin with multicultural groups of 5–7 students introducing themselves and listing the first things that come to mind when thinking of their own culture and the cultures in their autonomous multicultural group. The exercises include references to values, identity, and ways of living and communicating. Students are encouraged to openly and politely make reference to any aspects of their cultures and other cultures that might seem negative due to their not understanding the cultural norms of the others. The goal of the course is to help students better understand why and how they (mis)interpret themselves and others. This approach offers them an opportunity to begin with self-produced multiple interpretations of cultural values and practices. Positive interpretations of Finnish cleanliness and Finland's nature are often emphasized by both Finnish and exchange students. Perplexity comes to the surface when exchange students ask why Finns are silent. After free discussion, the students take a coffee break and return to continue their discussion with more focus on their personal experiences at home and abroad.

During one of the first sessions of the course, the students watch an American 'documentary', *Tango Finlandia*, which contains commentary on Finnish ways of living and communicating within an American frame of reference, that of 'discomfort with silence'. Words used by Finns to describe themselves in *Tango Finlandia* include

10 Approximately 600 exchange students and 500 Finnish students have participated in the courses. Ten percent of the exchange students have been French and over 1,000 American students have been connected via email.

'shy', 'silent', 'melancholy', 'private', 'brooding'. These words overlap semantically with the words used by Finnish students prior to viewing the clip. Voice-over terms used by the American commentator include 'clinically shy', 'terminal melancholy', 'depressed', 'mourning', 'brooding', 'isolated', as well as the following chance judgment: "The national mission seemed to be to not be noticed, grimly in touch with no one but themselves ... a difficult time making even the most casual social contact." This American commentary also overlaps semantically with that of many exchange students prior to and during the first weeks of the course.[11]

After watching *Tango Finlandia*, the Finnish response to group members is often 'don't know whether to laugh or cry' (the Finnish speech is full of humour but do the others understand?). The students are then given examples of how Finnish *students in previous courses* had developed the ability to explain to exchange students the positive sides of Finnish cultural meanings in *Tango Finlandia*. This approach, which keeps confusion and frustration under control, encourages Finnish students to freely modify or confirm previous examples of Finnish students' comments as they answer multiple questions from exchange students.[12]

Here are a few examples of the Finnish commentary in *Tango Finlandia*. A Finnish radio commentator says: "We're a silent, brooding people, we think a lot. We like to keep our privacy and give the fellow man his privacy – keep a distance," and a Finnish student wrote: "*saying Finns are 'silent, brooding people' is that we are quiet and comfortable with quietness.... Having our own privacy is important to us.*" Another student explains: "*Brooding hasn't (as a word) that negative meaning for Finns, or as an action either. It is normal and not weird at all to [be] ... in her/his own thoughts. ... And it definitely doesn't mean that when Finns 'brood' they would be in a bad, depressed or sad mood.*" When referring to brooding, the Finn in *Tango Finlandia* was translating 'mietiskelevä', which Finns asso-

11 This aspect of the research is being treated more comprehensively in *Television and its Cultural Discourses: The most Popular American and Finnish Text Ever!* In progress. Parts of it are only very briefly summarized here.

12 The initial French response to *Tango Finlandia* is often 'stupid American film' but some French students also make explicit: that 'we are perhaps trapped by our love-hate American relationship'. As the course moves forward they become aware of how their discomfort with silence overlaps with American discomfort.

After viewing *Tango Finlandia*, American students turn to the Finnish students across the Atlantic to better understand Finnish cultural communication and its meanings in the American video clip. For literature related to *Tango Finlandia* and student interactive learning, see Berry 2006; Berry, Carbaugh & Nurmikari-Berry 2004; Carbaugh & Berry 2001; Carbaugh 2005.

ciate with thinking deeply but not about something that is making them unhappy.

A Finnish tango singer in the video clip says: "We have like a wall here. We try to look at you and watch who you are – what you are before we dare to come to you and speak with you," and a student explained: "*the verb to dare carries a misleading double meaning in the Finnish language. It can mean a lack of self confidence. Here it means that we want to come to you but also want to be sure you want us to come to see you. We don't dare to interfere with your privacy because we respect it, and we know that you expect us to respect it.*"

In another section of the video clip the American commentator says: "it strikes me travelling around this country that people are terribly shy, particularly the men," and the Finn replies: "among ourselves, we think that is the natural way to be, not to sort of stick out. It's easy to see that coming from another country you think of it as shyness, and it probably is, yes." A student explains: "*When Finns talk about being shy they are simply referring to being quiet, observant and respectful of other people's physical and mental privacy. That is how our culture has taught us to be. Perhaps this natural way to be, to not stick out, is difficult to understand for people who are uncomfortable with silence.*" The student then adds: "*In Finland a person is respected if he or she begins with quiet respect of others and moves towards talking when having something of added value for others to hear. In the statement above Knutas [the Finn] is being polite. He doesn't agree with Safer [the American] but believes Safer won't understand the positive side of shy among Finns.*"

A Finn in *Tango Finlandia* comments on tango songs and says: "*Lyrics is very important because the stories are quite sad and melancholy stories, and they are –– they are necessary to [our] people.*" *When the commentator asks, "why this sadness", the Finn replies: "because we are very melancholy people here in [our country] and we need that.*" A Finnish student writes: "*For us Finns melancholy means something like yearning, longing or even hope and desire. These are all positive words that live inside every Finn. Melancholy is a national characteristic rather than a symbol of depressed individuals.*" The student then explains: "*There may be something like pessimistic streaks in Finnish culture, but the word pessimism is too strong. Finns are more like realists rather than optimistic or pessimistic people. We have our feet firmly on the ground, are hard working, and look forward to the future. But we realize that life is full of complexity. We must be prepared for difficult times even if we have hope in our hearts. All of this can be expressed through tango music.*" [13]

13 The Finnish students' explanations overlap with Pirjo Kukkonen's analysis of the cultural meanings embedded in Finnish tango music: *Tango nostalgia. The language of love and longing* (1996).

Viewing *Tango Finlandia* can be confusing, even frustrating, but when reflecting on it students often describe the video clip as a mixture of frustration and an eye-opening experience: 'first an embarrassed, defensive response' which moves on to (1) 'a good starting point for discussion' and (2) hope that 'in the future my feelings will be under control to explain rather than defend Finnish ways of communicating.'

During group discussions some seeds thus start to take root and begin to clarify, to some extent, (1) how the media often interpret strangers' ways of living and communicating according to local frames of reference; (2) how 'false friends' – words or phrases a speaker believes carry a universal meaning but the cultural other(s) interprets differently – had hidden cultural meanings when the Finns were using 'proper' English in *Tango Finlandia;* and (3) how members of their multicultural group can face the same challenge. Nevertheless, despite the positive aspects of these group discussions, continuous reference to silence remains active.

Talk (+) vs. Silent (-) Communication Traps

As exchange students continue to raise questions about Finns being silent (which implicitly means to them not communicating, being impolite, unsociable, etc.), Finnish students often continue to offer a variety of replies, e.g., 'We talk, not as much as you / we don't talk enough' and 'We are silent / too silent / not that silent'. The initial interaction between the so-called 'talking' and 'silent' cultures is quickly stymied by two communication frames of reference. The 'talk-silent' categories are imposed by an 'implicit imperialism of discomfort with silence' that becomes self-imposed by Finnish students.

The discussion below respects the extensive literature on English linguistic imperialism and a growing academic focus on supporting native and non-native speakers to develop competence in accommodating to multiple varieties of English (Berry, Carbaugh & Nurmikari-Berry 2004, 2006). We will focus here, however, on a problem related to 'cultural imperialism' when widespread cultural 'discomfort with silence', which is often attached to British and American English (Cameron 2000; Carbaugh 1988b), enters a cultural environment that is 'comfortable with quietness'. The intercultural communication challenge goes deeper than moving beyond reliance on 'proper´ English towards helping native and non-native speakers to develop competence in discovering, interpreting and communicating cultural meanings (Berry 2006). These are often invisible or implicit when using a shared international language. This approach is essential for

improving competence in the use of any shared international language in multicultural contexts. The reason? A shared language is always full of cultural resources rather than being simply a neutral communication tool. In other words, when used in intercultural encounters, an international language is a language which carries multiple cultural meanings. These, the multiple cultural meanings in different semantic spheres, are what is largely hidden in the communication process.

We employ the strong word, 'imperialism', then, to capture at least three consequences of this social dynamic: Finnish students quickly comply with the use of the English words 'silence' or 'shyness,' presuming native and non-native European and North American users of English are speaking about the same dynamic, so named, appropriately in English; Finnish students thus unknowingly cultivate English meanings of 'silence' or 'shy' which misrepresent their Finnish meanings; the play between these Finnish and English meanings, as well as the meanings in the minds of non-native speakers, hides the more appropriate Finnish meanings of 'being comfortable with quietude' (Berry, Carbaugh & Nurmikari-Berry 2004). These dynamics, taken together, show how subtle uses of language can carry deep meanings that privilege one set of ideas over another. We thus use the concept of imperialism to discuss this dynamic of linguistic and semantic dominance; we also use it to illustrate how 'false friends' can initially hide this dynamic from native and non-native English-speaking participants.

Once the intercultural discussions are framed by talk vs. silent categories, the lexical term 'communicating' easily replaces a reference to 'talking'. When Finnish students explain to or agree with exchange students that Finns are 'not communicating very much or enough', they often mean 'not talking very much or enough'. They are unaware of how they are using English in a 'proper', conventional, but misleading way. This way, unknown to them, presumes a discomfort with silence rather than Finnish ways of living and communicating when comfortable with quietness. Lexical items can function then as hidden cultural terms that remain imperceptible to interactants on both sides.

This intercultural communication process often contributes to the Finnish students' discomfort with talking about silence. Discomfort and reticence conjoin to further hide from those uncomfortable with silence, as well as from themselves, the positive cultural dimensions of Finnish 'comfort with quietness'. When the term 'shy' is added to 'not communicating enough', the cultural imperialism of discomfort with silence easily overshadows Finnish comfort with quietness in

the minds of both the exchange students and the Finnish students themselves.

Reference to the talk vs. silent categories can also be reinforced when Finns are unaware of how they are translating 'hiljainen/hiljaisuus'[14] (quiet/quietness), culturally rich/dense lexical terms, into English for French students. Rich/dense terms resonate in a speech community but are difficult to communicate via translation to people from other speech communities. Finnish students often choose 'silent' instead of 'quiet', both of which are correct translations but can create culturally misleading interpretations.

Finns also often refer to themselves as 'shy' people. When responding in this way, they are often unaware that

(1) 'silent' in French (silencieux) is generally socially negative; that 'silent' + 'shy' in French (silencieux + timide) is more negative; and that

(2) 'quiet' (tranquille) is positive while 'quiet' + 'shy' in French (tranquille + timide) can also be at least neutral.

French students are also unaware that the words 'silent' and 'quiet' come from the same Finnish word 'hiljainen'. Thus cultural meanings easily remain hidden on both sides, especially when there is a mutual agreement that Finns are 'shy'.[15] Each word and combination can move in a more positive or negative direction within different social situational contexts in each culture.

In this pedagogical intercultural context Finnish students are often confronted with multiple challenges: (1) to begin to understand that they have been relying on 'false friends'; (2) to become aware of Finnish taken-for-granted 'comfort with quietude'; (3) to develop some competence in communicating the cultural 'logic' of comfort with quietude to those who easily interpret silence as a social void; (4) to help exchange students uncomfortable with silence begin to understand how their own implicit 'grammar' of communication overshadowed Finnish meanings in the Finnish use of English; and (5) to become aware of how Finnish comfort with quietude has created Finnish bases for negative stereotypes of others such as 'superficial' American or 'impolite interrupting' French students, prior to their pedagogical interaction (Berry, Carbaugh, Nurmikari-Berry,

14 Many Finnish students use silent and quiet interchangeably, others associate 'silent' with nature and 'quiet' with social situations. 'Hiljainen' carries active, relaxing and passive social meanings often invisible for others, see Appendix 5.

15 For a more in-depth discussion of French and Finnish reliance on 'proper' English, see Berry, 2006. For an example a multicultural group discovery of meanings associated with 'shy', see Appendix 5.

2006). In combination, these challenges create a very heavy communicative burden to bear.

As the Finnish students start to cope with these challenges, they begin to free themselves from the externally imposed and self-imposed discomfort which hides their comfort with quietude from themselves and strangers. During this movement away from discomfort and towards comfort, exchange students for their part begin to understand, to some extent, the positive sides of Finnish comfort with quietude, while Finnish students begin to perceive how they have imposed a standard on their taken-for-granted comfort with quietness, which belittled both their own ways of communicating as well as those of students uncomfortable with silence.

In beginning to develop a deeper understanding of oneself one must open the door to understanding strangers. *Breakthroughs for Finnish students* come as they move back and forth between English and Finnish, discovering previously invisible Finnish cultural meanings. They discover culturally rich/dense terms and phrases such as 'kommunikoida ilman sanoja', 'harkita', 'mietiskellä' and 'olla omissa oloissaan.' These can be translated as: communicating without words, thinking, reflecting, pondering before acting or using words in important situations, and being in one's own thoughts and/or respecting the privacy of others, even on occasions when surrounded by others (Berry, Carbaugh & Nurmikari-Berry 2004, 2006; Carbaugh, Berry & Nurmikari-Berry 2006).

As Finnish students discover comfort with being silent/quiet, they become aware of how and why movement back and forth between their comfort with silence/quietness and comfort with talking is a natural Finnish way of being. As this taken-for-granted feature of Finnishness comes to the surface, Finnish students, even 'I hate silence' Finns, begin to realize that the Finnish ways of communicating are not limited to an either/or question of 'talking' or 'being silent', i.e. 'negative not talking'. This natural Finnish trait is not, however, easily understood in the same way by people from cultures uncomfortable with silence. Nevertheless, movement beyond a focus on 'talk vs. silent' categories to multiple cultural dimensions of comfort and discomfort when being either quiet or talking can open the door to discovering various hidden dimensions of cultural convergence and divergence.

Multiple dimensions of comfort / discomfort with talking and silence /quietness

Our goal has always been to help students develop competence in discovering, interpreting and communicating cultural meanings.

Over time we achieved partial success at the stages related to discovery and interpretation of cultural meanings, but finding ways to cope with discomfort at the communication stage continued to be an intercultural challenge. The learning process can benefit from awareness of false friends and the ways that Finnish reliance on words like 'shy' and 'silent' fails to communicate Finnish meanings. Developing the ability to become aware of taken-for-granted comfort with quietness in contexts that are difficult for exchange students to understand is clearly an important step forward; but it falls short of helping Finnish students to comfortably communicate their cultural message to those from cultures that often interpret Finnish comfort with quietness as 'social emptiness'.

Fortunately, a Finnish student talked to one of the teachers after a class and discussed her frustration with continuous reference to 'silence' in her Finnish-German group – "they just don't understand and keep talking about Finnish silence." She hoped that the teacher would find a way to avoid reference to silence in group discussions. The teacher was aware of the frustration but still had no idea of how to minimize the problem in some of the group discussions. The post-class discussion about uncontrollable frustration led to awareness that everyone might benefit from listing and discussing reasons why they were comfortable or uncomfortable when talking and when silent/quiet in different contexts in their respective cultures.

The next session included an exercise in which the students provided and discussed examples from everyday life regarding being comfortable and uncomfortable with talking or being silent/quiet. During these discussions the invisible began to come to the surface for the students as well as for the teacher. This approach has often led to a discovery of overlap and divergence in cultural feelings of comfort and discomfort within respective cultural environments and in intercultural contexts, and is related to Hymes' concept of what is formally possible, feasible, appropriate and actually done in a speech community (Hymes 1979).[16] In most cases the students' speech was limited to what they considered appropriate (something positive) or inappropriate. The discussion below is not the result of in-depth analysis of student speech or an introduction to a final model for dealing with intercultural discomfort. It sums up, rather, a pedagog-

16 Hymes' concept of communication competence within a speech community involves four sectors of competence: "whether and to what degree something is formally possible; whether and to what degree something is feasible given the means of communication available; whether and to what degree something is appropriate (adequate, happy, successful) in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated; and whether and to what degree something is in fact done, actually performed and what its doing entails" (Hymes 1979: 281).

ical development process, with some examples of students' speech related to their movement towards more intercultural understanding and comfort.

Finnish examples

During the courses, reference is made to quietness instead of silence because one pedagogical goal of moving towards intercultural comfort has been to encourage Finnish students to translate 'hiljainen/hiljaisuus' as 'quiet/quietness' rather than 'silent/silence'. In some cultures 'quietness' can be interpreted as socially similar to 'silence', but in other cultures it can carry a less negative connotation or even a positive one, as in French culture.

Comfort with quietness represents a natural state of being for a Finn, e.g., when having nothing meaningful to say, when alone or with others in nature, when in one's own thoughts even if surrounded by others, when communicating non-verbally with others, etc. This kind of quietness confers comfort because it is considered appropriate and is rather common. It does not happen all the time or for long periods of time by Finnish social standards, keeping in mind that personal and regional diversity influence the interpretations of Finnish standards. During the discussions Finns share examples of their comfort with quietness related to an implicit 'grammar of quietness'. Quietness can exist as something 'that is there', often used intuitively without making a conscious choice to be quiet.[17] We will begin with one example of 'just no words' from one Finnish student about her experience as an exchange student in the United States:

A Finnish girl is sitting quietly in a car driven in the autumn by an American friend through the Appalachians full of beautiful leaves. After a while the American friend stopped by the side of the road, turned to her and said: Now! – you tell me what is bothering you! A Finnish friend would have continued to drive, interpreting the quietude as a sign of deep feeling and reverence of the beauty on the mountains.

It is rather common for Finnish students who have been exchange students in 'uncomfortable with silence' North America or Latin Europe to identity with this story, which Nurmikari-Berry first heard and Berry has used in courses for many years. For a similar example, see Carbaugh, Berry & Nurmikari-Berry (2006). This example of 'just no words' also helped at least some exchange students to begin to understand how their active use of words to express enjoyment could pollute one's own deep feelings of comfort and shatter harmony with nature or one's social environment. As a French student put it, "I guess we are a little like Americans. Perhaps we could be comfortable like her for just a moment but not that long." In another context a French student said that silence is like the 'angel going away' (*un ange passe*). It was not easy to understand that perhaps she was 'with an angel' until asked 'what is bothering you!'

Other examples of Finnish attitudes can be seen in the following comments: (1) *"Quietude doesn't mean that Finns would be wordless, speechless or unable to communicate."*(2) *"I don't think the concept of shyness in cultural quietude has actually anything to do with being shy… it is not the reason behind the cultural quietude…Finns just don't have the same habits of expressing solidarity or fellowship [as] Americans … through verbal process."* (3) *"Silence is a sign of respect."* (4) *"Silence leaves more room for subtle body language and facial expressions."* (5) *"Sometimes I suffer of the way that Finnish people act because at times we are too silent…. Maybe we are moving slowly towards a talkative direction, but hopefully we can still be comfortable with quietness because it is part of our nature."* (6) *"We also wonder if Americans [are] afraid of something because you can't be quiet, or are you perhaps hiding something – [do] you have to talk a lot so your secret doesn't come out[?]"* As the Finns become more comfortable explaining their comfort with quietness, exchange students could begin to understand that quietude is not a void that disconnects – connecting can also take place by being quiet together in multiple social contexts.

Discomfort with silence comes, e.g., when a person or people are too quiet for negative reasons. The reasons can include, for example, no interest in others, no self-confidence, sulking, a problem that no one dares to talk about, disagreeing about an important issue but absence of knowledge when a counter argument would be important, inability to speak about something important without showing emotion, an inclination to be 'polite' and say nothing, or a desire to preserve harmony in conflict situations, without actually consenting. These examples of silence are rarely considered appropriate but do happen. The examples of discomfort with silence overlapped to some extent with the examples of the exchange students, e.g. the French and the Americans. They are not as common, however, as people from cultures uncomfortable with silence might assume.

Comfort with talking is related, for example, to an implicit assumption that there is no comfort with quietness unless there is comfort with talking when there is something worthwhile to talk about. There is no reason to talk to fill what people uncomfortable with silence might call the 'social emptiness of silence'. A Finn might fill

17 This concept, which has not been systematically researched, has benefited from the insights of Marjatta Nurmikari-Berry during the past five years. For examples of consciously moderating behaviour to control nonverbal style in public and civil contexts, see Wilkins 2005.

the 'emptiness' of silence, however, if s/he senses that a stranger feels uncomfortable. The Finn is probably comfortable about being helpful, partially comfortable with some continuous small talk, and very comfortable if small talk turns into meaningful talk (according to Finnish norms). Comfort with talking is considered appropriate and rather common. Talking does not happen, however, all the time, and people uncomfortable with silence often fail to be aware of the extensive role of nonverbal communication and the respect for the privacy of others which prevail in Finland.

Discomfort with talking occurs, e.g., if a person or others are talking only to be talking, disagreeing at a personal emotional level in public, talking about a sensitive or embarrassing topic, feeling incapable of explaining the logic of one's opinion, etc. According to Finnish conversation norms, these examples are considered inappropriate but rather uncommon because one rarely talks under these conditions.

Cultural overlap and divergence

During subsequent sessions many students, both Finnish and non-Finnish, begin to realize that they had become aware of multiple reasons for being comfortable or uncomfortable when talking and/or silent/quiet in their respective cultural environments – sometimes for similar reasons and at other times for differing reasons. The discussions begin to move away from a conflict between 'comfort with quietness' and 'discomfort with silence' towards an understanding of positive and negative aspects of ways of living and communicating in their respective cultures.

In a Finnish cultural context, American and French students often share discomfort with Finnish moments of silence and are more comfortable when talking to fill up any voids of silence. There is clear Finnish-French-American overlap, however, in discomfort with silence if there is no interest in others, no self-confidence, a problem that no one dares to talk about, etc. The most significant difference in the group discussions about comfort and discomfort is related to examples of 'comfort with silence/quietness'. The American and French students are comfortable with what they call 'silence/being silent' in situations where they know they shouldn't talk: at the cinema, in a very interesting or important lecture, in church, in a library, when studying, etc. Finnish students rarely make reference to these contexts in which people should not be talking. The Finnish students' examples of comfort with quietness focus more on natural ways of being when they and others are quiet, e.g., actively listening, thinking, respecting the privacy of others, being in harmony with others, communicating nonverbally, etc.

American and French students, who are uncomfortable with silence, refer to talking as healthy social 'doing' and tend to consider repeated movement towards silence as personally and socially unhealthy. Finns consider 'hiljaisuus' (silence/quietness) to be one aspect of natural and comfortable social 'being'. Sometimes they choose to be 'vaiti', 'vaitelias', by 'refraining from talking', especially in new or in sensitive situations; or they might simply be 'hiljainen' (quiet) as a natural way of being in harmony with oneself and one's social environment. Finns take this distinction for granted and exchange students are unaware of it. Perhaps Finns no more choose to be quiet than Americans and French people choose to talk.[18]

During the multiple comfort/discomfort dimension discussions, quietude begins to emerge in the Finnish students' minds as a comfortable form of cultural action and communication. This discovery gives rise to more awareness of subtle non-verbal communication, with a wide repertoire of modes of communication and harmony with oneself and with others. Finnish students take for granted and rarely explain this culturally deep comfort until extensive interaction with exchange students helps them (1) escape the 'talk–silent' categorical imperialism of 'discomfort with silence' and (2) begin to explain their comfort with quietness to the exchange students.

As the American and French students begin to understand the positive side of Finnish comfort with quietude, they become aware of how their discomfort with silence has imposed a negative reading on Finnish ways of communicating. They also begin to understand that the frequency of phrases such as 'refraining from speaking,' and 'absence of speech' belie a preoccupation with talk as the presumed, primary means of social behaviour (Berry, Carbaugh & Nurmikari-Berry 2004).

The movement from 'talk' vs. 'silence' categories to multiple dimensions of comfort and discomfort in communication situations brings overlap and divergence to the surface by helping students make explicit to themselves and others varieties "of forms in social interaction ... [relating] to societal life, and ... providing possible explanations of individual types, society and culture" (Carbaugh & Berry, 2001: 356). This step forward is closely linked to students help-

18 Non-Finnish scholars who understand that different cultures can have their own acceptable ways of communicating focus on 'giving up on words' as a culturally acceptable way to be (Basso, 1990; Berry, Carbaugh & Nurmikari-Berry, 2004). In this development process the focus has been on quietude as one taken-for-granted natural way to be. Academic reliance on 'proper' English is as problematic for scholars as it is for Finnish and exchange students.

ing each other develop some competence in discovering, interpreting and communicating their cultural communication norms. Regardless of their culture, students begin to understand that all concepts of cultural communication have positive and negative sides, not only when compared with other cultures but also within their own cultures.

Linkage between communication norms and comfort / discomfort

At the beginning of a course, students take their communication norms for granted and interpret the ways of communicating in other cultures according to their own culture's ways of communicating. Creation of and discussion about communication norms in multicultural groups is summarized here and will be compared below.

Finnish communication norms: The Finnish student commentary related to Finnish conversation rules has included the following descriptions of Finnish communication: (1) *"Don't talk to be talking and don't argue unless the issue is important."* (2) *"Speak up when you have a good explanation."* (3) *"It is pointless to discuss the obvious."* (4) *"Speak to the point rather than around it."* (5) *"Observe, listen and think before talking if you want to be respected for saying something useful."* (6) *"When you say something it's almost like making a promise," "stand behind what you say."* (7) *"Don't stare [like the French] at people when talking."* (8) *"Emotions affect everyone but not believable speech."* (9) *"We also communicate without words."* (For an extensive overlapping discussion of Finnish conversation rules, see Berry 2006; Berry et al. 2006; Berry & Nurmikari-Berry 2005; Carbaugh, 1995, 2005; Carbaugh et al. 2006; Lehtonen & Sajavaara, 1985; Nurmikari-Berry & Berry 1999; Sajavaara & Lehtonen 1997).

American Communication norms: American student commentary related to American conversation rules has included: (1) *"State the obvious to make sure everyone is informed."* (2) *"Introduce controversial topics or opinions to create a maximally robust basis for communication."* (2) *"Think out loud in order to help yourself and others begin to think."* (3) *"Be open by sharing your feelings."* (4) *"Be socially connected by talking with others."* (5) *"Avoid making others uncomfortable with silence."* (5) *"Have more eye contact than the Finns but less than the French."* (6) *"Don't interrupt others."* (7) *"Get things going by talking."* (For more insight into American conversation rules, see Carbaugh 1988b, 2005).

French communication norms: French student commentary related to French conversation rules has included: (1) *"Conflict and debate, French are crazy about them … [also] teasing. French will be satisfied if both sides are arguing, otherwise it is not interesting."* (2) *"Teach the wrong to know the truth."* (3) *"Don't hesitate to interrupt the speaker if you have something to say," "interruption shows that you want to be involved."* (4) *"French speak to avoid silence which is a sign of problems or impoliteness."* (4) *"Judge people according to their acts, not their words."* (5) *"Eye contact means listening, interested and polite."* (6) *"French people are like roosters that tease each other."* (7) *"Arguments based on feelings are believable."* (For more insight into French conversation rules, see Berry 2006.)

Comparison of communication norms

In American, French and Finnish cultures a person who listens before speaking is respected if s/he provides useful information for others, and a person who rarely interacts verbally can be considered socially disconnected – more so, however by American and French students than by Finnish students. The expectations concerning how one verbalizes, interprets and acts on what is verbalized are culturally different, e.g., the narrowness or breadth of the gap between what is said and done, the communication styles that are considered culturally polite and effective, and the differing ways of communicating non-verbally. Total absence of eye contact is considered inappropriate in most Finnish contexts but the French use of eye contact is often described as staring by Finns. Finnish non-verbalization of social togetherness and/or respect for the physical and mental space of others is a subtle form of communication that strangers from cultures uncomfortable with silence often initially have little, if any, competence to interpret in a socially positive way. Finnish comfort with quietness would not be comfortable, however, without the ability to also communicate social messages via a nonverbal cultural grammar of quietness and the ability to move from comfort with quietness to comfort with talking when talking is considered relevant and appropriate (by Finnish standards).

When the American and French students speak English the lexical terms 'shy' and 'silent' function as shared 'cultural terms' that subconsciously focus on the importance of being talkative. This is the case, even if the person who talks too much (by American and French standards) is less respected and the one who listens first is most respected. A shared discomfort with silence does not mean, however, that American and French students necessarily respect each other's cultural ways of communicating. In contrast, the Finnish efforts to explain comfort with quietness eventually begin to focus on the importance of communicating nonverbally and listening/observing before actively expressing opinions. This development also brings some comfort when explaining how reference to terms

like 'shy,' 'silent' and 'quiet' in English can also carry a negative Finnish meaning if there is a lack of self confidence and a lack of interest in social interaction.

Student discovery related to creation of intercultural comfort

The student discovery process is made explicit in the email sent to group members and in the final reflective essay at the end of the course. The American examples are taken from distant email exchange between Finnish and American students; the French examples are taken from participation in multicultural groups which included French and Finnish students; and the Finnish examples are taken from email exchanges with American students as well as from participation in multicultural groups that included French students. This data provides examples of movement from an uncomfortable 'that's not me' towards a comfortable 'this is me' and a better understanding of 'what/who you are'.

Examples of American student commentary:
(Berry, Carbaugh & Nurmikari-Berry 2006)

"When there is no 'open' communication, it is presumed that one is afraid to form social relations. They [Finns] are simply labelled anti-social or disconnected. They fail to 'express' their own unique voice to the other.... To create harmonious relations, one simply has to believe that we are more similar to each other than not. Their perception, unlike an American's, is that one should not have to speak in order to prove real relations.... 'We're a silent people' is naturalness. Valued within this premise one can achieve the beautifully innate universal human necessities such as real relationships and interdependent social connection."

"In her [Finnish] eyes, this tactic of intense verbal speech which is associated as an American tool in forming relationships [can hide] a sense of loneliness, emptiness, and disconnection. For Finns unnecessary verbal communication tries to create relations that may not be "really" there – thus leading to superficial relations."

"My acquired knowledge of Finnish codes and codes in general has helped me transform my Finnish interpretation from one that had an American bias into one that embraces their unique communicative practices. Not only did I learn to explore the basic Finnish features in terms of their code, but I also perceived my own American code more thoroughly from the view of the Finns. My investigation of their code of quietude allowed me to recognize and understand my own American code of 'openness' in a clearer light. This whole process has consequently enabled me to critically learn more about Finnish codes and also my own code."

Summing up by the teacher of the commentaries produced by American students:

Now we begin to realize how uncomfortable we are with silence and how we misinterpreted Finnish comfort with silence. We thought that Finns are silent to hide feelings but maybe we sometimes talk to hide our feelings. Our feelings are often openly on our sleeves and we think maybe Finnish feelings are hidden, at least from us, deep in their faces. Our remedy to connect people via small talk might interfere with a Finnish respect for shared privacy and having meaningful conversation. Our sense of openness is free expression of feelings but a Finnish sense of openness seems to be more connected to not hiding important information from others who need it. We talk to get the talking going and Finns talk when they really have something to say.

Examples of French Student Commentary:

"French need to be very open minded, patient and interested to understand [Finns].... When I arrived here I was really surprised because Finns were for me weird and uninteresting. Why? Because they never talked with me.... I was not able to understand that communication is not only making a gesture or speaking a lot. Communication rules are really different between our countries.... Their pillars of communication could be efficacy and minimalist conversation; our pillars could be awful communication and interminable discussion.... I don't think Finns are shy but much more "reserved people". So shy for me, in the meaning is more close to "not daring people", Finns are not timid but more respectful of the privacy and they don't want to disturb people...but using shy or timid for us is not appropriate because in France those words describe uninteresting people (no opinion, no argue potential).... I [now] realize how difficult [it is] to understand 100% people from another culture and also how difficult an international relationship [can be]. But above all these differences, language difficulties, problems increase my interest for international business."

"I noticed also that Finns are very straightforward and if they don't know the answer they spend more time thinking about the answer instead of speak by impromptu. Finns are familiar with answering "yes" or a "no" and uncommonly will answer with 'perhaps'. Finn's frankness may be a bit difficult to the French to accept. The way of communicating is upfront and uncomplicated, which is different than the French way."

"What I discovered about the Finnish ways of communicating is that they usually do not talk for no reason. This might seem a bit weird but in many countries, people feel the need to talk a lot. In France for example, we usually talk about obvious things before entering deeper into a particular (and more serious) topic. In Finland, people do not talk about obvious things because it is no use. I believe that if a

very talkative French stops saying obvious things, then he will speak as much as a Finn. They might seem non-talkative to us but in reality, we might be the ones that are too talkative. Therefore, we say that non-talkativeness is a negative thing, but that is because we compare it with our behaviour that we have taken for granted. Finns might do exactly the same thing but other way and see us as too talkative. This would not surprise me."

Summing up by the teacher of the commentaries produced by French students:

Now we begin to understand that Finns are comfortable with silence before talking and that they show interest by listening. We can't learn to be like that but we feel better now that we have learned about Finnish comfort with silence. We feel very good about how we can rely on what Finns say, because Finns don't even need to use the word 'promise'. In France we highly respect a person who listens before talking. Now we know that a Finn who isn't talking very much by our standards might also be the person we should respect the most. Can we act on that interpretation?

Examples of Finnish student commentary:
(Berry, Carbaugh & Nurmikari-Berry 2006)

"When we think of stupid American questions, we realize that they helped us realize how stupid we were."

"The meanings that are hidden to us might be totally obvious to the speaker. Therefore we must always stay alert and ask further questions whenever we are in doubt. Even though the differences are maybe easier to acknowledge and analyze in this context, I still want to say that I find the wide range of similarities between these ... cultures as surprising as the differences."

"Sometimes during the course I couldn't understand everything and I got frustrated. I believe it was worth the pain and I learned many precious things. I realized that it's not important to learn details about different cultures. It's more important to learn to question our own habits and attitudes and their basis and then start to understand the others. If you don't know your own culture, it's impossible to know the others...I'm off to France in the spring and hope I can learn to interrupt others."

"One of the most interesting things during the course was to realize that our 'silence' or 'quietude' is actually quite a complex concept. It became obvious that it is considerably hard to explain the concept of Finnish cultural quietude by using English terms ... Silence is not silence, even if the dictionary convinces us so!"

Summing up by the teacher of commentaries produced by Finnish students:

We now understand how American and French 'openness to verbalize togetherness' had closed the door to understanding our comfort with quietness and how our comfort with quietness, which we had taken for granted, had closed the door to understanding the positive sides of their 'openness'. For us 'openness' often means listening in an open way and not hiding important information from others; but that can also limit our ability to open the door to 'being connected'. We now understand that the French often communicate socially not only by talking: interrupting means interested, and we now see how the Americans have an urge to talk in order to get things going. We never realized how the English and French language dictionaries that we rely on are full of 'false friends' that don't necessarily communicate our comfort with quietness in English and French. We have finally started to understand the importance of both sides of the cultural logic of Finnish comfort with quietness and American/French comfort with actively verbalizing connectedness. Now I'm a person comfortable with quietness and also comfortable with talking – especially with others when I can explain the cultural logic of my comfort in moving back and forth between comfort with quietness and comfort with talking.

The movement away from the categories of 'talk-silent' towards multicultural discussions about everyday examples of being comfortable or uncomfortable when talking or being quiet/silent has helped Finnish and exchange students begin to understand (1) how reliance on the use of 'proper' English easily leads to invisible misunderstandings, and (2) how the cultural imperialism of 'discomfort with silence' had been imposed from the outside and initially 'accepted' with disinclination as an international norm by the inside.

Moving beyond intercultural reliance on 'proper' English

Geopolitical, economic and cultural dimensions of the globalisation of English language teaching have been discussed extensively. Bartlett (2001), Canagarajah (1999), Holliday (1994, 1997), Holland (2002) and Pennycook (1994) have underlined the significance of viewing English as a resource that can and should be used to communicate the users' perspectives in the context of the global tensions between the 'centre' and the 'periphery'(Berry, Carbaugh & Nurmikari-Berry 2004). Finnish students tend to suffer explicitly from the burden of considering their English 'inferior' to the English of native speakers, but also implicitly from considering their ways of communicating 'inferior' to the communication styles of people 'uncomfortable with silence'. When dealing with Finnish situational intercultural com-

munication contexts, pedagogical and research development could benefit in an increasingly mobile world by moving beyond a focus on the role of the 'native speaker centre' vs. the 'non-native English speaker periphery' to also focus on aspects of the 'discomfort with silence centre' and a 'comfort with quietude periphery'. *This suggestion is not limited, however, to Finnish comfort with quietness.*[19] All cultures, especially subcultures, can benefit from coping better with the relationships between false friends and cultural imperialism when using a shared international language.

Who can be a privileged intercultural speaker? Native speakers of English rarely have the linguistic-cultural ability to move between English and another language to discover where cultural meanings have remained invisible. Similarly, they are often unschooled in the degree to which one language, usually English, is the carrier of multiple cultures. Non-native speakers with a good command of English find it much easier to develop a competence for discovering, interpreting and communicating cultural meanings hidden in false friends when using English as a shared international language. 'Silent' and 'shy' are false friends during interaction between Finnish students and American/French students, but shared French/American discomfort with silence helps those words remain rather 'reliable lexical friends' between French and American students. As Finnish students make these discoveries vis-à-vis native and non-native speakers who are uncomfortable with silence/quietness, the Finnish intercultural discomfort begins to fade away and comfort can begin to come to the surface.

Discussion

There is clearly an implicit imperialism of cultural discomfort with silence in most western cultures and in western academic intercultural communication literature (Berry 2006). From a Finnish perspective Kari Sajavaara and Jaakko Lehtonen took the lead in sending a message about the implicit challenge of communicating Finnish cultural meanings in Anglo-American English to scholars from cultures that easily interpret silence as an effort to move away from being socially connected. They raised an important question in 'The silent Finn revisited' (see Lehtonen & Sajavaara 1985; Sajavaara & Lehtonen 1997):

19 Examples include Athabaskan-English interethnic communication (Scollon and Wong-Scollon 1990) and western Apache culture (Basso 1990).

> The terminology [of English] may ... be highly misleading depending on the type of culture that it is applied to (Sajavaara & Lehtonen 1997: 279).

> [If misinterpretation is] from the outside, it is understandable that the result is misguided. Yet, one of the dilemmas in all this is that at the same time the insider is also incapable of seeing his or her true nature as a communicator (Sajavaara & Lehtonen 1997: 278).

Jaworski, the editor of the *Silence: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* in which 'The Silent Finn Revisited' article was published, made explicit that most of the authors are from cultures in which "talk consists of vessels filled with meaning, whereas silence is a void" (Jaworski 1997: 397). Sajavaara and Lehtonen were important exceptions.

Any reference to 'tolerance of silence' implies a particular standard of talkativeness as a premise for judgment of appropriate communication, just as 'tolerance of talk' can imply a Finnish standard of quietude (Sajavaara & Lehtonen 1997). If a book for American business people is titled '*Talking with Confidence for the Painfully Shy*' (Gabor 1997), perhaps an alternate title for another book could be considered: '*Quietude with Confidence for the Painfully Talkativ*e' (Berry, Carbaugh & Nurmikari-Berry 2004). As the speech of Finnish, French and American students in this chapter has demonstrated, the students helped each other better understand the challenge of dealing with invisible cultural meanings embedded in their reliance on 'proper' English in dialogues implicitly influenced by cultural presumptions related to 'comfort with quietness' and 'discomfort with silence'.

The theoretical framework we have used in this study has helped in organizing our thoughts as well as in providing a particular trajectory for our analyses. It has moved from (1) a detailed examination of cultural terms for communicative action (e.g., 'shy', 'talkative', 'omissa oloissaan', 'harkita'), (2) to semantic dimensions that are active in the use of those terms, (3) to an interpretation of those dimensions of meanings from the vantage point of different codes (i.e., Finnish, French, and American), (4) to a linking of these terms and dimensions to specific cultural practices in specific contexts of everyday life, and (5) to an explication of the distinctive norms for everyday interaction which are constituent parts of each code. (This perspective and method is summarized in detail in Carbaugh, Berry, & Nurmikari-Berry 2006.) The integrated analytical movement and pedagogical development does not focus on dictionary or word-mean-

ings, but on the use of invisible cultural terms, the multiple dimensions of meanings they express including their norms, and the social practices revealed through each. The general constructs we use in summarizing each set of dynamics are the constructs of cultural discourse and communication code.

Developing this framework has helped us understand interaction among local and exchange students, as well as interaction between students and teachers. This student learner-teacher interaction can lead to awareness of how people comfortable with quietude probably no more choose to be quiet than people uncomfortable with silence choose to talk. In both examples, largely implicit choices are made and there are also natural ways of being.

The main difference is Finnish ease in moving back and forth between comfort with quietude and comfort with talking when compared with many other cultures where silence is often considered social emptiness. Of course, challenges exist inside and outside a cultural comfort with quietness. "Negative [external] stereotypes ... may lead to ... the use of self-handicapping strategies [by insiders]" (Lehtonen 1994b: 104), and "if we [outsiders] are going to get any further in our understanding of the meaning of silence in conversation, we must first examine the metaphors generating our research and our conversational stance" (Scollon 1985: 27–28). Appendix 5 offers more insight into multiple Finnish cultural meanings hidden in 'silence', and Appendix 6 offers examples of Finnish business overlap with student experience.

Moving away from cultural discomfort related to negative stereotypes and towards the above goal, outsiders can only move forward with help from insiders, and insiders can only be helpful if they become aware of and focus on the richness in their taken-for-granted cultural comfort. In the present case a significant contribution to moving towards intercultural comfort can come with (1) discovery of taken-for-granted Finnish comfort with quietude, (2) interpretation of Finnish meanings related to 'hiljainen' (quiet/silent) without relying on external 'measuring stick' norms of 'tolerance for silence', and (3) communicating the cultural logic of this cultural richness to strangers without relying on 'proper' English terminology.

When the students become learner-teachers and the teachers become participant-observing learners, there is hope for coping with sensitive issues that we often subconsciously tend to skip over. The teacher's responsibility and opportunity is to discover and introduce ways to "make the telling justifiable", i.e., to help students become aware of and begin to escape, or at least minimize, negative culturally inherited "presuppositions about oneself, one's relation to others, one's view of the world and one's place in it" (Bruner 2001: 35).

Chapter 3

REFLECTING ON A TEACHER'S EXPERIENCE: LEARNING FROM STUDENTS AND THEORY

This chapter is Dedicated to Dell Hymes [20]

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I moved from the United States to Finland as a Fulbright Senior Lecturer of history and international relations in the mid-1970's and remained as a senior lecturer of English and a docent (adjunct professor) of history and intercultural relations in three Finnish universities. My approach to creating a learning environment to foster discovery and interpretative competence in the classroom began as a historian (Berry 1987, 1999a). The approach was rooted in two fundamental assumptions: that the present is often influenced more by the distant rather than the recent past, and that every historical text is a response to an act, statement or question in one or more other texts. The historian's task is to reconstruct, to the extent possible, the system of coherence in which each text becomes meaningful. This is done by discovering and interpreting patterns in the position-taking and communication concerning relevant issues. This approach leads, when successful, to a better understanding of the larger context that was rarely, if ever, made explicit in any of the multiple texts available to the historian.

At least three dimensions of meaningfulness in the texts pose challenges to the historian: the vertical (going back through history), the horizontal (discovering a context for current historical issues) and the immediate (interpreting what just happened at that point in history). These layered and interrelated dimensions have different degrees of salience at any point in the historical production of the texts. The historian must also apply the insights acquired to an interpretation of him/herself as a person who is often anchored by similar dimensions. Failure to do so leads to creation of a contemporary text that tells more about the historian's personal and/or sociocultural views concerning some contemporary issue(s) than about

20 Professor emeritus Dell Hymes' creation of a basis for understanding the ethnography of communication greatly influenced [the teacher's] discovery process [discussed] in this chapter and the book in general. For a summary of the approach see Carbaugh 2008.

the meaning of the historical texts being interpreted. These results also provide implicit and explicit 'lessons of history' that fail to reveal the relationship between the meaning of historical texts and the meaning of the contemporary text produced by the historian.

As I moved into the field of intercultural communication, I quickly realized that my experience as a historian overlapped in many ways with the challenges of intercultural understanding. There was, however, one significant difference. Historians, as outsiders, have no opportunity to ask those who were insiders – the historical writers of texts – any questions and expect explanations that go beyond the historical texts. In clear contrast, the cultural outsider *CAN* learn from insiders and help them become aware of taken-for-granted cultural premises via productive intercultural dialogues. In consequence of this, I therefore decided (1) that it was useless to try to teach students what I had learned when the local and exchange students had their own lessons to learn – and to teach! -, and (2) that it was best to let the students take the lead by helping them develop strategies for finding their own solutions to the challenges posed by their intercultural encounters.

This open-ended experimentation eventually paid off as I began to listen to the cultural speech of the students and to follow the paths of inquiry that they pointed to when responding to critical incidents (exercises with perplexity) that I introduced. When students are given an opportunity to take responsibility for their learning, they can begin to develop a variety of learning strategies that are appropriate to them but perhaps unknown to the teacher (Berry 1999a). I eventually discovered that I had been following, among other things, Max Van Manen's approach to human science (1990). Although the students didn't actually teach me the theoretical approach, they introduced me to overlap with the theoretical academic models that I had been unaware of.

Pragmatic and theoretical frames of reference

Van Manen's approach to human science for an action-sensitive pedagogy is based on seeking a 'phenomenological nod' by pursuing a 'validating circle of inquiry' which can lead learners to produce descriptions that resonate with other learners from the same culture, especially when interacting with 'strangers'. This approach relies on the interplay among six integrated teaching-research activities. First, the teacher must be highly motivated to learn from the students. Second, a research activity should investigate experience as it is lived. Third, a research activity should involve reflecting on essential themes that characterize the phenomenon; and as patterns begin to emerge, tentative conclusions should be pursued and tested course after course, for without verbal and written responses to critical situations or lived experience, thoughtful reflection is rarely possible within or after courses. Fourth, speaking, rewriting and re-speaking among strangers can bring classroom and lived experiences together. Fifth, this approach is rather demanding because the discovery of patterned practices requires strong motivation on the part of the teacher-learner-researcher and the student-learners; and interaction with strangers is the ingredient which often creates that key motivating factor. Sixth, discovery of the relationship between the parts and the whole are of utmost importance when developing some competence for discovering, interpreting and communicating cultural meanings effectively in intercultural contexts (Van Manen 1990; Berry 1999b).

An ethnographic approach to teaching and research evolved into a cyclical reconsideration of the reflection approach in which local and exchange students could help each other develop some competence for discovering, interpreting and communicating cultural meanings when English was being used as a shared international language. Important sources of inspiration and guidance along the way included the ethnographic insights of Michael Agar (1991, 1994, 1996), Donal Carbaugh (1990, 1996, 2005), Michael Byram (1989, 1997), Dell Hymes (1972a, b, 1974, 1979, 1996), Clifford Geertz (1973), Gerry Philipsen (1987, 1992, 1997), and Muriel Saville-Troike (1989). The work of these scholars has contributed to developing ways to pursue mutually reinforcing interactive learning and research agendas as I learned from students.[21] The goal became pedagogical development through a participatory discovery process, which overlaps with Holliday's (1994, 1996) encouragement for teachers to become ethnographers and with Kumaravadivelu's vision of teachers as "creators of learning opportunities and utilisers of learning opportunities created by learners" (1994: 33). I eventually realized that this approach and some systematic analysis of my experience could bring learning as a teacher and

21 The overall interplay between 'theory and method' in this book probably falls short of the academic expectations of many readers but the goal is limited to open reflection and discussion about a discovery process in two cases which were influenced at different stages by (un)awareness of how a participant-observer learning approach both integrated and failed to integrate a so-called appropriate balance between theory and method. Awareness of this challenge became more explicit when reading Van Maanen, Sorensen & Mitchell 2007.

research together.[22] The development of exchange programs and internet communication has contributed to these possibilities, even if it falls short of the in-depth 'learners as ethnographers' approach referred to in other publications (Heath 1983; Roberts et al. 2001).

A basic conceptual approach evolved into a whole-part relationship between particular word-images and the larger systems of practice of which they are a part (Carbaugh, Gibson & Milburn 1997) with a focus on the ways in which cultural discourse both presumes and creates knowledge about persons, actions, social relations, and feelings (Berry 1997, 1999a; Berry, Carbaugh & Nurmikari-Berry 2004; Berry & Innreiter-Moser 2002; Carbaugh 1990, 1996, 2005; Carbaugh & Berry 2001; Philipsen 1997; Wierzbicka 1997, 2004). The approach also draws attention to the ways people verbally interpret their 'material and social worlds', which are full of 'webs of significance' (Geertz 1973). These webs create spheres in which people use and understand their languages for linking a range of human experience, thoughts, feelings and actions, with each utterance invoking a system of coherence that is deeply felt and widely accessible to a speech community full of diversity (Carbaugh 1996; Scollon & Scollon 1995). Competence, the actual capability of doing what is appropriate and feasible in speech communities, resides in local ways of living and communicating (Hymes 1972a, b, 1996). When these local ways come into contact with each other, there is the risk of creating a rather incoherent and inequitable social environment (Gumperz 1982, 2001; Carbaugh: 2005: ch8).

Perplexity can lead to the discovery of rich points via an ethnographic framing process (Agar 1996). Rich points can be terms of expression (and other means of communication) ranging from lexical items to basic premises, which invoke deep and complex feelings and values that people implicitly claim as their own, and are difficult, at least initially, to translate for and communicate to people from other cultural spheres of coherence. They are readily familiar, if subconsciously, in the speech communities of the cultural actors but the absence of overlap in dense cultural meanings can remain invisible in the intercultural groups. The meanings are attached deeply to the interactants' spheres of coherence. If understood at all in other speech communities, rich points typically have a different range of meanings and can be understood in other speech communities as sending significantly different messages (Berry, Carbaugh & Nurmikari-Berry 2004; Carbaugh, Berry & Nurmikari-Berry 2006). Rich points "can be rich ... because of the intricate web of associations and connotations that they carry with them, webs that have no corresponding echoes in [one's] own language" (Agar 1994: 232).

Discovery of cultural richness comes when looking in the mirror together and answering key questions: (1) What message did I/you (would I/you) want to communicate in this or that social context? (2) How did I/you (would I/you) act/talk/communicate non-verbally to send this/that message in this or that context? (3) Why did I/you (would I/you) communicate this/that message and why in this way? (4) What is there in me that makes it difficult to understand the other's ways of communicating and acting? (5) What is there in the logic of the other's ways of communicating and acting that are hidden from me? (6) How can we help each other ask and answer these kinds of questions? (Berry & Nurmikari-Berry 2005). The questions are simple but finding answers to them is challenging. Insiders and outsiders need to help each other ask and answer these questions. Therefore cooperative teaching and learning by local 'insiders' and stranger 'outsiders' has been essential during the discovery process related to this book.

Interaction between cultural actors is often initially influenced by the discovery of difference that leads in turn to discovery of poverty and no-growth points. It is common to say that cultures are different and that we should never judge strangers. This non-judgmental attitude is positive as far as it goes; but if we leave it there, we have only reached a 'no growth' point. There will be no growth in our understanding of others or of ourselves as cultural beings if we don't see the need or the potential for discovery of the systems of coherence and meanings underpinning the diversity in the speech or practices of our own culture and other cultures.

Poverty points come when judging others according to one's own rich points, that is, according to one's deep taken-for-granted cultural presumptions. This often happens when our cultural presumptions tell us that the practices in another culture are unacceptable. A negative response to the speech or practices of strangers might make us feel better about ourselves but it can also trap us in a cycle of intercultural poverty when it comes to learning about others and ourselves as cultural beings. Even if we do not like or accept the practices of people from another culture, we become richer as individuals and intercultural communicators when we learn to better understand the logic of their ways of living and communicating, while also becoming aware of our own taken-for-granted cultural assumptions. Turning a discovery of difference and an awareness of communication deficiency in coping with sensitive cultural issues into a basis for

22 For examples of the author's ethnographic learning experience related to language and content learning, see Auer-Rizzi & Berry 2000; Berry 1992, 95, 97,98ab, 99ab, 2002, 2006; Berry & al. 2004, 2006; Berry & Nurmikari-Berry 1997, 98, 2005; Berry & Innreiter-Moser 2002; Berry & Markowski 2002; Carbaugh & Berry 2001; Koehler & Berry, 2008; Nurmikari-Berry & Berry 1999.

open dialogue space can lead to movement beyond a sense of deference toward oneself and/or domination by others.

The concepts 'rich, no-growth or poverty points' facilitate distinguishing between how we interpret the discovery of cultural differences. Sometimes our response opens the doors to more intercultural understanding, while at other times we have no motivation for understanding others or close the door to understanding strangers (Berry 1998a; Berry & Nurmikari-Berry 2005). The intercultural challenge is to discover ways to translate cultural meanings rather than rely on the use of 'proper' English as a shared international language. This is a challenge whether we talk about integrating culture into the communicative curriculum (Corbett, 2003), intercultural practitioners/professional strangers (Agar 1994, 1996), intercultural speakers (Byram 1997; Kramsch 1998), intercultural mediators (Zarate et al. 2003; Baraldi 2007) or translators, interpreters and cultural mediators (Katan 1999). The initially implicit hypothesis, which has been tested during the courses described in the first two chapters, is that students begin developing some competence for discovering, interpreting and communicating cultural meanings by turning the discovery of poverty and no-growth points into a productive space for discussion.

Extensive research on imagology and stereotypes has demonstrated how national stereotypes of auto-images, our implicit and explicit views of ourselves, and hetero-images, our implicit and explicit views of others, are often related to (mis)interpretations of history and national realities (Beller & Leerssen 2006; Lehtonen 2005). This research has communicated awareness of a degree of subjectivity both among interactants and those who analyze the creation and interpretations of stereotypes. Negative stereotypes can easily 'pop up' when interacting with cultural strangers.

These stereotypes can be neutralized to some extent when a student 'helper-learner' approach is integrated into a dialogue full of confrontation: "a bringing together of ideas, themes, etc., for comparison" (*Webster's Encyclopaedic Unabridged Dictionary* 2001). The teacher provides ethnographic guidance to help students cope with unexpected confrontation during multi-cultural group discussions; for without cultural confrontation, there is little, if any, meaningful intercultural learning. However, if the confrontation is not kept under control and used to open the door to learning about oneself and strangers, there is only creation or reinforcement of negative stereotypes.

Intercultural communication comes via the discourse of individuals who are also cultural beings (Scollon & Scollon 1995). Therefore, the ability to detect "a difference not just between individuals but between ... cultural systems in action" (Carbaugh 1993: 181) is essential to the development of intercultural communication. It should also be clear that intercultural pedagogical dialogues within the context of academic mobility space are most successful when students from different cultures are actively involved in creating a 'Third Space' between different cultural spheres of coherence: "a social space, inhabited by people in motion, in interaction and in transformation" (Kelly 2001:56; Berry, Carbaugh & Nurmikari-Berry 2004).

The learning contexts

Local and exchange students are cultural 'experts' who have developed competence in their respective cultures in order to be socially successful, but they have often developed very little competence in explaining their taken-for-granted cultural values and practices to those who come from other cultures. Interaction with strangers thus opens the door to discovering, interpreting and communicating cultural meanings that they often assume are rather 'universal' when seen from their implicit cultural perspectives described above.

During the courses, students participate in bi- or multi-cultural groups of 5–7 with at least 2 students who have grown up in the same cultural environment in each group. This approach helps the students to move beyond communicating only as individuals through double-checking their comments about ways of living and communicating; it also encourages thinking about what is rather common for cohering social diversity in their respective cultures. The students become learner-teachers rather than remaining simply students. Students don't work together to implement theoretical methods or to solve theoretical problems. They work together to discover where, how and why cultural overlap ends and difference begins when dealing with social relationships in their respective cultures.

Successful international team building also comes when team members are give time and support for developing shared intercultural knowledge (Reber & Berry 1999). This approach overlaps with Nigel Holden's concept of an "intercultural development process of knowledge sharing." The Holden model focuses on developing "participative competence to help each other discover and interpret cultural meanings of acts and speech" by creating "interactive group communication of meaning." This process is full of intercultural challenges, e.g., ambiguity in the meaning of texts across cultures when "English captures only a part of cultural meanings" (Holden 2002). This challenge is closely related to the role of 'false friends' and the creation of a semi-coherent Third Space as students create shared

frames of reference while coping with perplexity in their group discussions (Berry, Carbaugh & Nurmikari-Berry 2004: 262–264).

As the local and exchange students respond to perplexing situations related to ways of living and communicating in their respective cultures, they also create new topics for discussion by bringing observations from their everyday lives into the group discussions. The group interaction then broadens to include not only writing reflective essays after every session but also to talking about the same topics outside of class, sometimes with group members but mainly with other students from their own cultures who are not participating in the course.

This approach adds diversity to cultural discussions, e.g., the exchange group members return to the next class and explain to their group members how other students from their cultures (mis) understood the topics discussed in the previous sessions. The local students also return to their group with insights gained from discussing the topics with their local friends. Students begin to develop strategies for detecting taken-for-granted patterns in their cultural ways of living and communicating as they proceed from one experience to the next and reflect on previous experiences inside and outside the classroom. At the end of the course, students relive their intercultural discovery process by writing a final reflective essay based on all the exercises and the reflective email that they had sent to each group member after each session. Having acted as student-teachers-learners they produce critical incidents by raising new questions and insights that the teacher can integrate into the next course, whenever appropriate.

Metaphors as flexible guidelines

The academic literature referred to above helped me benefit from the ethnography of communication approach but direct reference to this theoretical approach was often confusing for students who rarely take (inter)cultural communication-related courses. This realization contributed to creating simple metaphors. These metaphors, which include 'rich, no-growth or poverty points' are taken from Berry & Nurmikari-Berry (2005). They provide informal 'theoretical' frames of reference and guidance for discovering and interpreting cultural meaning in the acts and speech of people from different cultures. They can be used freely and modified whenever useful to enhance an understanding of nuances in intercultural communication.

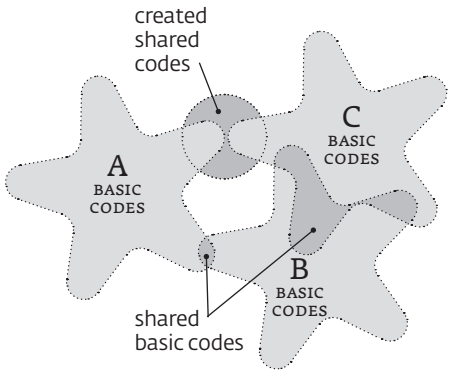
Some metaphors in the introductory handout are easy to understand at the beginning of a course. Others become more functional at a later stage. Movement forward is similar to planting some seeds and waiting until they start to take root, after which the students can begin to cultivate them in their own creative ways during a course. Here I would like to introduce a few metaphors that have been found to be useful throughout the courses and relevant when coping with sensitive cultural issues. Reference is made to 'we' throughout the introductory handout, to send the message that everyone, including the teacher, can benefit from creative use of the metaphors.

Fingers, thumb and palm of the hand: The first metaphor is the relationship between the palm and the fingers/thumb of a hand. Fingers and thumbs can remind us that different individuals and contexts influence how people act toward and understand each other. When we look at a person's hand we usually focus on the movement of the fingers/thumb and don't pay much attention to the palm. We take the palm for granted but fingers/thumb can't function without the palm. Fingers (individuals) from different hands (cultures) might have much in common, e.g., the same age or gender, or be business students, environmentalists, etc. But the deeper meanings of some of the ways the individuals (fingers) act and communicate can often be understood only in terms of the relationship between the fingers (individuals and contexts) and the palm of the hand (core cultural values and practices).

During and after a course we have opportunities to think about when we act (1) as a finger (an individual person who is different but also rather similar in many ways to others in one's culture), or (2) as a thumb (an individual person who is very different in some ways from others in one's culture). When we are introducing 'strangers' to our culture, we need to help them understand when we are talking about ourselves as a finger or as a thumb and when we are introducing our cultural palm via our finger talk. This metaphor can be used in many ways, e.g. reference to finger and thumb-like social contexts in a cultural palm and reference to overlap between fingers/thumbs from different cultures. In different contexts shared personal experience, profession, gender, religion, etc. can overshadow the more general role of the cultural palm. Since no interpretation is 'watertight' when talking about the role of culture and personal meanings, different dimensions of overlap between cultural palms can be integrated into a 'skating on thick or thin ice' metaphor, keeping in mind that 'fingers' and 'thumbs' are always part of cultural overlap.

Skating on thick or thin ice: The diagram below illustrates different examples of cultural convergence and divergence and illustrates that while empathy and a positive attitude are important to intercultural communication, we also need strategies to recognize the existence or absence of overlap in our basic communication codes and the basic codes of our communication partners. To illustrate this point we can begin with reference to three national cultures: A, B, and C (fig.5).

Figure 5 : *Existence and Absence of Shared Assumptions and Communication Codes*



We have (potential) understanding and cooperation between cultures A, B and C. In the case of A and C there is no known overlap in shared codes. To communicate, both A and C need to recognize the absence of overlap and create common codes. In the case of A and B there are already some, but very limited, shared basic codes. Here the challenge is to create more shared basic codes. In the case of B and C there is rather extensive overlap in basic codes, and the challenge is to become aware of the difference between what is shared and what seems to be shared.

We can illustrate these different communication situations through the use of a metaphor for skating on ice. The overlap in the basic codes of B and C represents thick ice. We easily assume, however, that the ice beyond the area of overlap is also thick. If we assume too much similarity, we are perplexed when misunderstandings arise. In the case of A and B awareness of misunderstanding often comes at an early stage. In the case of A and C, we can use the image of water. Few people assume that they can walk on water, let alone skate on it. The need to bridge the gap between two cultures is therefore often self-evident.

These different communication situations – with examples from overlap between B and C and the absence of overlap between A and C – require different and flexible strategies. One requires creation of common codes in order to begin to communicate. The other calls for strategies to enlarge the domain of shared basic codes. To increase the areas of thick ice we need to discover where the thick ice ends and the thin ice begins, and we need to realize that thin ice is equivalent to hidden water that won't support us if we attempt to step onto it.

The greater the combination of cultures, the greater the potential for misunderstandings across cultures. For example, the 'cultures' can be occupational cultures within the same company, corporate cultures within the same country, industrial cultures within the same transnational corporation (TNC) or national cultures within the same TNC. Two technical people from the same country and the same corporation can usually be assumed to be on thick ice because they share similar national, corporate, industrial, and occupational codes. However, although two technical people from different national cultures can often count on common assumptions and communication codes with respect to technical issues, once they have to manage the process of coordinating a multicultural project they can suddenly find themselves out on thin ice without realizing it. Likewise, a technical person and a marketing person from the same country or corporation can easily move beyond the thick ice of shared national or corporate culture to the thin ice covering the water between the two different occupational cultures. A technical person in one country and a sales person in another country would thus have to deal with three levels of cultural differences within the same international company. If we apply a reference to 'fingers' and 'thumbs', we can see that individual personalities might take a leading role as 'bridge builders' or 'skaters towards thin ice' with only limited influence from their cultures.

In these situations, bridge-building strategies should be an integral part of ice-skating. Intercultural communication competence is not the ability to skate on thick ice with people from other cultures. It is the ability to detect where the thick ice ends and the thin ice begins; it is the ability to get back on the thick ice after going through the thin ice; and it is the ability to build bridges where the ice is never thick or where there is only water. If we apply our 'ice skating' metaphor during and after a course, it can lead us to consider to what extent we were on thick or thin ice when talking to someone from another culture or thinking about an intercultural incident. Likewise, joint ventures that fail can ask themselves if they

started out on thin ice or failed to detect when thick ice became too thin to help them move forward together. This metaphor has been introduced through the use of an international business example but can be applied in multiple intercultural contexts.

Cultural gut and cultural knowledge: In intercultural situations we act on our knowledge about other cultures ('cultural knowledge') but we also take our own values and practices ('cultural gut') with us wherever we go. Cultural knowledge helps us to communicate with people from other cultures and to steer our way through new cultural environments, but limited cultural knowledge can also be misleading, since it is easier to be aware of what we know than to be aware of what we do not know. The challenge of dealing with limited knowledge about another culture is only part of the problem because we are often unaware of the implicit ways our own cultural values and practices influence our interpretation of other cultures.

Knowledge about other cultures is easy to accept if there is overlap between our cultural values and the newly acquired knowledge. In these cases, our cultural gut is similar to a gas pedal that speeds up our willingness and ability to act according to newly acquired cultural knowledge. If, however, there is a basic conflict between our cultural values and explanations about another culture, our cultural gut can also function as a brake on acceptance of that knowledge.

Cultural knowledge is important but it is not very helpful in intercultural situations unless we are aware of the extent to which our cultural gut is acting as a gas pedal or as a brake in those situations. In light of this need, let us now turn our attention to the 'continuum' below, which reflects commentary by business managers and students of business when describing their intercultural experiences. It should be noted that it is common to be at different points on this continuum for different aspects of the same culture, so we are often somewhere on this continuum for everything we hear (see, read, etc.), as is the other person; and it may be added that this continuum can be most useful when combined with reference to the 'fingers, thumb and palm of the hand', 'skating on thick or thin ice', 'false friends', and 'rich, no-growth, poverty points'.

1. *I don't hear* (At first I didn't realize that a point was being made. Now, on reflection, I realize that I am at # ? below.) For an example, see Appendix 5.
2. *I hear but I refuse to understand* or I will not allow myself to understand (because that way of thinking, talking or acting is very unacceptable).

2a. *I hear and I sort of understand* (even if I don't like it).

3. *I hear and would like to understand* (but I don't understand because it doesn't make any sense to me).

3a. *I hear and I think I understand at least a little bit* (even if it doesn't make much sense).

4. *I hear and I understand* (even if I find this rather odd or unacceptable).

4a. *I hear, I understand, and I sort of accept.*

5. *I hear, I understand, and I accept* (even if I find this rather odd or unacceptable).
6. *I hear, I understand, I accept and I can explain* (in positive terms from the perspective of the other culture).
7. *I hear, I understand, I accept, I can explain and I can perform* (act or talk so that I can communicate the same meaning as persons in the other culture).

In short, our ability to understand and to communicate interculturally depends to a large extent on our awareness of the relationship between our own cultural gut and our cultural knowledge about others. It is natural to misunderstand and/or to be annoyed in intercultural situations. If, however, we become more aware of the cultural system of meanings in the ways we act and communicate in our own speech community, we can also begin to discover and interpret the system of meanings in another culture (as something different but locally 'logical'). For a student example of this movement forward, see appendix 5. The model was also beneficial for minimizing confusion when there were misunderstandings between Austrians and Hungarians who were working on a gender equality project. After the continuum was introduced, participants had more opportunity to discuss where they had been, where they were and where they hope to go during the project negotiations.

The role of culture in a society is like implicit answers to questions even before those questions are raised. As we respond to people from another culture, we are also indirectly talking about our own culture – unaware that we take many important aspects of being a good social being for granted. We need to learn to ask questions about our own cultural values and practices as we begin to ask meaningful questions about other cultures. The creative integration of the metaphors into group discussions and reflective essays sent to group members contributes to a reflection-on-reflection discovery process.

Discussion

The metaphor examples above bring us to the 'eyes, ears, and tongue metaphor'. At the beginning of a course, students and teachers alike are often unaware of what their eyes and ears don't see or hear and what the eyes and ears of others don't see or hear when they

are being/acting and their tongues are active/inactive. Eyes and ears bring information to their brains, but personal and cultural experiences often limit their ability to see and hear the deeper meanings of cultural ways of living and communicating. As more awareness of their taken-for-granted attitudes about self and others comes to the surface, their brains encourage their eyes and ears to look and listen below the surface and their tongues to begin to have the voice of an intercultural mediator and facilitator. As mediators, group members develop competence in discovering, interpreting and communicating cultural meanings plus competence in helping others move in the same direction. As facilitators, they begin to help each other ask themselves and others meaningful, even provocative, questions during their group discussions and in their reflective email.

This process can lead to the development of an ability to discover, interpret and communicate cultural meanings as well as to acquiring an ability to help others develop intercultural communication competence. This only works, however, when strangers actively play helper-learner roles while learning about self and others. When students are given autonomous responsibility and opportunity there can be confusion even when working on business-related topics that have no relationship to culturally sensitive issues. Diversity in the students' learning experiences is rather common. Some students experience a rather systematic step-by-step discovery process during which something new, which they didn't expect, often pops up during group discussions. Most students experience 'why this?' – 'why that?' confusion, and even frustration, before discovering the unexpected about themselves and others.

This learning experience corresponds to a Harvard Business School seminar message for managers, one which is related to creating an environment in the classroom and asking two basic questions: "How do people experience you [and] how do they experience themselves when they are with you? ... We want to be able to do the right thing well ... [but] ... the only way that you can do the right thing well is to do it poorly first, whether you're learning algorithms, a new language, being a parent, coaching, giving feedback" (DeLong 2004). Many students point out during the courses that this has become a lifelong development process, and that they only experienced this discovery because of the close, sometimes challenging, relationship between local and exchange students in their multicultural groups.

Coping with confusion, and/or frustration, can gradually bring awareness of cultural taken-for-granted presumptions, a sense of responsibility for helping each other, and the possibility of openly creating new approaches for exploring and reflecting on intercultural meanings. This process offers the teacher an opportunity to observe and learn but it also requires teacher patience while interacting, to

keep moments of frustration under control. A cautious controllable confrontational approach is essential when coping with culturally sensitive issues.

If success is achieved to some extent but still needs to move forward, who can say that the discussion in this book is more than a few steps forward? Who can say where a meaningful pedagogical discovery has its roots: in a teacher who puts new challenges on the table after learning from students, or in students who lead a teacher forward, course after course? As chapters 1 and 2 suggest, discovery of responsibility by students and teachers can give rise to opportunity, and opportunity can create the responsibility to continue forward.

Epilogue

CREATION OF A THIRD SPACE AND A LEARNING OPPORTUNITY

This book has evolved out of more than a decade spent on two intercultural projects: one related to language learning and intercultural communication and the other to language usage in an intercultural management course. During this process, we have used and developed a nested conceptualization of cultural discourse (Carbaugh 1988, 2005). Cultural discourse is understood here as a system of symbols (including words and images), of forms of discursive practice, and of the meanings the symbols and forms carry. This conceptualization invites us to explore how particular terms co-occur in identifiable clusters with cultural forms of practice and how those terms and practices activate distinctive semantic fields. These elements, together, comprise cultural discourse as it coheres diversity within a cultural landscape.

Our basic conceptual approach, then, activates a whole-part relationship between a particular word-image and the larger system of practice of which it is a part. This approach employs a cultural theory of interpretation by focusing on the ways cultural discourse both presumes and creates knowledge about persons, actions, social relations and feelings (Berry, Carbaugh & Nurmikari-Berry 2004; Carbaugh 2005). This book has demonstrated how reliance on English as a shared international language easily hides the cultural meanings of whole-part relationships that exist between word-images and the larger system of practice. The book also demonstrates how multiple cultures are activated within a single language.

Research literature on intercultural communication often focuses on the individual adjustment of one person to another culture. In the Austrian and Finnish cases, the goal has been to support and study the creation of a semi-coherent discursive Third Space in which interactants are both within and outside their traditional cultural spheres of coherence. In this process, we can help each other develop ways to discover, interpret, and communicate our typically invisible cultural meanings, especially in the cases above, as these reside in a shared reliance on English. Developing this approach can contribute to neutralizing misleading stereotypes about self and others. Creation of a Third Space with shared frames of reference can bring together important dimensions of the implicit and the explicit. Developing individual competence in adjusting to others falls short of developing intercultural competence and comfort with others. *We need to develop the ability to help others understand us, which includes not only helping others understand themselves but also helping others to help us understand ourselves*.

Intercultural communication literature often emphasizes the importance of empathy, which can contribute to and evolve during the creation of a semi-coherent Third Space. Creation of a positive group spirit is essential but worthless unless there is (1) discovery of similarity with reference to difference and difference with reference to similarity, and (2) inclusion of group members as active mediators and facilitators within this group process. The Third Space should be regarded, however, as a semi-coherent social space, inhabited by people in transformation who are creating shared frames of reference in order to explore the diversity and commonality of their ways of communicating and living.

Experiencing a process of transformation related to awareness of how socio-cultural communication competence back home can interfere with intercultural communication constitutes an important stage in the process of understanding the relationship between linguistic and intercultural communication competence. As local and global participants create shared frames of reference, the 'parts' of their communication begin to fit together more 'logically', albeit in semi-coherent ways (Bhabha 1994; Berry, Carbaugh & Nurmikari-Berry 2004; Kelly 1998, 2001; Tomic and Lengel 1999).

Motivational learning can occur for students and teachers when students participate in autonomous intercultural groups and take responsibility for becoming learner-teachers of each other and of their teachers. Ethnographic discovery and the development of a Third Space takes place with reflection on reflection when teachers become aware of sensitive issues, and when they take responsibility for finding ways to give the students an opportunity to benefit from taking responsibility for sensitive intercultural issues. Before closing, and keeping in mind that ethnographic discovery is never complete (Geertz 1973), let us take a moment to look at a comment that supports the approach adopted in this book.

> By focusing on our responsibility to the Other, and therefore on our responsibility to openness in opposition to closure, the point is to determine not whether different truths are good or bad, but whether putting a particular discourse or set of discourses into practice might lead to a silencing of open alternatives, and therefore also a turning away from the Other (O'Regan & MacDonald 2007: 275).

John O'Regan and Malcolm MacDonald focus here on the responsibility of academic scholars to 'the Other'. The development that led

to the creation of this short book has focused on a similar responsibility and possibility that can exist between teachers and students as well as among students from different cultures who have been given the autonomous responsibility and opportunity to reflect upon their cultural terms and practices.

It is therefore essential for us to comprehend the following: the more we realize how we and others talk about ourselves when talking about others and the more we can help each other understand this often invisible reality, the more we begin to better understand ourselves and others.

Without movement towards this approach to intercultural dialogue, we and others will continue to suffer from multiple dimensions of the blinkered mind. There are at least two intercultural dimensions for us to keep in mind: 1) the topic of discussion, and whether it is about ourselves, or about others, and 2) the perspective taken for that discussion which is usually our own, and not the perspective of the others. Ways of understanding others must, therefore, always create space for including their points of view, to avoid locking us into blindly considering only our own!

Appendix 1

EIN ÖSTERREICHISCHER „MYTHOS ÜBER ERFOLGREICHES VERHANDELN“

Die Österreicher sind stolz auf ihre Geschichte, worunter sie die Habsburgerzeit meinen. Während der Königlichen und Kaiserlichen Monarchie Österreich – Ungarn wurde Österreich hauptsächlich durch Diplomatie und Heirat zu einer Großmacht. In jener Zeit sagte man über Österreich: „Andere mögen Kriege führen, aber du, glückliches Österreich, heirate (...tu felix Austria nube!)“. Auch heute noch sprechen Österreicher manchmal nostalgisch über die guten alten Tage, als Österreich die größte Macht Kontinentaleuropas und ein Verteidiger des Christentums gegen die Türken aus dem Osten war.

Das Verständnis über Österreich beginnt mit seiner Lage an den Kreuzungen Zentraleuropas, den nachhaltigen Symbolen der Großmacht und der Monarchie, dem Niedergang der Großmacht im 20. Jahrhundert, und dem Einfluß katholischer Werte überall in der Gesellschaft. Jahrhunderte der politischen Herrschaft durch dieselbe Familie und die religiöse Führung durch die katholische Kirche versorgten Österreich mit (angemessenen und unangemessenen) Modellen der Hierarchie in Bezug auf (1) die Organisation der Gesellschaft, (2) auf religiöse Modelle für individuelles und familiäres Leben, und (3) auf externe Sicherheit.

Die Monarchie war elitär und jahrhundertelang durch dieselbe Familie kontrolliert. Jedoch repräsentiert sie symbolisch auch eine Tradition unterstützender väterlicher Führung, die Österreichs Interessen während des Kaiserreichs förderte. Nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg führten ein Gefühl der Unsicherheit, hohe Arbeitslosigkeit und politische Unruhe zum politischen Extremismus der 30er Jahre und zum Anschluß an Deutschland während des Zweiten Weltkrieges.

Am Ende des Zweiten Weltkrieges entstand unter den österreichischen politischen Führern eine Konsensorientierung aus der Notwendigkeit alles nur mögliche zu tun, um eine Wiederholung der Fehler der 30iger Jahre zu verhindern. Eine Dekade der Besetzung durch die Alliierten und der von ihnen garantierten Neutralität brachte Österreich von Mitte der 50er bis Mitte der 90er Jahre einen internationalen Rahmen der Stabilität, und erlaubte Österreichs Führern internationale ideologische Konflikte allmählich von der Lösung inländischer Angelegenheiten zu trennen.

Innerhalb Österreichs lieferte die „Sozialpartnerschaft“ zum Wiederaufbau der österreichischen Politik und der Beziehung zwischen Kapital und Arbeit einen Rahmen für die Entwicklung der Sozialdemokratie und für ziemlich umfassende Wohlfahrtsreformen. Der Ausgleich von Konflikten, bevor sie aus der Hand geraten, wurde ein gesellschaftliches Ziel. In der Praxis bedeutete dies, daß Kapital und Arbeit unter der Beratung der Regierung politisches Verhalten zu verfolgen hatten, welches die Extreme von Sozialismus und Kapitalismus vermeidet. Im allgemeinen heißt dies, daß alle gesellschaftlichen Konflikte durch Verhandlungen der Spitzen der Interessensgruppen bearbeitet werden sollen. Konsens bedeutet nicht Gleichheit, sondern eher ein System von Verhandlungen und Kompromissen, welches radikale Aktionen aufgrund ungleicher Machtverhältnisse verhindert. Innerhalb dieses gesellschaftlichen Rahmens werden die Interessen der Individuen von gesellschaftlichen, institutionellen und familiären Beziehungen unterstützt.

Österreich erfreute sich nach dem Krieg beachtlicher Sicherheit und großen Wohlstandes, aber es herrscht auch Besorgnis bezüglich der Finanzierbarkeit des laufenden Wohlfahrtssystems in der Zukunft. Weiters ist Ambivalenz über die Mitgliedschaft in der Europäischen Union, wie der möglichen Mitgliedschaft in der westlichen Militärallianz und Unstimmigkeit über die Rolle der katholischen Kirche in der gegenwärtigen Gesellschaft bemerkbar. Diese Besorgnisse existieren neben der Unklarheit, ob institutionellen Anordnungen, welche individuelle und nationale Möglichkeiten beschränken, der Rücken zu kehren ist. Schließlich haben diese in der Vergangenheit auch den Rahmen für Sicherheit und Wachstum geliefert.

Eine enge Beziehung zu Natur, sowie Stabilität, gemächliche Veränderung, Aufrechterhaltung der Sozialpartnerschaft und Vermeidung von Konflikt und Risiko sind integrierte Teile der österreichischen Art zu leben. Einen Dialekt zu sprechen heißt eine regionale und eine österreichische Identität zu haben. Das Akzeptieren, und manchmal auch das Respektieren, der sozialen Hierarchie, die Sicherheit und Wohlstand liefert, existiert mit dem Glauben „klein ist schön“.

Appendix 2

AN AUSTRIAN 'MYTH OF NEGOTIATING OPPORTUNITY'

Austrians are proud of their history, by which they mean the empire under the Habsburgs. During the Königlich und Kaiserliche Monarchy Österreich-Ungarn, Austria grew to become an empire mainly via diplomacy and marriage. In those days people said of Austria: 'Others may wage wars but you, happy Austria, you just marry (…tu felix Austria nube!).' Even today Austrians sometimes talk with nostalgia about the good old days when Austria was the greatest power in continental Europe and a defender of Christianity against the Turks from the east.

An understanding of Austria begins with its location at the crossroads of Central Europe, the lingering symbolism of the empire and the monarchy, the 20th century decline of the empire, and the impact of Catholic values throughout society. Centuries of political rule by the same family and religious rule by the Catholic Church provided Austrians with (appropriate and inappropriate) models of social hierarchy related to organization of society, to religious models for individual and family life, and to external security.

The monarchy was elitist, controlled for centuries by the same family, but it also symbolically represents a tradition of supportive fatherly leadership that promoted Austrian interests throughout the empire. After the First World War a sense of insecurity, high unemployment and political unrest led to political extremism of the 1930s and cooperation with Germany during the Second World War.

By the end of the war a consensus had begun to emerge among Austrian leaders on the need to do everything possible to prevent a repeat of the mistakes of the 1930s. A decade of Allied occupation and Allied guaranteed neutrality since the mid-1950s provided Austria with an international frame of stability and allowed Austrian leaders to gradually separate international ideological conflicts from the resolution of domestic issues.

Within Austria a 'social partnership' to reconstruct Austrian politics and relationships between capital and labour provided a frame for the development of social democracy and rather extensive welfare reforms. Reconciliation of conflicts before they get out of hand became a societal goal. In practice this meant that capital and labour had to pursue, with the assistance of the state, policies that avoided the extremes of socialism and capitalism. At a more general level, all societal conflicts should involve negotiations among leaders of interests groups. Consensus does not mean equality but rather a system of negotiations and accommodation that avoids radical action based on uneven power relationships. Within this societal framework, the interests of individuals are promoted by societal, institutional and family relationships.

Austria has enjoyed remarkable post-war security and prosperity but there is also concern about financing the current welfare system in the future, ambivalence about membership in the European Union as well as possible membership in a western military alliance, and disagreement about the role of the Catholic Church in contemporary society. This concern coexists with ambiguity about turning one's back on institutional arrangements which place limits on individual and national rights but have also provided a frame for security and prosperity in the past.

Close association with nature, stability, gradual change, maintenance of social relationships and avoidance of conflict and risk are integral parts of the Austrian way of life. To speak a dialect is to have a regional and an Austrian identity. Acceptance of, and in some cases respect for, social hierarchy that provides security and prosperity coexists with the belief that small is beautiful.

Appendix 3

SHORT HANDOUT DESCRIBING THREE HISTORICAL MEANINGS OF 'ANSCHLUSS' [23]

The term 'Anschluss' embraces the following different conceptions and events in different historical contexts (Haas, 2000):

(1) Anschluss *before Nazi Germany*: Anschluss can be traced back into the 19th century – the so-called Pan-German issue ("die grossdeutsche Frage"). In 1918 its meaning shifted with the collapse of the Habsburg monarchy and the peace treaty of Saint Germain (1919) in which Austria had compulsory separation from Germany. Anschluss was associated with the reunion of [...] Germany and Austria (Paller, 1930) – "the old task of a peaceful living together of the middle-European nations ("Völker") under entirely modified terms and conditions" (Brunner 1930: 11). Many Austrians considered the First Republic a forced provisional arrangement for a small country (Andic 1962). All three political camps – Social Democrats, Christian Socials and German Nationals – had anschluss-longings that were not associated with Nazi Germany.

(2) Anschluss *with Nazi Germany*: The 'take over' by the Austrian National Socialists on March 11–12, 1938; the entry of the German troops into Austria on March 12th; the 'Federal Constitution Law about the Reunion of Austria with the German Reich', a corresponding German Reich Law on March 13th; preparation and transaction of the national referendum from April 10th about the Austrian Anschluss to the German Reich plus the administrative integration into the German Reich; the German reign in Austria, 1938 to 1945, the so-called Anschluss period (Anschlussära).

(3) Anchluss *after* WWII: 'German' and 'Anschluss' were discredited by association with Nazis, conflict, war and crime. The response was a harmonious 'Social Partnership', which found ready acceptance based on Austrian traditions in baroque and enlightened absolutism plus a specific development of the bourgeoisie in the Habsburg monarchy (Pelinka and Rosenberger 2000; Pelinka 1990; Hellmuth 2000). The result was a democratic social-welfare state.

23 Professors Gerhard Reber and Hellmuth Thomus contributed to our understanding of Austrian history.

Appendix 4

EXAMPLE OF GERMAN STUDENT DISCUSSIONS

German students who have been in Michael Berry's intercultural management courses in Finland carry an inherited national cultural burden. They can feel uncomfortable when reference to WWII is made by people from other cultures. They often respond, however, in a rather rational way in group discussions with Finns and exchange students with comments like the following: 'What Germany did was bad and wrong'; 'We are (or I am) not responsible'; 'We are (or I am) responsible to prevent it from happening again'; 'We (I) have democracy because Germany was defeated'. The members of each subgroup are asked to compare this brief summary of German commentary with that of Austrians in their group.

Appendix 5

DISCOVERY OF ACTIVE FINNISH COMMUNICATION RICHNESS

Looking in the mirror together contributes to discovering, interpreting and communicating taken-for-granted Finnish cultural meanings of silence often hidden from self and others. This approach offers opportunities to cope better with (1) an implicit imperialism of 'discomfort with silence' deeply influenced by a 'talk vs. silent' yardstick for interpreting communication, (2) the failure of direct English translation to communicate Finnish cultural meanings, and (3) the challenge of becoming aware of as well as communicating one's own cultural richness to others. Awareness and communication of this cultural richness can come when making multiple social and personal dimensions of Finnish silence explicit, e.g., positive active, positive relaxing, and negative active/passive silence. This appendix offers several examples of the student discovery process, which has contributed to the discovery process of the observant-participating teacher.

Multiple hidden meanings in shy (ujo)

During group discussions students are encouraged to move back and forth between English and their native languages to discover what additional words they could have used to send the social meanings that they believed they were sending when using the word 'shy' (ujo) to describe Finns. The following is presented as the kind of Finnish and English forms of statements that were often made during these group discussions: Suomalaiset ovat (Finns are), Suomalainen on (a Finn is): ujo (socially timid, careful), hiljainen (quiet in style and amount of talk, silent), arka (timid, cautious, sensitive), pidättyväinen (tactful, reserved, reticent), varautunut (cautious in order to be prepared before acting/talking inappropriately in a new situation, reserved, observant), hienotunteinen (discrete, considerate, tactful) and herkkä (positive: sensitive to others' feelings, and negative: easily upset). Most Finnish users interpreted these words as neutral or positive unless preceded implicitly or explicitly by 'too/liian'. A common question by Finnish students during their discussions was: *why are we using shy when we have all these other options*? and the answer was often: *because everyone else says we are shy* (Berry, Carbaugh & Nurmikari-Berry, 2004). Here is an example of a student's discovery experience in a multicultural group:

The time spent in the intercultural communication course was enough to start understanding the importance of cultural complexity in conversations but of course it was too short a time to understand everything and be 'ready' in all coming cultural situations. As Mr. Berry pointed out in one lesson, this is a life long learning opportunity where we all are teachers and students at the same time. We teach others about our own culture but at the same time we learn from others about their cultures. This learning is not limited only to the course but can also occur in our everyday life and last 'forever'. The word shy was our 'false friend'; although we all knew what the word shy meant when we translated the word from English to the native language, we all understood it differently. The word shy was very deeply attached to our cultural backgrounds. We discussed the word shy in our first lesson. The foreign students in our group described Finns as cold or shy people. We did not discuss the meaning of the word further as we did not see it necessary. We thought that the word shy was understood similarly by all of us but we were wrong. We did not realise that we were at the 'false friend stage'.

In one of the lessons where we started to explore the word shy more we realized that we all had different kinds of images what the word shy represented to us. There was nothing wrong with our English skills but we still could not explain the meaning or understand what the others were saying. After we had discussed about the meaning of shy we thought about the conversation at home and wrote our reflective essays. By writing the reflective essays we helped each other to understand each other better. I noticed I had to study the deeper meanings of my own culture to be able to explain my point of view.

In our introductory handout there was a Cultural Gut/Cultural Knowledge 'seven steps' model [p. 72]. In our subgroup we started at the beginning at the 'I don't hear' phase. We did not realise that we had different meanings for the word shy. By discussing and exploring the hidden cultural meanings behind the word we moved further on the continuum. At the end of the course, I think that we reached the stage 'I hear and I understand' but maybe also the stage 'I hear, I understand, I accept and I can explain' (Berry, Carbaugh & Nurmikari-Berry, 2004: 280).

Movement towards awareness of positive silent (hiljainen)

There is a clear consensus among Finnish students that everyone could benefit from developing some more 'small talk' competence, and some students with different personal and/or regional backgrounds don't always feel comfortable with the silence of other Finns in some social contexts. They might prefer more verbal interaction than others in those situations *while being unaware of their own taken-for-granted comfort with silence/quietness in other contexts*. For example, a Finnish student tells the European and American exchange students in his multicultural group that 'silent' carries a negative meaning in Finland. European and American exchange students agree even if the other Finns in the group disagree. After a couple of classes, all agree that silence is negative and talking is positive. At that point, the teacher asks the Finnish student to describe a 'harkitsevainen'

Finn. Summary of his response: a harkitsevainen person listens and thinks while others are talking but also talks when it is one's turn to talk and feels that s/he has something meaningful to share with others.

The teacher then asks if an 'ujo'(shy) person could be 'harkitsevainen'. The student replies 'yes but not always' and emphasized why he had ignored his taken-for-granted respect for being harkitsevainen in Finnish communication situations: he wanted Finns to be more talkative and had thus been trapped by a 'too silent/too shy' negative semantic frame of reference during previous group discussions. The exchange students then realize that he is often actively silent, even if he is the Finn who talks the most in the group.

In another course a talkative Finn tells his group members 'I hate silence'. When the teacher hears the exchange students from French and Spanish speaking cultures stereotyping him as a 'non-Finn' during a following class, he asks the Finnish student to explain to group members whether a 'harkitsevainen' person is respected in Finland. As in the previous example, everyone in the group begins to realize that he is a harkitsevainen Finn rather than someone who hates all kinds of silence. During the course he also actively focused on getting group discussions 'back on track'. One possible interpretation of the meaning of his 'hate silence' message and his coordinating role is: separate self from the stereotyped silent Finn but also enjoy 'competing with' French and Mexican talk as long as he could keep discussions on track.

Making 'active' and 'relaxing' silence more explicit

The examples above emerged over time during courses with multicultural groups. When there were no exchange students in an American culture course to help the Finnish students become aware of how to communicate their taken-for-granted cultural richness associated with being 'silent/quiet', a new level of awareness came to the surface. While discussing the challenge of helping these students communicate that something positive is often happening when Finns are 'hiljainen' (silent/quiet) Marjatta Nurmikari-Berry, the creator of the concept 'grammar of quietude' (p. 48), came up with reference to *active* silence. Over time reference was also made to *relaxing* silence.

This awareness of the need to make the positive sides of Finnish comfort with quietness more explicit led to the creation of an exercise to encourage movement back and forth between Finnish and English while thinking about everyday communication related to (1) *positive active silence*, (2) *positive relaxing silence*, and (3) *negative active/passive silence*. Reference to shy was integrated into the exercise, and students were encouraged to provide an example of communication challenges across cultures.

This exercise was created at the end of an American culture course. The timing of the exercise was unfortunate but multiple meaningful responses have contributed to demonstrating how words with closely related social meanings can bring awareness of better ways to communicate Finnish cultural meanings in English. The data from the shy related exercise suggests that 'ujo' (shy) has overlap with 'positive active silence', has limited association with 'positive relaxing silence', and is related to 'negative passive silence'. These results correspond to the negative stereotyping of 'ujo' (shy) by Finns and others but also make explicit that 'ujo' often carries a neutral or positive meaning for Finns, depending on the context.

Here we will introduce a short list of Finnish and English words and phrases semantically associated with hiljainen (silent/quiet)/hiljaisuus (silence/quietness) that were discussed during the course as well as those produced during the exercise. They are listed separately rather than as translated options (1) *Positive active*: odottava, kuunteleminen, keskittyminen, kiinnostunut, kommunikoida ilman sanoja, kohtelias, olla omissa oloissaan, kunnioittaa ja antaa muille tilaa, rauhallinen miettiminen, harkita, mietiskellä. The examples overlap with the semantic meanings of willing to wait, listening carefully, being focused on something, showing interest, communicate without words, polite, be in one's own thoughts, respect and give private space to others, thinking (hard), calm; (2) *Positive relaxing*: olla omissa oloissaan/ajatuksissaan, ei puhu mutta on läsnä, rauhallinen, rentoutuminen, rauhallisuus, tyyneys, mietiskely, mukava oleskelu, kiireettömyys, vaatimaton, kiinnostunut. The examples overlap with the semantic meanings of 'in harmony with oneself', e.g., in nature, in sauna, when observing or feeling something wonderful, when communicating non-verbally with others, calm, peaceful, enjoyable, relaxed, take it easy, interested. (3a) *Negative passive*: ei kunnioittava, tylsä, tympääntynyt, masentunut, välinpitämätön, varautunut, vaikeasti käsiteltävä, rakentaa muuri ympärilleen, ikävystynyt (disrespective, dull, get bored, indifferent, depressed, apathetic, too reserved, difficult to handle, not letting anyone close, exhausted). (3b) *Negative active*: juoruta, mököttöminen, itsekkyys, tuppisuu, epäkohtelias (can't tell anyone, sulking, selfish, not talk enough, rude, impolite, disrespectful).

To sum up these semantic clusters, being too silent/shy can definitely carry negative meanings in Finnish culture. In contrast, *relaxing silence* is one important cultural natural way to be and Finnish socially positive *active silence* **integrates** Finnish comfort with both

quietness and talking. These positive meanings are often invisible to people from other cultures. Nevertheless, when words and phrases with shared meanings are used to communicate Finnish cultural meanings, everyone can benefit from no longer relying on 'proper' dictionary translation. Here is one example of how a student reflected back on her personal and cultural experiences while doing the exercise:

Before starting the American culture-course, I was aware that Americans tend to feel a little uncomfortable and confused when being around silent people. However, I had never really thought about why that was the case. I had only interpreted the matter from my personal Finnish point of view. I used to think that Americans were really weird to be bothered by silence and I couldn't understand why they didn't appreciate all the great aspects of silence. I had taken the positive sides of quietude for granted and I thought anyone who didn't notice them must be out of his mind! I made the common mistake of assuming that the things that are appreciated in my culture should be common ideals in other places, too.

During the course I realized that the characteristics that Finns consider positive can be completely misinterpreted in different cultures. When I show my interest by listening carefully, staying silent for a while in order to give the other person some space, it might actually be considered as being rude or uninterested! That was definitely a new discovery for me, and it explained many of the confusions I had faced during my exchange year in the United States.

I have a good example on the confusing situation where an American only saw the negative aspects of being silent. During my exchange year I took French classes in high school. I really enjoyed those classes and thought that the teacher was great. During the last day of the school year the teacher asked me to stay in the class for a few minutes longer as there was something he wanted to talk about. He looked kind of disappointed and asked me: "Did you enjoy the classes at all? Was there something wrong in my teaching? You seemed very passive all these months, were the things that I taught too easy for you? Was there not enough challenge? Why didn't you like the classes?"

I was shocked by these questions as they definitely got me off guard. The truth was completely the opposite; I had really enjoyed the classes and always tried to pay attention to the lessons. I tried to explain that to the teacher, but he didn't seem to believe me. He most likely still thinks that his classes were a major disappointment for me. That's partly my fault. Back then I didn't really have the tools or understanding to express the positive aspects of silence that were hidden from the teacher. I was just confused and didn't really know what to say. Hopefully next time in a similar situation I'll be able to explain myself better so there won't be any hard feelings.

This appendix has offered examples of cultural discovery, a focus and a 'hope'. The *examples* were taken from a Finnish context with a *focus on* making explicit the importance of creating multiple approaches for becoming aware of and communicating cultural meanings that are often hidden in a shared international language. *The hope* is that readers will go deeper not only within but also beyond the Finnish context. For example, professor Shi-Xu Zhejiang recently made explicit at the 15th World Congress of Applied Linguistics in Germany that English does not communicate Chinese cultural meanings, and Michael Berry's discussion with Chinese students at a conference in Paris brought awareness that Chapter 2 could provide a model for a similar, albeit modified, discussion concerning sensitive cultural issues related to interaction between Chinese, French and native English speakers.

Appendix 6

Michael Berry

FINNISH INTERCULTURAL BUSINESS OVERLAP WITH STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Erna Szabo (2007) has clearly demonstrated how Finnish managers tend to differ from other managers when coordination and communication norms are integrated into the concept of participative management. In the Finnish example, the concepts of 'autonomy', 'quality' and 'participation' are supported and reinforced by Finnish communication norms. These three aspects of participative management can be linked pragmatically to Finnish management contexts. The Finnish values of 'autonomy', 'quality' and 'participation' are greatly influenced by Finnish comfort with quietness, as well as comfort with talking when there is responsibility and/or opportunity to verbalize one's thoughts in a business context. Once assigned a task, subordinates become 'self-bossed', thus possessing individual responsibility for quality work and contacting their superior when a problem arises. Such a participative managerial hierarchy with a 'bottom up' dimension facilitates autonomous development and allows Finns to create a vision for the future shared by all when effectively coordinated from above.

What others might interpret as a 'disconnected social void' can actually be full of Finnish respect for others, reflection, and a willingness to stand behind one's word. In Finland an honest person is someone who not only avoids telling lies and stealing but also acts according to her/his word without needing to use the word 'promise'. A Finn's message should be clear and to the point. Thus, if a business person needs to use the word *promise* in a Finnish context, then not everything is clear. Finns also rarely use the word 'please' in Finnish. The meanings are understood to be there without the use of the words; and active use of the words suggests that everything might not be entirely appropriate. Unfortunately, the absence of these words when Finns speak English might cause confusion for people from other cultures.

Another factor influencing business communication during meetings is listening to other people until they finish talking. When speakers do not overlap with one another in a business meeting there is respect for others and a moment for reflection. Finns might remain quiet if they disagree and don't have a good counter argument at that point in the discussion. In other cultures silence in a business context might be understood as agreement or lack of competence or interest. Finnish communication norms do not support brainstorming – they support sharing pre-thought information and listening to those who are well prepared. The people who come well prepared or who listen carefully before expressing an opinion based on their own reflection are the respected participants in a meeting. Coordination of subordinate 'self-bossed' autonomy is essential, given the ways the communication norms and autonomy can reinforce each other in a counter-productive way. There is a Finnish tendency to remain steadfast and stick to one's plans, which can be an element of stubbornness or commitment to careful planning. Sharing new quality information is important in this context. Therefore, successful development requires active sharing of autonomously created information but not active hierarchical roles.

Let us now turn to an example of an American interpretation of Finnish and Swedish ways of communicating, planning and acting on decisions.

During a training session for Americans, Finns and Swedes in a Finnish business subsidiary in the United States, an American came to the consultant during the first coffee break and mentioned that there were problems with Finns because they didn't talk much, if at all. This American didn't know what the Finns were hiding, if they ever thought independently or whether they were even interested during the group discussions. In contrast, he said the Swedes were easy to deal with because they talked, if not as much as Americans. The consultant listened, after which they both returned to the training session. During the afternoon coffee break the same American told the consultant that the Swedes were difficult to work with because, after a decision had been made, they kept discussing whether the decision should be modified. In contrast, the American now felt that the Finns were easy to work with because they focused on the goal and, once a decision had been made, implemented it quickly.

The following day the Americans politely raised a question about Finnish inability to make decisions and the Finns politely responded that they felt the Americans also had a problem. The consultant then asked if there was perhaps a difference between 'let's get the ball rolling' (which from a Finnish perspective might not be a good decision) and 'let's plan carefully before the ball gets rolling' (which from an American perspective might prevent the ball from ever rolling). During the discussion, the American response was the following: "For years we have been misunderstanding each other. Maybe long-term planning is what the Finns and Swedes have in common, but the Swedes just keep discussing after a decision has been made and the Finns seem to be silent during the planning process, yet there is no

silence when they act on a decision." This interpretation is consistent with the discussion in chapters 2 & 3.

Another example of diversity in business communication norms comes from the Nokia era. Mobile phones have added a new dimension to the Finnish communication style. Nokia's "connecting people" message can be interpreted by Finns in positive and negative ways. One should not talk to just be talking, but a mobile phone call often means that the other person considers it important to talk. In such a case a full response is called for. Finns nevertheless often experience discomfort with the extent to which this modern connecting system invades the traditional desire to enjoy one's privacy while focusing on one's responsibility to create quality results. A common solution in many cases is to send a text message, if appropriate, and to talk only when necessary.

If we want to give an example of the most relaxing communication atmosphere for Finnish business people, it would be a sauna get together in a forest next to a lake. A sauna can provide meaningful time spent together to silently relax, discuss serious issues or simply create a humorous atmosphere. But as soon as people come out of the sauna, mobile phones can begin polluting the relaxing post-sauna environment and disconnecting the people who were together just a few moments before. Mobile phones thus allow business people to go anywhere at any time, but also reinforce the concept that the modern world is not the same as the natural world with which they are most familiar and comfortable.

Finnish comfort with quietude is one natural way to be in harmony with nature, with one's self and with others. This comfort does not deny the importance of comfort with talking. It can, however, hide non-verbal communication of togetherness and respect for others in a way that might initially confuse those who arrive in Finland for a business meeting, just as Finns might be initially confused when French people interrupt during a meeting to show interest and Americans want to brainstorm in order to get the ball rolling.

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Our inability to know what we don't know can overshadow intercultural realities. We all carry 'cultural baggage' that is often invisible, can easily become weighty and must be dealt with, regardless of where we are in our globalizing environment.

The more we realize how we talk about ourselves when talking about others, the more we begin to better understand ourselves and others.

This insight helps us move beyond negative stereotyping of ourselves and others towards discovery of ourselves and others.

Unmasking cultural self and others to move from uncomfortable 'that's not me' to comfortable 'this is me' and 'that is you' is an intercultural challenge throughout the world.

This book introduces an intercultural learning approach; drawing on examples from Austrian intercultural trauma, as well as from Finnish 'comfort with quietude' full of active silence often invisible to others' 'discomfort with silence'. Each case offers frames of reference for modified intercultural implementation.

The approach described in this book is the result of more than a decade of intercultural collaboration and ethnographic discovery. The students involved in the pedagocical collaboration found that they had much to learn and teach about their cultural backgrounds, and the observing-participant teachers discovered how to make use of students as rich cultural resources.

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PDF, 2010
ISBN 978-952-92-7817-6
PAPERBACK, 2ND ED. 2009
ISBN 978-952-92-5091-2