CROSS CULTURE UNDERSTANDING

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PREFACE

The relationship between language and culture has been a matter of. As the focus of this book is on varieties of English around the world and especially on aspects of verbal interaction between and among users of these varieties.

The chapters explore issues arising out of the interplay between linguistic and sociocultural norms of language behavior in social contexts. We are primarily concerned with linguistic interaction as a dynamic process rather than a static object. The use of language in performing acts, the cooperative nature of verbal communication, whether in the spoken or
written mode, and the nature of sociocultural competence displayed in producing and interpreting linguistic performance are discussed in these chapters. The emphasis is on what it means to be polite in verbal interaction. We also bring in those aspects of non-verbal communication that have been
identified as being responsible for successful communication or for failures in communication that lead to misunderstandings between users of different varieties.

CHAPTER I

INTERRACTION IN CULTURAL

1. INTRODUCTION

Communicating through language—whether spoken or written—is a remarkably skilled social behavior. There are two major modes of using language for communication, spoken and written.

- The written mode is not universal, there are many languages in various parts of the world that are spoken, but not written. Written language, where it exists, imposes a severe restriction on channels through which participants communicate with each other.

- The spoken mode, on the other hand, allows for a number of channels to be utilized. We speak with our vocal organs, but we converse and communicate with our entire bodies. Obviously, the written mode cannot utilize the channels of gesture, body posture, facial expression, etc. to the same extent, though there are some symbols devised for (informally) indicating smile, frown, etc.

These differences notwithstanding, a broad generalization in terms of spoken vs. written mode of linguistic interaction is possible, since the

dichotomy spoken vs. written is not discrete, e.g. a phone conversation utilizes the spoken channel, but does not share all the features of face-to-face conversation. In a phone conversation the speaker and hearer are unable to see each other's body posture, facial expressions, gestures, and other nonverbal cues. The technology is not widely available as yet for the participants in a conversation to see each other as they speak, hence, facial expression, gesture, body posture, etc. are not transmitted in phone conversations. For our purposes, we will, for the most part, concentrate on features common to the spoken and the written modes. Most of what we have to say about verbal interaction in this chapter apply to both the modes.

In both the spoken and the written modes, participants exchange three types of information as:

1.1 conceptual information,

i.e. the purely factual content of linguistic signals exchanged. "Factual" does not mean "true";

For instance, "The Fairy Godmother transformed Cinderella into a princess by a wave of her magic wand," has a cognitive content, and therefore, conveys a certain "factual information," although it is not "true" in the real world.

1.2 indexical information

nformation about the speaker/writer himself/herself. Listeners/readers use this information to draw inferences about the speaker/writer's identity, attributes, attitudes, and mood.

For instance, the utterance, "It is clear that Jeremy is the culprit" makes it obvious that the speaker is making a firm assertion, whereas the utterance, "I think Herbert was fired" indicates that the speaker is not sure of his/her facts.

1.3 interaction-management information

information that enables participants to initiate or terminate an interaction, indicate transitions, control time-sharing, etc., in an acceptable way in the spoken mode, or signal **cohesion**, coherence, etc., in the written mode.

For instance, the utterance, "That's all I have to say about it" signals explicitly to other participants in the conversation that the speaker has completed his/her turn and is ready to give a chance to someone else to claim a turn. Similarly,

the utterance of "Did you hear what happened to Margie?" provides a clear signal to the participants in the conversation that the speaker wishes to narrate a significant event. Similarly, expressions such as "It is claimed in

this study that . . ." and "I will argue in this paper that . . ." clearly signal academic argumentative writing. More about such devices in the spoken and written modes are pointed out in Chapters 8 and 9. Here, we will focus on some concepts that are crucial in analyzing verbal interaction.

The structure of conversation is looked at in terms of units such as

a) **turn** (distribution of talk across participants; Sacks *et al.*, 1974),

b) **exchange** (response by one participant to another), and

c) **Adjacency pair** (paired utterances by two different participants, e.g. question–answer, compliment–response, apology–minimization).

In relation to cross-cultural communication through English Goffman have also looked at:

a) *Face-to-face* interaction as ritualistic behavior (Goffman, 1955, 1967) and discussed face as an important concept in characterizing the image that people attempt to project, negotiate, and maintain in such interaction. The concept *face* is inextricably linked with the concept of politeness as well as the concept of cooperation in Gricean terms.

b) *Context* of situation or *context*, the latter several constructs for structuring background knowledge or sociocultural knowledge essential for analyzing conversation or discourse structure.

In this chapter, we will discuss some of the concepts mentioned above in some detail. We will look at two instances of a conversation and analyze them in terms of speech acts, Gricean cooperative principle, and conversation analysis, taking into account sociocultural context and background knowledge.

Consider the following verbal interaction between a Vietnamese (A), a recent immigrant to the USA, and an American college student (D) in the college lounge. Both are women and have heard the teacher pronounce their names, which may not be enough in case of unfamiliar names.

1.   D: Hi Ann, How ya doin'?

A: Oh hi. Uhm, I'm reading.

D: Mind if I sit down?

A. Please.

D: Thank you. You getting ready for class?

A: Yes.

D: I was wondering—you're from Vietnam, aren't you?

A: Yes.

From the point of view of interaction management, this conversation does not seem to be going well. The addressee, addressed as Ann, is not very communicative. Out of the four *exchanges*, she replies in monosyllables in three.

Now compare the above with the following interaction:

2.   D: Hi Ann. How ya doin'?

       A: Oh, hi. How are you?

       D: Fine, thanks. You mind if I sit down?

       A: Oh, have a seat.

       D: Thanks. Getting ready for class?

A: Yes, I'm prepared. (A: slight laugh)

D: Your name is "Ann", isn't it?

A: Uh, no, it's "Anh", A—N—H. In Vietnamese, it's "Anh".

It is obvious that this interaction has a better chance of succeeding in establishing some social relationship between the participants. Anh is more forthcoming and does not confine herself to monosyllables.

The Concept *Face*

When an interaction is not going well, both participants engaged in it may feel uncomfortable. This is because in face-to-face interaction, participants are not only exchanging messages, they are also projecting their self-images.

Two good examples of such attempts in conversation (2) are the return greeting *How are you?*, and the explanation by Anh, *In Vietnamese, it's "Anh."* The first reciprocates Diane's attempts at getting a conversation going, the second is to make sure Diane is not embarrassed at being corrected in the pronunciation of Anh's name.

Let us look at another example. Consider the following conversation between two friends:

A: We will be delighted if you could share a meal with us on Saturday evening.
B: Why go to so much trouble? After all, everyone is so busy during the week. The week end is the only time when one can relax. We will drop by and see you some time during the week end.

A: It will be no trouble at all. It will be a simple meal, nothing elaborate.

B: Shall we bring some thing?

A: Just yourselves, and a good appetite. See you at 7 PM.

B: We will meet then.

It may be hypothesized that both participants are conscious of each other's face or the image of themselves that they want to project to the society as a whole. A's invitation is not accepted immediately because that would either imply that A is obliged to invite B for some reason, or that B has to accommodate A's wishes for some reason. The first alternative would be detrimental to A's image, the second to B's. Also, B has to be sure A is sincere in inviting him/her before accepting the invitation.

The Concept *Context*

Maintaining the ritual equilibrium is easier when the participants share a common sociocultural background. A simple illustration is what the participants know about each other as individuals and as members of a sociocultural group. Let us take a second look at the conversation in (8) from this perspective. Note that both participants take it for granted that according to the norms of their culture and society, a dinner invitation is a

matter of negotiation and not of immediate acceptance or rejection. It is polite on part of the guests to offer contributing to the dinner by bringing in a dish to share; it is, however, not polite of the hosts to accept the offer, except in rare circumstances. It is not customary among friends to thank each other for such invitations. At a personal level, both participants seem to know that they are working couples, hence the mention of week end. The host is sure that the guest knows where the hosts live, hence the location of the dinner is not specified. The guest seems to know that the hosts know the dietary habits of the guests, hence no mention is made of any dietary restrictions, e.g. a vegetarian dinner.

CHAPTER 2
CULTURAL CONTEXT

2.1 Definition of Culture

Culture comes from Latin *cultura*, means cultivation. Culture has been defined in various ways in different disciplines. For instance, one definition says that culture is "a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life"

Another definition suggests that culture is what people "must know in order to *act* as they do, *make* the things they make, and *interpret* their experience in the distinctive way they do"

According to Bloch (1991), culture, which is an important area of anthropological research, can be defined as that which people must know in order to function reasonably effectively in their social environment.

The same is true for a culture. That which we can easily see, the external part of a culture including behavior, clothing, food, is the smallest part. Meanwhile the internal part, including beliefs, values, norms, and attitude, is beneath the water level of awareness. It is inside people's heads. In every society there is a set of cultural beliefs which in large measure defines the implicit culture of that society and set if off from another

society. The belief system of a society includes all the cognition namely ideas, knowledge, superstitions, myths, and legend, shared by most members of society.

Cultural norms are rules of standard behavior accepted by members of society. Norms are divided into folkways and mores. Norms are called folkways when conformity to them is not considered vital to the welfare of the group and when the means of enforcing conformity is not very clearly defined. In American folkways specifies that on formal occasion, a man should wears a tie. The punishment of this conformity is that he may be flowned upon,or talked about.

Value is a collection of guiding principles; what one deems to be correct and desirable in life. Cultures have values that are largely shared by their members, which identify what should be judged as good or evil. Values tend to influence attitudes and behavior. For example, American values human equality.

Social environment consists of social organizations and behaviors that are the instruments through which people relate to each other. Although it is difficult to define precisely what is meant by the term "culture," what is clear from all the attempts at defining it is that culture is both historic and immediate; it shapes action—verbal as well as a variety ofother actions—

and in turn is shaped by them. It is a dynamic process rather than a static, monolithic entity with a stable existence. It is equally difficult to define what is meant by the term **society**.

For example, Examples of such groups are parents and children, teachers and students, employers and employees, etc.

Human actions, including verbal interactions, take place in institutions defined by societies, such as the institutions of family, workplace, education, worship, and others.

2.2. Types of Culture

The word ―culture‖ doesn't mean just national culture, but the whole range of different types of culture. These include:

1. Corporate culture (for example, the culture of Apple, Microsoft)
2. Professional culture (for example, the culture of doctors, lawyers)
3. Gender (different cultures of men and women)
4. Age (the different cultures of young, middle-aged, and old-people)
5. Religious culture (for example, Catholicism, Islam, Budha)
6. Regional culture (for example, Western, Eastern)
7. Class culture (for example, working class, middle class, upper class)

2.3 Cultural Patterns of Behavior

Cultures have widely characteristics, but such patterns for living according to some anthropologists have universal characteristics. George Peter Murdock in Tomasow (1986) mentions seven cultural patterns of behavior, namely:

1. They originate in the human mind.

2. They facilitate human and environmental interactions.

2.4 CONTEXT AND CONTEXT OF SITUATION

According to Firth (1957a, p. 182), "context of situation" is best used as a suitable schematic construct to apply to language events. He suggests the following categories to relate "context of situation" to "language events":

 a. The relevant features of participants: persons, personalities.

i. The verbal action of the participants.

ii. The non-verbal action of the participants.

b. The relevant objects.

c. The effect of the verbal action.

For instance, in a classroom situation, both teachers and pupils engage in speaking (e.g. both teachers and pupils ask questions and give answers). The verbal interaction involves objects, such as books, chalk, blackboard, etc., and actions such as raising hands, opening books, pointing at a pupil, writing on the blackboard, etc.

A similar approach is found in Hymes (1964, 1974) where further details of context are specified.

For instance, the notions of **speech situation** (which may comprise both verbal and non-verbal events, e.g. a ceremony or a hunt) and **speech event** ("activities, or aspects of activities that are directly governed by rules or norms for the use of speech," e.g. a church service) are relevant for a sociolinguistic description.

Components of speech include:

    a) **message form** ("how things are said," e.g. the linguistic form of the utterance including silence),

    b) **message content** ("what is being talked about," e.g. topic)

    c) **setting** (place and time of the event and the non-verbal actions of the participants)

    d) **scene** (psychological setting, e.g. informal/formal, serious/ festive)

    e) **participants**, including speaker, addressor, addressee, and audience, i.e. person(s) other than the addressee(s), purposes, including outcomes and goals (what the participants intended to achieve as a result of the communicative event),

f) **key** (evaluation of message form, e.g. as mock/ serious, perfunctory/painstaking),

g) **channels** (e.g. speech, writing, smoke signals, drum beats),

h) **forms of speech** (e.g. language, dialect, code, variety), norms of interaction (rules that govern speaking in a community),

i) **norms of interpretation** (how certain behaviors, including verbal behaviors such as hesitation, are interpreted within or across communities),

j) **genre** (e.g.poem, myth, tale, riddle, curse, chanting).

For instance, the following signal two different meanings:

A: Is he at home?

B: Is he at his residence?

Just the difference in the use of the lexical items *home* vs. *his residence* signals the difference between intimate vs. a more formal domain.

They are therefore able to understand texts by "supplying" the missing components in speech when faced with a piece of text such as the following exchange:

A: Don't you have to go to school tomorrow morning?

B: I just have one more math problem to solve.

2.5 CONTEXTUAL

One can infer several contextual features from this. One set of inferences may be that B is a student, and A is either a parent, or a caregiver. B is still young enough for the caregiver to suggest when (s)he should go to bed, but not

young enough to be ordered to go to bed.

For example, a change in the participants' age and relationship will lead to a difference in message form, e.g. if both A and B were college roommates, the following rather than may be a possible interaction:

A: What time do you have to go to the class tomorrow?
B: I just have one more short chapter to read.

According to Sanford and Garrod (1981) knowledge of settings and situations may be thought of as constituting the interpretive scenario behind a text. To the extent that a piece of text invokes an appropriate scenario for a reader/ listener, it is interpreted successfully. For example, a text that mentions going to a restaurant invokes a scenario in which waiters, menus, seating, etc. play a role.

Some examples may make the applicability of these concepts clearer. For instance, the following exchange between a foreign visitor and a native host in the USA may prove problematic for the foreigner unless (s)he has the relevant background knowledge,

i.e. (s)he is aware of the holidays in the USA:

> Visitor: I was thinking of cashing in some cheques on Thursday.
>
> Host: Thursday is Thanksgiving.

The host's utterance indicates that "Thanksgiving" is part of the background knowledge that a speaker of American English possesses. What the visitor is expected to infer is that the banks will be closed on Thursday, so his/her plans will have to be revised. If the visitor has never heard of Thanksgiving, obviously, the American host's utterance is a puzzle for him/her.

2.6 CULTURE, CONTEXT OF SITUATION, AND LANGUAGE USE

The concepts discussed above are all invoked in discussing language use and usually, one comes across generalizations that apply to oppositions A great deal of caution needs to be exercised when we make generalizations about cultures with reference to nations or regions. It is as important to be aware of the differences between smaller groups—based on age, gender,

ethnicity, profession, etc.—when we discuss verbal interaction within or across such groups as it is when we generalize across national or regional cultural contexts. It is common to speak of "American Culture" or "European culture" or "Japanese culture" as though every individual from these regions instantiates all the conventions of behavior associated with these labels. The associations between cultures and behavior are usually formed by what one learns from scholarly sources, e.g. anthropological or sociological descriptions, or popular sources, such as travelogues or folklore. No matter whether the descriptions are based on careful observations or casual impressions, broad generalizations are just that. Meticulous ethnographic studies detail how groups, subgroups, professional networks, and other units of human society—too many to list exhaustively—have their characteristic behavior patterns, including linguistic behavior

CHAPTER 3
CULTURE COMMUNICATION INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

3. 1 Culture and Communication

The term "culture" refers to the complex collection of knowledge, folklore, language, rules, rituals, habits, lifestyles, attitudes, beliefs, and customs that link and give a common identity to a particular group of people at a specific point in time.

All social units develop a culture. Even in two-person relationships, a culture develops over time. In friendship and romantic relationships, for example, partners develop their own history, shared experiences, language patterns, rituals, habits, and customs that give that relationship a special character—a character that differentiates it in various ways from other relationships. Examples might include special dates, places, songs, or events that come to have a unique and important symbolic meaning for two individuals.

Groups also develop cultures, composed of the collection of rules, rituals, customs, and other characteristics that give an identity to the social unit. For example, issues such as where a group traditionally meets, whether meetings begin on time or not, what topics are discussed, how decisions are made, and

how the group socializes become defining and differentiating elements of the group's culture.

Organizations also have cultures, often apparent in particular patterns of dress, layout of workspaces, meeting styles and functions, ways of thinking about and talking about the nature and directions of the organization, leadership styles, and so on.

The most rich and complex cultures are those that are associated with a society or a nation, and the term "culture" is most commonly used to refer to these characteristics, including language and language-usage patterns, rituals, rules, and customs. A societal or national culture also includes such elements as significant historical events and characters, philosophies of government, social customs, family practices, religion, economic philosophies and practices, belief and value systems, and concepts and systems of law.

Thus, any social unit—whether a relationship, group, organization, or society—develops a culture over time. While the defining characteristics—or combination of characteristics—of each culture are unique, all cultures share certain common functions. Three such functions that are particularly important from a communication perspective are (1) linking individuals to one another, (2) providing the basis for a common identity, and (3) creating a context for interaction and negotiation among members.

The Relationship between Communication and Culture

Cultures are created through communication; that is, communication is the means of human interaction through which cultural characteristics (customs, roles, rules, rituals, laws, or other patterns) are created and shared. Cultures are a natural by-product of social interaction. In a sense, cultures are the "residue" of social communication. Without communication and communication media, it would be impossible to preserve and pass along cultural characteristics from one place and time to another. One can say, therefore, that culture is created, shaped, transmitted, and learned through communication. The reverse is also the case; that is, communication practices are largely created, shaped, and transmitted by culture.

The communication-culture relationship has to be approached in terms of ongoing communication processes rather than a single communication event. While communicating, the members of a group bring with them individual thought and behavioral patterns from previous communication experiences and from other cultures of which they are, or have been, a part. As individuals start to engage in communication with the other members of the group, they begin to create a set of shared experiences and ways of talking about them. If the group continues to interact, a set of distinguishing history, patterns, customs, and rituals will evolve. New members would in turn influence the group culture as they become a part of it. In a reciprocal fashion, this reshaped

culture shapes the communication practices of current and future group members. This is true with any culture; communication shapes culture, and culture shapes communication.

Characteristics of Culture

Edward Hall (1959, 1979) is one of the most significant contributors to the general understanding of the complexity of culture and the importance of communication to understanding and dealing with cultural differences at the societal level.

There are several key characteristics of cultures that must be taken into account:

1. Cultures are subjective. There is a tendency to assume that the elements of one's own cultures are logical and make good sense. It follows that if other cultures—whether of relationships, groups, organizations, or societies—look different, those differences are often considered to be negative, illogical, and sometimes nonsensical. People who are used to informal meetings of a group might think that adherence to formal meeting rules is strange and stilted. Employees in an organization where suits are worn every day may react with cynicism and questioning when they enter an organization where casual attire is standard practice. With regard to culture, the tendency for many people is to

equate "different" with "wrong," even though all cultural elements come about through essentially identical communication processes.

2. Cultures change over time. In fact, cultures are ever changing—though the change is sometimes very slow and imperceptible. Many forces influence cultural change. Simce cultures are created through communication, it is also through communication between individuals that cultures change over time. Each person involved in a communication encounter brings the sum of his or her own experiences from other (past or present) culture memberships. In one sense, any encounter between individuals in new relationships, groups, organizations, or societies is an intercultural communication event, and these varying cultural encounters influence the individual and the cultures over time. Travel and communication technologies greatly accelerate the movement of messages from one cultural context to another, and in small and large ways, cultures come to influence one another through communication. Phrases such as "melting pot," "world community," and "global village" speak to the inevitability of intercultural influence and change.

3. Cultures are largely invisible. Much of what characterizes cultures of relationships, groups, organizations, or societies is invisible to its members. Language, of course, is visible, as are greeting conventions, special symbols, places, and spaces. However, the special and defining meanings that these symbols, greetings, places, and spaces have for individuals in a culture are far

less visible. Consequently, opportunities to "see" culture and the dynamic relationship that exists between culture and communication are few. Two such opportunities do occur when there are violations of cultural conventions or when there is cross-cultural contact.

When someone violates an accepted cultural convention, ritual, or custom - for example, by speaking in a foreign language, standing closer than usual while conversing, or discussing topics that are typically not discussed openly the other members of the culture become aware that something inappropriate is occurring. When "normal" cultural practices are occurring, members of the culture think little of it, but when violations occur, the members are reminded of the pervasive role that culture has on daily life.

When visiting other groups, organizations, and, especially, other societies, people are often confronted by—and therefore become aware of— different customs, rituals, and conventions. These situations often are associated with some awkwardness, as the people strive to understand and sometimes to adapt to the characteristics of the new culture. In these circumstances, again, one gains a glimpse of "culture" and the processes by which people create and adapt to culture.

4. Cultures are influenced by media. All institutions within society facilitate communication, and in that way, they all contribute to the creation, spread, and evolution of culture. However, communication media such as television,

film, radio, newspapers, compact discs, magazines, computers, and the Internet play a particularly important role. Because media extend human capacities for creating, duplicating, transmitting, and storing messages, they also extend and amplify culture-building activities. By means of such communication technology, messages are transmitted across time and space, stored, and later retrieved and used. Television programs, films, websites, video games, and compact discs are created through human activity—and therefore reflect and further extend the cultural perspectives of their creators. They come to take on a life of their own, quite distinct and separate from their creators, as they are transmitted and shared around the increasingly global community.

5. Cultures depend on communication. Understanding the nature of culture in relationship to communication is helpful in a number of ways. First, it helps to explain the origin of differences between the practices, beliefs, values, and customs of various groups and societies, and it provides a reminder of the communication process by which these differences came into being. This knowledge can and should heighten people's tolerance for cultural differences. Second, it helps to explain the process that individuals go through in adapting to new relationships, groups, organizations, and societies and the cultures of each. Third, it underscores the importance of communication as a bridge between cultures and as a force behind cultural change.

6. Cultures are shaped by communication. A number of questions also concern researchers and policymakers in this area. As communication increases between individuals, groups, and countries, does this mean that cultural differences and traditions will inevitably erode altogether? Will the cultures of individuals from groups, organizations, and societies that have great access to and control of communication media overpower those in cultures that have fewer resources and less access and control? Can knowledge be used to help individuals more comfortably and effectively adapt to new relationships, groups, organizations, and societies? The importance of these issues makes this area an important one for continued examination by scholars and practitioners.

Cross-cultural Communication Challenges

We all communicate with others all the time -- in our homes, in our workplaces, in the groups we belong to, and in the community. No matter how well we think we understand each other, communication is hard. "Culture" is often at the root of communication challenges. Our culture influences how we approach problems, and how we participate in groups and in communities. When we participate in groups we are often surprised at how differently people approach their work together.

As people from different cultural groups take on the exciting challenge of working together, cultural values sometimes conflict. We can misunderstand each other, and react in ways that can hinder what are otherwise promising partnerships. Oftentimes, we aren't aware that culture is acting upon us. Sometimes, we are not even aware that we have cultural values or assumptions that are different from others'. Therefore we should be aware that cultural differences do exist and influence the way we communicate.

Anthropologists Kevin Avruch and Peter Black explain the importance of culture this way:

"...One's own culture provides the "lens" through which we view the world; the "logic"... by which we order it; the "grammar" ... by which it makes sense. (...) In other words, culture is central to what we see, how we make sense of what we see, and how we express ourselves."

There are Six Fundamental Patterns of Cultural Difference :

1. Different Communications Styles

2. Different Attitudes Toward Conflict

3. Different Approaches to Completing Tasks

4. Different Decision-Making Styles

5. Different Attitudes Toward Disclosure

6. Different Approaches to Knowing

By describing them, we can more easily be aware of the causes of cross-cultural communication difficulties.

1. *Different Communication Styles*

The way people communicate varies widely between, and even within, cultures. One aspect of communication style is language usage. Across cultures, some words and phrases are used in different ways. For example, even in countries that share the English language, the meaning of "yes" varies from "maybe, I'll consider it" to "definitely so," with many shades in between.

Another major aspect of communication style is the degree of importance given to non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication includes not only facial expressions and gestures; it also involves seating arrangements, personal distance, and sense of time. In addition, different norms regarding the appropriate degree of assertiveness in communicating can add to cultural misunderstandings. For instance, some people typically consider raised voices to be a sign that a fight has begun, while others often feel that an increase in volume is a sign of an exciting conversation among friends. Thus, some may react with greater alarm to a loud discussion than others.

2. *Different Attitudes Toward Conflict*

Some cultures view conflict as a positive thing, while others view it as something to be avoided. In the U.S., conflict is not usually desirable; but

people often are encouraged to deal directly with conflicts that do arise. In fact, face-to-face meetings customarily are recommended as the way to work through whatever problems exist. In contrast, in many Eastern countries, open conflict is experienced as embarrassing or demeaning; as a rule, differences are best worked out quietly. A written exchange might be the favored means to address the conflict.

3. Different Approaches to Completing Tasks

From culture to culture, there are different ways that people move toward completing tasks. Some reasons include different access to resources, different judgments of the rewards associated with task completion, different notions of time, and varied ideas about how relationship-building and task-oriented work should go together.

When it comes to working together effectively on a task, cultures differ with respect to the importance placed on establishing relationships early on in the collaboration. A case in point, Asian and Hispanic cultures tend to attach more value to developing relationships at the beginning of a shared project and more emphasis on task completion toward the end as compared with European-Americans. European-Americans tend to focus immediately on the task at hand, and let relationships develop as they work on the task. This does not mean that people from any one of these cultural backgrounds are more or

less committed to accomplishing the task, or value relationships more or less; it means they may pursue them differently.

4. *Different Decision-Making Styles*

The roles individuals play in decision-making vary widely from culture to culture. For example, in the U.S., decisions are frequently delegated -- that is, an official assigns responsibility for a particular matter to a subordinate. In many Southern European and Latin American countries, there is a strong value placed on holding decision-making responsibilities oneself. When decisions are made by groups of people, majority rule is a common approach in the U.S.; in Japan consensus is the preferred mode.

5. *Different Attitudes Toward Disclosure*

In some cultures, it is not appropriate to be frank about emotions, about the reasons behind a conflict or a misunderstanding, or about personal information. When you are dealing with a conflict, be mindful that people may differ in what they feel comfortable revealing. Questions that may seem natural to you -- What was the conflict about? What was your role in the conflict? What was the sequence of events? -- may seem intrusive to others.

6. Different Approaches to Knowing

Notable differences occur among cultural groups when it comes to epistemologies -- that is, the ways people come to know things. European cultures tend to consider information acquired through cognitive means, such as counting and measuring, more valid than other ways of coming to know things. Compare that to African cultures' preference for affective ways of knowing, including symbolic imagery and rhythm. Asian cultures' epistemologies tend to emphasize the validity of knowledge gained through striving toward transcendence.

These different approaches to knowing could affect ways of analyzing a community problem or finding ways to resolve it. Some members of your group may want to do library research to understand a shared problem better and identify possible solutions. Others may prefer to visit places and people who have experienced challenges like the ones you are facing, and get a feeling for what has worked elsewhere.

Respecting Our Differences and Working Together

In addition to helping us to understand ourselves and our own cultural frames of reference, knowledge of these six patterns of cultural difference can help us to understand the people who are different from us. An appreciation of

patterns of cultural difference can assist us in processing what it means to be different in ways that are respectful of others, not faultfinding or damaging.

Anthropologists Avruch and Black have noted that, when faced by an interaction that we do not understand, people tend to interpret the others involved as "abnormal," "weird," or "wrong." This tendency gives rise on the individual level to prejudice. Consequently, it is vital that we learn to control the human tendency to translate "different from me" into "less than me." We can learn to do this.

We can also learn to collaborate across cultural lines as individuals and as a society. Awareness of cultural differences doesn't have to divide us from each other. It doesn't have to paralyze us either, for fear of not saying the "right thing." In fact, becoming more aware of our cultural differences, as well as exploring our similarities, can help us communicate with each other more effectively. Recognizing where cultural differences are at work is the first step toward understanding and respecting each other.

Learning about different ways that people communicate can enrich our lives. People's different communication styles reflect deeper philosophies and world views which are the foundation of their culture. Understanding these deeper philosophies gives us a broader picture of what the world has to offer us.

Learning about people's cultures has the potential to give us a mirror image of our own. We have the opportunity to challenge our assumptions about the "right" way of doing things, and consider a variety of approaches. We have a chance to learn new ways to solve problems that we had previously given up on, accepting the difficulties as "just the way things are."

Lastly, if we are open to learning about people from other cultures, we become less lonely. Prejudice and stereotypes separate us from whole groups of people who could be friends and partners in working for change. Many of us long for real contact. Talking with people different from ourselves gives us hope and energizes us to take on the challenge of improving our communities and worlds.

CHAPTER 4
VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Communication is the transfer of information from one person to another. In other words we can say communication as the exchange of ideas, information, etc. between two or more people. Most of us spend about 75 percent of our waking hours communicating our knowledge, thoughts, and ideas to others.

There are three major types of communication, namely visual, verbal or dialog, and von-verbal communication.. Visual communication, as the name suggests, is communication through visual aids. It is the transmission of ideas and information in forms that can be read or looked upon.

Dialog or verbal communication is a conversation between two or more entities in which they use their speech organs to convey a message.

Non-verbal communication is the process of communicating through sending and receiving wordless messages. Non-verbal communication can be divided into 4 parts namely body language (kinesics), eye contact (oculistics), touch (haptics), body distance (proxemics), paralangue, and turn taking.

4.1. Body Language (Kinesics)

Body language is a significant aspect of modern communications and relationships. Body language can be defined as the conscious and unconscious

movements and postures by which attitudes and feelings are communicated. It goes both ways:

Your own body language reveals your feelings and meanings to others. Other people's body language reveals their feelings and meanings to you.

Body language, and more technically the study of body language, is also known as kinesics, which is derived from the Greek word *kinesis*, meaning motion. This includes body movement, body position, facial expression, as well as dress.

4.2. Body movement (gesture)

Body languages allow individuals to communicate a variety of feelings and thoughts, from contempt and hostility to approval and affection, often together with body language in addition to spoken words. The most familiar categories of body language are the so-called emblems or quotable gestures. These are conventional, culture-specific body language that can be used as replacement for words, such as the handwave used in the U.S. for "hello" and "goodbye". Body languages are a crucial part of everyday conversation such as chatting, describing a route, or negotiating prices on a market etc. One of the most frequently observed, but least understood cue is a hand movement. Most people use hand movements regularly when talking. It can indicate a particular meaning, feeling or intention. The same gestures can mean different things to people from different cultures. Nodding head means —ýes‖ or understanding

in many countries. In other places such as Genovia, nodding head means ‗no‖ .

In some Australian Aboriginal cultures, it is disrespectful to look an elder, superior, in the eyes. It is a sign of respect to drop the eyes, (whereas in Western culture not meeting somebody's gaze is commonly considered to be a negative sign, indicating deceit, lying, lack of attention, lack of confidence, etc).

One of the most frequently observed, but least understood cue is a hand movement. Most people use hand movements regularly when talking. It can indicate a particular meaning, feeling or intention.

This category includes:

Salute: The salute is a formal greeting where the open hand is brought up to the forehead. It is often used in the military in a strictly prescribed manner and in specific situations.

Bowing: Bowing is another formal greeting and can be as extreme as a full 90 degree bend from the waist to even Bowing and its variants place the person into a lower rank than the person who receives the greeting and into a position of greater vulnerability.

Waving: Waving can be done from a distance. This allows for greeting when you first spot another person. Waves call attention and a big, overhead wave can attract a person's attention from some distance. This also makes others look at you and is not likely from a timid person. A stationary palm, held up and

facing out is far less obvious and may be flashed for a short period, particularly if the other person is looking at you (all you need is that he or she sees the greeting).

Another familiar body language are using fingers. Same as body movement, fingers communicate many things. Here are some of the gestures:

O.K Gesture: When you put your index finger on your thumb, in America and England it means everything is well or good. In Latin America, Germany, Middle East, and France, it is a sign of insult.
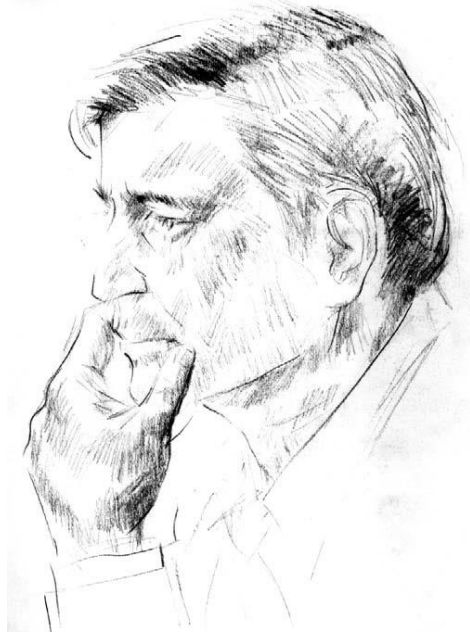
Thumbs Up: In America or Europe, it's a sign of approval or hitchhiking. In America when a person stands near the road and uses this sign, it means s/he wants to take a free ride in your car, so you will stop and pick up the person.

CHAPTER 5
THE ASIAN CONTEXT

Asian ELT professionals rely on American and British dictionaries of English such as Longman's, Merriam Webster's, and Oxford. The teachers and learners are used to norms presented in these dictionaries and as mature users of the language, they rely on their prior experience. However, they are also aware of the local norms of usage and are familiar with words and expressions that even highly educated people in their own community use regularly. These local words and expressions, of course, are not always listed in the dictionaries they are familiar with. The dilemma that they face is whether to consider the local items legitimate and acceptable in educated English.

One way of deciding what is legitimate and acceptable is to follow the suggestion that local items that occur frequently in a wide range of domains and are used by speakers of all educational levels are legitimate and acceptable in that local variety of English. For instance, items such as *salvage* ("to kill in cold blood") and *studentry* "the student body" are part of Philippine English; *follow* "to accompany" and *weekend cars* "cars which can be driven only after 7 pm and before 7 am on weekdays, after 1 pm on Saturdays and the whole of Sundays and public holidays" (Ho, 1992) are in the lexicon of Singapore English; *boy* "waiter,"

lathi-charge "charge with baton by the police," and *cousin sister/brother* are part of Indian English

There are, of course, items that are used by those who have minimal competence in English in the Outer and Expanding Circle contexts. Various conceptualizations have been adopted in the case of the variants in a particular variety that are sub-standard or non-standard. For example, some researchers have talked about a *lectal* range describe three reference points on a continuum in the context of Singapore English: acrolect (educated variety), mesolect (colloquial), and basilect (uneducated non-standard). In the realm of cline of bilingualism, one end of the cline represents the educated variety whereas at the other end are varieties such as Nigerian Pidgin

In addition to the above, there are items that occur infrequently, e.g. in literary texts in specific contexts. It has not been customary to consider such items worth listing in dictionaries (see Pakir, 1992 for discussions of these considerations in the context of Singapore English). On the other hand, there are items that have restricted use, that is, they are used in specific registers. Good examples are items such as the following in Indian English: *collector* (in the administrative register for a government official

who is responsible for revenue collection in a district), *sacred thread* (in the context of caste), *Vedanta* (a system of philosophy), and *satyagraha* "passive resistance" (political register). Such specialized terms which are widely used in their respective domains are normally included in any dictionary of the relevant variety.

Familiar items from "mother" (Inner Circle) English have undergone changes in the Other Circle varieties, e.g. *salvage* in Philippine English and *follow* in Singapore English. Items change their grammatical categorization, too, as is evident from the extensive use of collective nouns as countable in almost all Outer Circle varieties. Forms such as *furnitures*, *equipments*, *informations*, and *evidences* are attested in African, Philippine, Singapore, South

Asian, and Southeast Asian varieties. As there is still a lingering resistance to indigenous norms in many parts of the English-using world, there is uneasiness about such "ungrammatical" usages. However, as Lowenberg (1992) has shown, Inner Circle Englishes are not always consistent in the treatment of collective nouns, either. The whole notion of countability is not very well grammaticized in English.

5. 1 PROCESSES OF NATIVIZATION

People in Africa, Asia, and other parts of the world often need to express themselves through the medium of English. Inner Circle Englishes, such as American and British, are not always adequate for such purposes. Words may be adapted to convey some meanings, but there are concepts that are not lexicalized in English. For example, class distinctions exist in Inner Circle English-speaking societies, but there is no institution comparable to caste.

Meanings that need to be expressed in local contexts demand the nativization of English. Early examples of this process can be seen in British English as used by the British in India, and American English as it developed in North America. The British imported items such as *shampoo*, *chintz*, *brahmin*, *sacred cow*, and other items into the English language to represent new objects and concepts as a result of contact with India. In order to use English in the changed context of the North American continent, a large number of items were adopted from various sources in American English, including Native

The examples cited above make it clear that borrowing items from an indigenous source language is one device that is used for nativization of a language in a new situation. Thus, Indian English has a sizable vocabulary borrowed from Indian languages, Singaporean English from Chinese and

Malay, Philippine English from Tagalog and other local languages, Nigerian English from Yoruba, Igbo, and others, and so on. Such borrowings are not restricted only to items such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc. Rather, items that signal interactional meanings in conversational exchange and others that play a role in discourse may also be borrowed. One good example is that of the particle *la* in Singaporean-Malyasian English

Definition: Impossible at this point. Pragmatic meanings include codemarking, emotive-marking, contrast marking. It serves the functions of conveying obviousness, softening the harshness of an imperative or an explanation, dismissing the importance of an item on a list, deflecting compliments, etc.Etymology: Chinese languages found in Singapore, and Malay.

Usage note: Use of *la* would indicate that solidarity and familiarity levels are high. All speakers of SgE use *la* in their informal conversation.

Most Englishes have new items that have been coined for various local purposes. Users of English in Singapore and Malaysia may characterize one as *actsy* "conceited, proud" in African English one may talk about *destooling* "removing from a position of power" a dictator; *detach* someone to indicate

to second some official to another department; in Philippine English one may disapprove of someone's *blueseal* "foreign girlfriend"; in Indian English a college student may boast of his/her *fight* meaning (s)he gave something his/her best shot. Productive derivational processes may be used in ways that are not attested in Inner Circle Englishes, e.g. *installment* and *instalmentally* in Cameroon English or *prepone* in South Asian English. Compounding in novel ways is also very productive, e.g. *downpress* "oppress," *overstand* "understand" in Jamaican, *grey area* "area where people of all races live or work," and *Old Year's night* "New Year's Eve" in South African English Increasingly most varieties use their own characteristic abbreviations, at least in speech, that are hard to process across varieties. Singapore- Malaysian Englishes have items such as *air con* "air conditioning," Philippine and Indian English have items such as *funda* "fundamental," Indian English

CHAPTER 6
CONVERSATIONAL AND
WRITING STYLES

Effective communication requires **competence** in language and **capacity** to utilize linguistic competence in expressing one's intended meaning (Widdowson, 1984).

In this part of the book, we focus on how the capacity to use English in the oral and written modes differs across cultures.

6.1 CONVERSATION

Conversational interactions in different varieties of English display different styles depending upon the sociocultural context in which they take place. In the multilingual and multicultural context of Outer and Expanding Circle varieties, English is used in conversational interactions in ways that do not meet with the expectations of the speakers of the Inner Circle varieties.

Conversational Interaction

Conversation is an activity relevant to all domains of human interaction. It is through conversation that social structure is instituted and

maintained, and humans enact their social roles through conversation more than any other

behavior. It is not very surprising that conversation analysis as a subfield of research had its beginnings in the works of sociologists, who established that conversation, in turn, has its own structure. In order to describe the structure of conversation in the Outer and Expanding Circle varieties of English, we need a vocabulary to refer to activities that take place in face-to-face verbal interaction. We discuss the required concepts first; subsequently, we point out some of the observed crosscultural differences in the organization of conversation.

Two types of activities take place in conversation: the first relates to how the interaction is managed; the second relates to what is being conveyed or negotiated between the participants. The first has been termed interactive acts (Widdowson, 1979, p. 138). The second type of activity involves those aspects of conversational interaction that are discussed under the notions of speech acts, the Gricean cooperative principle, and politeness as discussed in Chapter 2. All these are relevant to a discussion of conversational styles in the new varieties of English. In addition, issues of identity play a major role in any interaction that involves participants from varied backgrounds.

5.2 ORGANIZATION OF CONVERSATIONAL INTERACTION

When two people engage in a conversation, both do not usually speak at the same time. Normally, first one speaks and then the other. This way of organizing speaking has been called "turn-taking"

Schegloff (1968, p. 1076) describes the general rule of conversational exchange in American English as "one party at a time." Normally, when a speaker completes a "turn," (s)he indicates the completion by displaying a "turn signal," which is accomplished through the occurrence of "cues" (Duncan, 1980, p. 69) such as intonation, the utterance of expressions such as "you know," "or something," etc., termination of a gesture, a lengthening of the final syllable, or a stressed syllable in the last part of the utterance, etc. Another concept useful in describing conversation is that of "floor" (Edelsky, 1981). Floor refers to the right to begin to talk, or make a first statement. Turn-taking mechanisms determine when the next speaker takes the floor in a conversational exchange. Floor has some duration in an interaction and is related to topical content, so that normally the floor is occupied by the participant who controls the topic. The participant who initiates and continues to talk about the topic of conversation has the primary floor, and others, who may contribute to subtopics within the conversation, have the secondary floor (Edelsky, 1981). Speakers utilize sets of specific devices and strategies to gain the right to speak (or, to

acquire the floor), hold onto their turn in order to talk about the topic or subtopic of their speech (or, to maintain the floor), and signal to their conversational partner to take his/her turn (or, to relinquish the floor). While one participant speaks, the other participant usually indicates that (s)he is attending to the speaker's utterances by giving backchannel (Yngve, 1970) cues such as "uh-huh," "yeah", "right," etc. Some backchannel cues overlap with a speaker's turn, others signal as "moves" by functioning as requests for turn, and thereby interrupt the current speaker's turn. This happens in some situations. In other situations, however, more than one participant engages in simultaneous talk without causing any interruption and discomfort in face-to-face interaction. In addition to signaling attention, backchannel cues encourage the speaker to continue to speak by indicating that (s)he still has the floor (see pp. 122–123). Conventions of turn-taking, frequency of and overlap in backchannel cues, simultaneous talk, and acquiring, maintaining, and relinquishing the floor, all differ from culture to culture, and are being investigated. We will look at some of these differences in the following pages.

6.3 Turn

The term *turn* indicates both the opportunity to assume the role of speaker and what is said by him/her as a speaker (Schegloff, 1968; Schegloff and Sacks, 1973). Sacks *et al.* (1974) propose a system of turn-taking in conversation

that regulates conversational exchanges. It has already been mentioned that the convention regarding

turn-taking in American English is "one party at a time." This is true of the British and other Inner Circle varieties of English in general. Children are taught not to interrupt and wait for their turn to speak in multi-party conversations even within the family domain. In some speech communities, such as the Hindi speech community in India, the Japanese speech community, and some communities in the Middle East and Eastern Europe, the "one party at a time" rule does not hold. In conversations where more than two participants are involved, the turn-taking behavior is not rigid. Interruptions and simultaneous talk may be quite common in these situations.

Floor

Sacks (1972) defines *floor* as a *ticket*, a right to make a first statement during a conversation. Edelsky (1981) points out the distinction between a turn and a floor by demonstrating that a turn may not constitute a floor, as in the

following example:

A: Did you hear the news?

B: What?

C: Bill is back in town!

In the above exchange, B takes a turn, but not the floor, which still belongs to A, who maintains it in the third line.

Hayashi (1988, p. 273), building on this body of research, defines the concept of floor "with respect to:

(1) who is orienting his/her attention to the on-going conversational content,

(2) who the central figure(s) of the ongoing conversation is/are, and

(3) to whom and where the communicative territory belongs."

It has been observed in American English cross-sex conversations that men are more successful in initiating and maintaining topics than women, and men also tend to demand the floor more frequently than women

In India, conversations between age-different participants, the older participants have the right to initiate conversation, maintain the floor, and yield the floor. Any attempt to interrupt or demand the floor on part of a younger participant is considered rude and insulting behavior.

In traditional Western European communities, children were admonished that they were meant to be seen, not heard. In many cultures, in certain contexts, only older males have the right to speak, and therefore, they initiate, maintain, and control the floor.

6.4 Simultaneous Talk

It has already been mentioned that although backchannel cues overlap with talk, they are not perceived as interruptions. Talk by another participant that overlaps for a considerable period with a current speaker, however, is

perceived as an interruption in American and British Englishes. In order to discuss simultaneous talk, we need to discuss rhythmicity and synchronization of talk by different participants briefly.

Rhythmic coordination: This refers to patterning in speech and non-verbal body movements, both within the speaker and between speakers, that participants in conversation exhibit in interaction. Research has shown that a sense of smooth and successful verbal interaction results from the participants' coordination of their rhythmic patterning.

Sync talk: One noticeable difference between American and Japanese conversation is the phenomenon of sync talk (Hayashi, 1988). Sync talk is characterized by overlapping speech and synchronized hand movements, head nods, body postures, etc. among the participants in a conversation. All these simultaneous actions are coordinated rhythmically and are in sync

In single floor conversational interaction, there is a marked difference between the American and the Japanese speakers. Americans do not engage in sync talk as frequently as the Japanese do, and even when do, they synchronize in a far less active manner. Their hand movements, head nods, etc. are much less pronounced than the Japanese

High involvement style: It is important to remember that overlap or simultaneous talk is attested in American English

In contrast, in what she terms high-considerateness style, the rate of speech is slow, interactants wait for their turn, and the end of a turn is signaled by a pause. The latter style does not tolerate simultaneous talk, which is perceived as interruption.

The strategies used to indicate agreement or disagreement by speakers of Indian English in interaction.

1.   A: Do you think it (wife abuse) is common?

B: In India? In rural families this is common.

C: **No, it's common**. Very much common even in very literate families.

There are cases where direct disagreement is expressed and is followed by backing down by the previous speaker in the speech of both male and female speakers:

2.   A: So in your family were you treated differently from your brothers in other ways?

B: **No, not in other ways, but yeah yes I was**. They didn't allow me.

The conversation between two Maori speakers of English illustrates such transfer

> Rewi : Tikitiki//well we're\across the river from there and
>
> Ngata : /**ae** ["yes"]\\
>
> Rewi : if we wanted to go to Tikitiki we had to go right around to Ruatoria and back out again
>
> Ngata : that's right yeah oh well we actually went right around to Ruatoria and down we didn't cross across ++ **te awa rere haere te- too koutou taniwha I teeraa waa** ["the river flowed over the taniwha (a legendary monster which resides in deep water) there"]
>
> Rewi : in winter **eh**

The use of *ae* to indicate agreement, switch to Maori in Ngata's second turn, and Rewi's use of the particle *eh* to elicit confirmation are all devices that affirm the two interlocutors' in-group membership and

solidarity. Similar strategies are employed by the two Malaysian young women in the following piece of conversation

Khadijah : *Eh* Mala, where on earth you went ah? I searching, searching all over the place for you—no sign till one o'clock, so I *pun* got hungry, I went for *makan*.

Mala : You were *makaning* where? My sister, she said she saw you near Globes—when we were searching for parking space. . . . Went roun(d) and roun(d) nearly six times *pun* [also], no place. That's why so late *lah*!

Khadijah : So you ate or not?

Mala : Not yet *lah*—just nibbled some "kari paps" [curry puffs] at about eleven, so not really hungry.

There are several items from the Malay language in the above excerpt; the particles *eh* and *lah* are especially noteworthy as they perform several functions

CHAPTER 7
SOUNDS AND RHYTHIM

7.1 RHYTHMIC PATTERNS

There are patterns of stress, pitch, and loudness that convey specific meanings. Some are universals, e.g. a high level of pitch and increased loudness conveys excitement or signals new information (Chafe, 1972). Others are culture-specific. For example, loudness may convey emphasis in one culture, but aggression in another. A high pitch may be obligatory in speech for certain categories of speakers in one culture, but may be associated with "childish" behavior in another. As has been mentioned earlier, speakers of Inner Circle varieties of English are normally tolerant of what they perceive as "errors" of pronunciation and grammar. For instance, they normally attempt to adjust to features such as the following in the other varieties: simplification of final consonant clusters (e.g. *lef* for *left*), wrong assignment of stress in a word (e.g. *'success* for *su'ccess*), missing articles (e.g. *he gave me tough time*), use of wrong preposition (e.g. *We are ready to eat, go sit* on *the table*), and failure to observe verb agreement patterns (e.g. *That time I see him, he tell me . . .*). Differences in the use of certain other devices, however, create severe problems. Rhythmic patterns of speech are especially problematic.

Stress and intonation in English and other languages are used to signal topic, focus, emphasis, etc., in characteristic ways. These are not subject to correction very easily as they signal speaker intentions. Therefore, certain features of the Outer and Expanding Circle varieties, such as their use of rhythmic patterns, are usually attributed to the personality of the speaker rather than to his or her competence in language. This reaction, of course, is not one-sided. Users of all varieties of English perceive one another as being rude, conceited, untruthful, hesitant, etc., if their utterances are interpretable as such following the conventions of the hearer's use of English. A few examples of interaction where the characteristic features of the Outer and Expanding Circle varieties led to serious problems in interpretation by the speakers of an Inner Circle variety may clarify this point.

The following is a description of how the messages that the speakers of Outer and Expanding Circle varieties wish to convey are coded in terms of the organization of sounds of English and how some of the devices that they use may sometimes result in miscommunication.

7.2 STRESS AND RHYTHM

Consider a constructed example of the rhythmic pattern resulting in miscommunication in the setting of a British bank.

Customer: Excuse me.

Cashier: Yes, sir.

Customer: I want to deposit some **money**.

Cashier: Oh. I see. OK. You'll need a deposit form then.

Customer: Yes. **No, No**. This is the **wrong** one.

Cashier: Sorry?

Customer: I got my account in **Wembley**.

Cashier: Oh you need a Giro form then.

Customer: Yes, Giro form.

Cashier: Why didn't you say so the first time.

Customer: Sorry, Didn't **know**.

Cashier: All right?

Customer: Thank you.

The items that the customer emphasizes are in bold letters. It is obvious that the customer is not a speaker of British English. According to Gumperz *et al.* (1979), the emphasis on *no* and *wrong* in the third exchange of the dialogue gives the wrong signal; it suggests to the cashier that the customer thinks it is his/her fault. The customer's repetition of *Giro form* in the fifth exchange is his/her way of expressing apology, which goes unnoticed and the cashier's irritation is expressed in the same exchange. The sixth exchange is an attempt to repair the damage, but again, the emphasis on *know* gives the wrong signal. The result is that neither participant is very happy.

Contrast the above with (2) below where both the customer and the cashier are speakers of British English:

Customer: Good Morning. I want to **deposit** some money, please.

Cashier: Certainly sir, you'll need a deposit form.

Customer: Thank you very much. Oh no. This is the wrong **one**. My

account is in **Wembley**.

Cashier: Oh I see. In that case you'll need a Giro form, sir. There you are.

Customer: Thank you

Cashier: You're welcome.

The British speaker of English emphasizes *one* rather than *wrong*, and does not have as much pitch variation on *Wembley* as the Indian English speaker (Gumperz et al., 1979, p. 24), therefore, the cashier does not feel s(he) is being blamed for suggesting the wrong form or not knowing where the customer's account is located.

The following information about stress assignment in the Outer and Expanding Circle varieties is useful. Stress assignment in words in these varieties does not follow the rules that operate in the Inner Circle varieties. For instance, word

stress in the Outer and Expanding Circle varieties seems idiosyncratic from the perspective of a speaker of American or British variety; *'success* for *su'ccess* (Nigerian English; henceforth, NE), *recog'nize* for *'recognize* (Indian English; henceforth, IE), etc. Actually, as most such varieties have a syllable-timed rather than a stress-timed rhythm (Bamgbos.e, 1992; B. Kachru, 1983a), it is probably the case that the stress assignment follows the values attached to the **mores** (weight of syllables in terms of duration) in these varieties. This seems to be the case in IE. Since the vowels in the syllables *re*and -*cog*- are short and not as weighty as the diphthong in -*nize*, the primary stress goes with the heavy syllable. Rhythm in these varieties is based on the mores of the syllables; the long syllables are twice as long as the short, but the quality of the vowel in long as well as short syllables remains the same. In case of a word with several long syllables, all the syllables are pronounced long irrespective of their stressed or unstressed character. In Inner Circle varieties of English, the stressed syllable has a longer duration as compared to the unstressed syllable; in fact, the characteristic rhythmic pattern of British

7.3 SOUNDS

In pronunciation, most Outer and Expanding Circle varieties are different from the Inner Circle varieties. They share this characteristic with the regional dialects within the Inner Circle varieties of English. Some of these differences lead to grammatical consequences which affect comprehension.

One such feature is the simplification of final consonant clusters, e.g. *lef* for *left*. By itself, in most contexts, presumably there will be no serious difficulty.

It is noteworthy, however, that this feature leads to a loss of past tense endings on verbs, e.g. *pick* for *picked*, and a loss of plural markers on nouns, *des* for *desks*. There is potential for misunderstanding in such cases. It is worth keeping in mind that this is true not only of the Outer and Expanding Circle varieties, but also of certain varieties of American English, e.g. African-American Vernacular English (see Labov, 1972a). The English sounds that are pronounced differently in the Outer and Expanding Circle varieties are as follows. Consonants and vowels are different as compared to the Inner Circle varieties in the following ways:

> 1. Voiceless plosives, *p*, *t*, *k*, lose their initial aspiration so that the speakers of Inner Circle varieties perceive them often as *b*, *d*, *g*. In colloquial varieties, e.g. Malaysian English (Schneider, 2003, pp. 56–57), the final stop is often replaced by a glottal stop, e.g. *ba'* "back"; *be'* "bet" or "bed."
>
> 2. Fricatives *f v* q ð *s z* « are often replaced by other sounds: *f* by *ph* (IE), *v* by *bh* or *w* (IE), q by *t* (Chinese English or CE, Ghanian English

7.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR CROSSCULTURAL CONVERSATION

Japanese sync talk so that they do not feel uncomfortable by what they perceive to be interruptions. Also, they may feel more comfortable giving more backchannel cues, and adjusting the rate and type of their body movements. Similarly, the Japanese who need to interact with the Americans may be made aware of the turn-taking rule, so that they feel less uncomfortable in reducing the frequency of backchannel cues and making less elaborate body movements to create the ensemble effect.

CHAPTER 8

SPEECH ACTS, COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES, AND POLITENESS

8.1 Speech Acts

It has been established by research that there is no set of speech acts and no set of strategies for performing speech acts such that all languages and cultures share them

Two examples of how it is used in Indian English with the illocutionary forces of assertion and persuasion, respectively, are given below:

"He, brother, what is it all about?"

"Nothing. I think it's about the quarrel between Ramaji and Subbaji. You know about the Cornerstone?"

"But, *on my mother's soul*, I thought they were going to the court?"

The context is that one villager, named Dattopant, is trying to find out what the bailiff's drum meant from another villager, named Sonopant. He

"swears" in order to convince Sonopant that he had a certain piece of information which he thought was true. In the second example, an older sister is scolding a younger brother for arguing with her:

. ". . . And Ramu," she cried desperately, "I have enough of quarrelling all the time.
In the name of our holy mother can't you leave me alone!"

The expression *holy mother* in the above example does not refer to any deity; it refers to the female (biological) parent of the siblings. The sister is trying to persuade her brother to drop the topic they have been arguing about.

The two examples make it clear that the cultural meaning of *saugandh khaanaa* is very different from "to swear" in the Inner Circle English-speaking contexts. The two instances of swearing are interpretable only in the context
of a society or culture that shares the specific meanings with South Asian society and culture

Similar speech acts, for example, expressing gratitude or regret, may differ, depending upon the context. In many cultures, there are no verbal

expressions equivalent to "thank you" or "sorry" of Inner Circle Englishes.as for instance:

a) In Indian languages, elders may bless a child instead of saying "thank you" for rendering some service.

b) In the variety of Mandarin Chinese spoken in Taiwan, a more direct strategy for making requests is adopted as compared to American English

8.2 The Cooperative Principle

➢ In general, in the Inner Circle Englishes, in conversational exchanges and even more so in written communication, it is expected that the speaker/ writer will come directly to the point of interaction after greeting the interlocutor. In many cultures some prefacing is required to satisfy the demands of a polite exchange.

▪ For example, in making a request, one may begin by saying something like, "I am sorry to trouble you . . .," or "Is it permissible for me to ask a favor of you . . ."

➢   even if the purpose of interaction is just elicitation of some ordinary piece of information. This may be perceived as a violation of the Gricean maxim of quantity by a speaker of American English, but will be perceived as polite by South Asian speakers of English. Cultures differ as to what is perceived as being cooperative in social interaction.

➢   In the Inner Circle, talk is highly valued and pauses between turns are short. Any long pause in conversation creates awkwardness and silence is frequently interpreted as either a signal of disagreement or hostility.

8.3 Value of Silence

➢   In many cultures, silence is highly valued and there may be long pauses between turns or even in responding to a question.

▪   For instance,of American and Japanese business discourse reports that an average pause in Japanese meetings is 8.2 seconds long; in the American ones, only 4.6 seconds. More specifically, long pauses in Japanese occur consistently between all topics; in American, only one between topics. The average pause-time to shift topics in Japanese business meetings is 6.5 seconds; in American, it is 1.7 seconds.

➤   In interactions between an elder and a young person in South Asia, silence on the part of the younger person is interpreted as signaling agreement or acceptance of whatever the elder says.

8.4 Politeness

➤   The Japanese culture values group harmony over individual rights, positive face considerations play a greater role in determining politeness than negative face considerations.

> For example, it would be very unlikely that an American parent, when introduced to a son/daughter's professor at a university would request him/her to "keep an eye on him/her."

➤   This would be considered an unreasonable expectation on the part of the parent and an imposition of unjustifiable responsibility on the professor. Such a request would be considered a threat to the professor's negative face. In contrast, a request of this kind would be considered entirely appropriate in Japanese as well as South Asian contexts, since the parent by making such a request displays a high degree of regard and confidence in the professor. A teacher is like a parent and has both the

authority to "discipline" a child and the obligation to make sure the child does not go astray. The request, by affirming the teacher's societal status and rank, satisfies the positive face wants of the interlocutor, and hence is perfectly polite. This would be true in many other cultures, too. As far as the son/daughter is concerned, (s)he may be offended by the parents' lack of confidence in him/her in the American context; in the Asian context, it will be interpreted as the usual parental concern and no reflection on the child's maturity.

➢ Contrasts the linguistic strategies used by American and Taiwanese bosses to tell an employee his/her job performance has been unsatisfactory. An American boss will use statements such as the following: *I am concerned about your performance; I have been extremely concerned about your work performance lately; I don't feel that you're working to your full potential.*

A Taiwanese boss, in contrast will prefer statements such as the following:

> *I don't like your performance; I am not pleased with your performance; I am not satisfied with your performance.*

CHAPTER 9

PARAMETERS OF POLITENESS

9.1 INTRODUCTION

Two types of concepts have been discussed previously: those that relate to the context of interaction in a crucial way, such as politeness, and those that are important from the point of view of structuring the context, such as schema, frame, etc. The concept of politeness is crucial in any communication, but it is more so in crosscultural communication. Hence, a detailed discussion of politeness phenomena is taken up next.

9.2 Politeness Formulae

All human speech communities have "politeness formulas" (Jespersen, 1933,p. 266) such as "good morning," "thank you," "God bless you," "bye-bye." Ferguson (1976, p. 138) hypothesizes that humans have "innate predispositions to the use of interjections and ritualized exchanges in which a given formula triggers an automatic response." Such politeness formulae, however, are not the only way in which human beings interact politely. There are several other devices or strategies that are used, and these vary from one speech community to another. Sociocultural conventions play a very important role in deciding the strategies used in any speech community:

The following is an attempt to set out the parameters along which politeness functions and the instruments or verbal strategies used to display politeness. No society makes use of all these parameters or instruments, and in order to function efficiently in a given society, one must determine what that society's choices are.

Politeness is closely tied to cultural values and one must know the latter if one is to use the former correctly. For example, one of the questions to be asked is: Does the culture defer to the addressee's desires and opinions in a direct manner? In America, the answer is "yes." If a guest refuses the offer of more food, for instance, his/her refusal is accepted at face value and the offer is not repeated. In Poland and India, however, the guest would be encouraged to eat some more and the host will practically insist that (s)he do

so. It does not mean that the Polish and Indian cultures do not defer to the wishes of the guests, it simply means that a refusal of offer for food or drink is not to be accepted readily. Such acceptance suggests the host was not sincere in his/her offer. Only repeated refusals can be accepted with regret. Similarly, the conditions under which compliments are to be paid and how they are to be accepted or rejected differ from culture to culture.

9.3 Parameters of Politeness

The following twelve parameters are important for a study of what being polite means in different cultures:

a.   Values:

The cultural values of a society must be taken into consideration.

- In Australian society, for instance, social distance has a positive value because it is interpreted as showing respect for individuality.

- In Polish society, however, social distance has a negative value because it is taken as showing hostility and alienation or lack of intimacy.

- In some Native American cultures there is a positive value placed on silence in situations where in other cultures people would speak out

b.   *Face*:

Desire to maintain "face" as playing an important role in social interaction. "Face" is defined as the "public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself," consisting of two related aspects:

a. *Negative face*: the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distinction, i.e. to freedom of action and freedom from imposition.

b. *Positive face*: the positive consistent self-image or "personality" (crucially including the desire that the self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants.

In the Western cultural contexts, especially those of English-speaking ones, many speech acts are considered face-threatening acts (Brown and Levinson, 1987, pp. 65–68). They are face-threatening because they restrict the addressee's freedom of action and freedom from imposition.

The following are examples of utterances that illustrate the concepts of negative and positive face-threatening speech acts:

a. Negative face-threatening speech acts:

i. Could you lend me a hundred dollars for a couple of days?

ii. If I were you, I would consult a doctor as soon as possible. That cough sounds dangerous to me.

iii. You are so lucky to have such good friends all over the world!

b. Positive face-threatening speech acts:

iv. Weren't you supposed to complete the report by now?

v. I am not sure I agree with your interpretation of the by-laws.

vi. (One girl friend to another) Mabel thinks you have put on some weight.

The utterance in (i) is said to threaten the negative face of the addressee by imposing a request for a loan on him/her. Suggestions as in (ii) and compliments as in (iii) do the same (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 66): advice and suggestions attempt to put a limit on addressees' choice of action and compliments may signal that the speaker is envious of the addressee and is desirous of acquiring what the addressee has.

C. Status:

According to Linton (1936, p. 113), "status . . . is simply a collection of rights and duties." It is suggested that when the social analyst refers to the term "status" [e.g. mother/child], (s)he is referring to an institutionalized,

systematic relationship. (S)he is more likely to use the term "role" when referring to a social relation that is less institutionalized (e.g. host/guest).

Some languages have conventionalized the assignment of politeness in the use of language for social interaction. According to Makino (1970), Japanese has the following conventions or Politeness Assignment Rule: if the speaker is lower in social status than the hearer, then the utterance has to be polite. If the speaker is higher in social status than the hearer but is lower than the subject of the sentence he is uttering, then the utterance has to be polite.

Otherwise, the utterance can be without the markers of politeness.

d. Rank:

Rank is hierarchically organized with reference to a social institution, e.g. the principal of a school, the commander of an army, etc. In an environment where rank takes precedence over all other considerations in determining speech levels, as in military organizations, there will usually be no ambiguity. One's rank title will often serve as the term of address and will cue the required level of politeness Cultures vary as to which relationships are treated as rank relationships and which ones are treated as status relationships. For instance, in some cultures, a teacher not only commands respect by virtue of his/her rank, (s)he also has a high status. This explains why for many users of Englishes, it is unthinkable to address

one's teacher by his/her first name. This is true of most Asian and African cultures.

e. Role:

Role refers to the less institutionalized position one assumes in some interaction. Examples are host/guest, captain of the team/players in sport, etc. Note that even a lower status person in the role of guest deserves polite

treatment in many cultures. Similarly, the status of older vs. younger brother may not override the role of player vs. captain of the team in a sports event.

f. Power:

Brown and Levinson (1987) describe this as the "ability to impose one's will on others." Power can also be seen as related to status. The higher one's status, the more power is ascribed to one and the more politeness is directed toward one. This seems to be the rule of interaction in general. It is true that in some cases, high status and power do not necessarily coincide. This is true of the system of constitutional monarchy in several countries. In spite of the circumscribed power of monarchy, however, as far as language use is concerned, the royals are still treated as though their status confers power. In British English, or in Japanese, or in Thai, terms of address and

other markers of polite language use still signal the monarch's high status and power.

g. Age:

The relative ages of the speaker and the hearer determine how politeness is to be expressed. In many speech communities, for example, a younger person may not address an older person by his/her name, even if the younger person is of higher status. In India, those domestic servants who have served the family for decades are addressed by a kinship term suffixed to the given name by the children in the family. Martin (1964, p. 41) notes that in nineteenth-century Okinawa a difference in age of only one day was sufficient to require the use of a different level of speech. In Burundi (Albert, 1972, p. 81), "[t]he order in which individuals speak in a group is strictly determined by seniority." Seniority in status, however, takes precedence over seniority in age in Burundi.

h. Sex:

In English, women's speech is supposed to be more polite, and in the presence of women, males are supposed to eschew "the coarseness of

ruffianly men's language: no slang, no swear words, no off-color remarks" (Lakoff, 1975, p. 52). In Hindi, although men may express intimacy and solidarity by using swear words and terms of abuse in face-to-face interaction with their intimate friends, women are not supposed to behave in a similar fashion. Note that sex-difference takes precedence over intimacy in male–female interaction. In many parts of the world, women are not supposed to speak at all in a group meeting. In others, women assume an equal role in debates on social, political, economic, religious and philosophical issues.

i. Social distance:

Brown and Levinson (1987) characterize this as a factor affecting politeness. Social distance is inextricably linked to intimacy: the more intimate the participants are, the less social distance there is between them. Also, the more intimate the participants are, the less polite they are to each other. In fact, in many cultures, use of a markedly coarse style, full of curse and swear words, is a strong indicator of a high degree of intimacy among men (Y. Kachru, 1983).

j. Intimacy:

This may be seen as intimacy of participants or of the setting or both. That is, participants may be in a relationship that is intimate, e.g. husband/wife, brother/sister, friends, and that allows for relaxations of rules of politeness. Or, participants may be in a relationship that is not intimate, such as an employer and an employee, and still may be able to relax the rules of politeness in an informal setting such as a dinner at a mutual friend's home, or a party.

k. Kinship:

The relationship between the participants decides the kind of instruments (i.e. linguistic exponents) used. For instance, in India, one invariably uses the honorific/plural forms of pronouns and agreement patterns in addressing or referring to one's parents-in-law. In Burundi, mother-in-law and son-in-law must address each other as *mufasoni*, "noble," irrespective of their actual caste position.

l. Group membership:

In certain societies, group membership is important in deciding the politeness strategies used. In Japan, for example, certain honorifics are used with out-group members only. With in-group members, a different set of

honorifics is used (Goody, 1978, p. 186), or honorifics may be dispensed with altogether. African Americans in the USA use certain verbal strategies, such as signifying and marking It is worth noting that the parameters listed above are not all equally discrete.

Whereas status, role, and rank are clearly distinguishable, kinship, group membership, social distance, and intimacy are partially overlapping. Kins belong to the same group, but groups may include non-kin members, such as professional colleagues and friends, too. Social distance and intimacy seem to be the two opposing ends of the same cline: intimacy involves minimum social distance. However, intimacy of setting is not included in this cline of social distance. For example, even in the boss's home, employees are expected to use more politeness markers toward the boss than with their co-workers. All these parameters of politeness interact with each other in complex ways. The following observations may be helpful in grasping the complexities resulting from such interactions. First of all, cultural values determine which parameters interact with each other, and which ones are weighted more heavily in comparison with the others. In Western culture, generally speaking, individual face wants are attended to more systematically than the demands of status or age or rank in interactions. In Eastern cultures, status, rank, and age interact with kinship, group membership, social distance, and intimacy in complex ways and take precedence over individual face wants (see

***8.6 Interaction of parameters of politeness*:**

The following three dimensions are useful in analyzing linguistic politeness: social distance vs. intimacy, power vs. lack of it, and formality vs. informality. It is safe to say that those who share their group membership and interact with greater frequency feel closer,

e.g. friends, colleagues, family members. Nevertheless, power relations may interfere with intimacy: normally, a worker does not feel close to a boss though they are members of the same group (i.e. they work for the same company or firm). Also, linguistic display of intimacy is much less in formal contexts than in informal contexts, e.g. two Indian lawyers, even though close friends, must refer to each other as 'my learned friend' in a court setting.

m. Tact:

A discussion of Leech's concept of linguistic *tact* is relevant here. Tact refers to linguistic politeness behavior (Leech, 1983). The factors that are relevant are the same: social distance, power, and formality. For instance, in

the context of a departmental office at an American university, a head of the department may say to his secretary: "Get me the file on our budget for the forthcoming conference." He may not, however, in the same context say: "Get me a cup of coffee." What is considered polite, tactful request depends upon the role relationship: in a boss–secretary relationship, request for a file is appropriate, request for personal service such as a cup of coffee may have to be phrased much more tactfully. If, however, the boss and secretary happen to be good friends in their social context, a more casual verbal interaction is possible.

Instruments of Politeness

Several linguistic devices are used as instruments (i.e. exponents, or linguistic markers) of politeness in different languages (see, D'souza, 1988 for a description of such devices in South Asian languages). It does not follow that what is polite in one language is necessarily polite in other languages, too. For instance, establishing a relationship on first-name basis as quickly as possible is considered polite in social relationships in the USA. This was not true of Britain until recently, and even now it is not favored in all situations; it is even less true in India. The following twelve devices— some linguistic and others extra-linguistic—have definite functions in expressing politeness:

a. Pronouns of address:

Status (or relatively greater social distance) and **solidarity**

(or intimacy or group membership) are two dimensions of social relations

b. Honorifics:

The use of honorifics is a very common way of showing politeness. One society that makes maximum use of this device is the Japanese. The following will give us some idea of the complexity of the Japanese system of using honorifics to convey politeness. According to Yamanashi (1974), the Japanese language has three basic types of honorifics:

H-I: Speaker honors individuals whose social status is higher than his by marking them, their states of affairs, and/or actions with honorifics.

H-II: Speaker indirectly honors individuals of higher status by marking in a humilitary way the individuals in the speaker's group, their states of affairs, and/or actions.

H-III: Speaker honors his interlocutor, whose status is respected, in the performative act by marking the end of the whole surface sentence.

For instance, if the speaker is of higher social status than the referent Yamada, and his son, the speaker may say:

a. Yamada ga musuko to syokuzi o tanosinda.

Yamada enjoyed dinner with (his) son.

If, however, the speaker is not of higher status, he will use:

b. Yamada-*san* ga musuko-*san* to *o*-syokuzi o tanosim-*are*-ta.

Yamadah enjoyedh hdinner with (his) sonh.

The superscript h indicates honorific marking, the Japanese honorific elements are in italics. Note that the item *are* is a marker of passive. The passive morphology is used in referring to the actions of people of higher status.] If the son being mentioned is the speaker's son and the speaker is of lower status than Yamada, the following is appropriate:

Yamada-*san* ga musuko to *o*-syokuzi o tanosim-*are*-ta.

Yamadah enjoyedh hdinner with (speaker's) son.

Similarly, different forms will be used if the son belongs to someone whose

social status is higher than speaker and in addition, the speaker is higher than Yamada. Since English does not make available devices such as special honorific pronouns or honorific markers dispersed throughout the sentence, users of other varieties use certain English items, such as *honorable* or *respected* or *sir*, in the same way as their native language expressions. In India, it is not uncommon for visiting British or American

c. Kinship terms:

Kinship terms are sometimes used for people unrelated to the speaker. Thus, in order to soften a request or a refusal, in many of the Indian and other Asian languages, the speaker will address the listener as *mother*, *brother*, *sister*, or with some other kin term. Even complete strangers may be thus addressed, e.g. in a shop, if the shopkeeper cannot agree to the price the customer suggests as a fair price for the merchandise. In many of the world's languages, including the Indian languages, *Uncle* and *Aunt* are appropriate terms of address for strangers older than oneself in ordinary circumstances. Among the Nuer people of the Sudan, older men will address younger men as *gatada*, "my son."

d. Set formulas:

Ferguson (1976) notes that "in general the structure of politeness formulas varies in constituency and intensity in correlation with a number of social dimensions." He lists these "social dimensions" as:

a. length of time elapsed since previous encounter,

b. distance between communicators,

c. number of individuals in the relevant groups, and

d. relative social status of the communicators.

In a study of Syrian Arabic politeness formulas, "the Syrian Arabic speech community uses hundreds of politeness formulas, many of them occurring in stereotyped initiator-and-response sequences."
A specific initiator formula is automatically followed by the appropriate response,
e.g.

a. *alla ma*?*ak* "God be with you" is invariably replied to with:

b. *alla yihfazak* "God preserve you."

In the Hindi speech community in India, the greeting addressed to an elder, *pran.aam*, is always replied to with *xusˇ raho* 'May you be happy' or, *jiite raho* (masculine) or *jiitii raho* (feminine) "May you live long." Some such pairs may seem deliberately non-communicative as in the Korean formulaic

"Where are you going?" (said upon meeting an acquaintance in the street) and the response "Just over there."

e. Plurals:

In many languages, the plural may be used to indicate politeness when addressing a single person, e.g. in certain dialects of Polish, which makes a gender distinction, polite forms are plural and masculine regardless of the sex of the addressee. In Standard Russian, Czech, and Serbo-Croatian, the pronoun, the verbs, particles, and adjectives that are in agreement with the pronoun are all plural, only the predicate noun remains in singular if the addressee is a single person, e.g. *Vi ste* (pl.) *bili* (pl.) "You were good," as opposed to *Vi ste* (pl.) *bili* (pl.) *studentkinja* (sg.) "You were a good student"

f. Questions:

In some societies, questions are used to express politeness, e.g. in English, "Could you tell me the time?" is more polite than "Tell me the time!" (Note that not all questions are polite, e.g. "What time is it?" is not very polite in English. Usually, the questions need to take account of the addressee's ability or convenience.)

g. Use of "a little":

Many languages use the phrase "a little" to convey the meaning carried by English "please" in imperatives, e.g. Tamil *koncam* "a little" (Brown and Levinson, 1978, p. 144), Tzeltal *ala* "a little" Bengali *ekt.u* "a little", Hindi *zaraa* "a little", etc. The following sentences illustrate this use:

 a. Tamil: *oru paise koncham kut.unka caami.* one cent a little give sir

"Could you please give me a cent?"

b. Tzeltal: *ya hk'an?ala pesuk.*

"I want a little peso's worth as it were."

c. Bengali: *jaamaat.a debe ekt.u?*

shirt cl. give will a little

"Will you give me the shirt, please?"

d. Hindi: *zaraa idh*ar aanaa.

a little here come inf.

"Come here, please."

In Japanese "chotto" (a little) can be used by itself to express a number of meanings such as "Excuse me," "Please pay attention," or "Come here."

h. Hedges:

Hedges are often used for politeness, e.g. "John is sorta short" instead of "John is short." suggests that hedges are used in societies in order to reduce friction in that they leave the way open for the respondent to disagree with the speaker and the speaker to retreat. Hesitations serve much the same purpose. "one might say that strategic elements like hesitation and high pitch appear to have similar meanings across cultures because there is something about social interaction which gives them a sort of 'basic meaning'." Hedges are encoded in particles, adverbials, parenthetical clauses, and gestures and body postures

i. Gaze, gesture, and body posture:

In many societies, certain types of gaze, gestures, and body posture convey politeness and others convey the opposite meaning. For instance, in the Inner Circle, it is not considered polite to get closer than 20 inches to the person one is conversing with. In certain Arab societies, however, to maintain such a physical distance is considered rude. Hall (1966) and Watson (1970) divide cultures into two types: contact and non-contact.

Those from contact cultures tend to stand closer, speak louder, and touch more while those from non-contact groups do not touch much in similar situations of interaction. In some cultures, touching certain parts of the body (e.g. head in Thai culture) is forbidden. In many Asian societies, couples do not touch each other in public. The non-contact groups do not face each other as much or look at each other as much in an interaction as do the contact groups. According to Argyle and Cook (1976), once gaze patterns have been learnt in childhood, they remain unaffected by later experience. Navaho Indians are taught not to gaze directly at another person during a conversation (Hall, 1966). The Japanese are taught to look at the neck, not at the eye. Indians are taught to look down, toward the interlocutor's feet, when talking to elders. Too much direct gaze is regarded as superior, disrespectful, threatening, or insulting by Africans, Indians, and Asians in general. Arabs, Latin Americans, and Southern Europeans belong to the contact group whereas Asians (including South Asians), Northern Europeans, and in general Americans are in the non-contact group. Nevertheless, there is a difference in mutual gaze between Asians, Africans, and Native Americans on the one hand, and Europeans on the other. In the USA, the English-speaking community certainly considers an unwillingness to look directly in the eye as signaling insincerity or lack of respect.

j. Bowing

Bowing is another way of showing politeness. It is very common in East Asian societies such as the Japanese and, to a lesser extent, the Korean. The depth and duration of the bow varies according to status, age, etc. In India, in general, to sit with one's head bowed is seen as a mark of respect for the elders present in the room. In the USA and several parts of the world, nodding one's head up and down signals "yes" or agreement, and shaking one's head side to side signals "no" or disagreement. In Southern India, however, bending one's head from side to side, with the head inclined toward the shoulder, signals "yes" and nodding one's head side to side, with the head held straight, signals "no." Particular gestures have particular meanings in different cultures. For example, in the USA, raising a hand and making a circle with the thumb and the forefinger is a signal that something is fine, or perfect. But in Japan, it is a gesture for money; in France, for zero, and hence worthless; and in Greece, an obscene comment or insult to a male or a female.

CHAPTER 10

MALE-FEMALE RELATIONSHIP

People's ideas about appropriate behavior for men and women are deeply-held, and having been planted within them from a very early age. People tend to believe strongly that their own ideas on the subject are correct and other ideas are wrong or somehow inferior. People's ideas about what is proper in male-female relationship do not change easily.

Foreign visitors usually find that American pattern in male-female relationship are different from the ones to which they are accustomed. If they become involved with members of the opposite sex, as lover or friend, they are likely to have strong, negative reactions. At very least, they will be confused and unsettled.

Besides this strongly-held ideas about what is and is not acceptable, there is another obstacle in understanding men-female relationship namely stereotype. People's stereotype about gender might become a great barrier in understanding male-female relationship.

10.1 Stereotype about American Men and Women

As stated in previous chapter, stereotypes are generalizations of people groups which are deep-rooted in the psyche of the people. People stereotype others based on what they see, their experience, or may be from the media.

Foreigners typically hold two stereotypes about American men and women. American women are stereotyped as inhibited women due to their sexual activity with a variety of men. The other common stereotype is that they are domineering. Related to this, American men are stereotyped as weak because they let themselves to be dominated by women. However, this stereotype is not the representative of the whole society.

10.2 Women and Gender Discrimination

Many of the stereotypes that result in gender discrimination are not only descriptive, but also prescriptive beliefs about how men and women. For example, women who are considered to be too assertive or men who lack physical strength are often criticized and historically faced societal backlash. They can also facilitate or impede intellectual performance, such as the stereotype threat that lower women's performance on mathematics tests, due to the stereotype that women have inferior quantitative skills

compared to men's, or when the same stereotype leads men to assess their own task ability higher than women performing at the same level. Gender discrimination or sexism refers to prejudice or discrimination based on gender, as well as conditions that foster stereotypes of gender roles. There are several prominent ways in which gender discrimination continues to play a role in modern society. Occupational sexism refers to discriminatory practices, statements, and/or actions based on a person's gender which occur in a place of employment. Wage discrimination in which gender is perceived to be a barrier to professional advancement, and sexual harassment in the workplace are all examples of occupational sexism.

Violence against women, including sexual assault, domestic violence, and sexual slavery, remains a serious problem around the world. Many also argue that the objectification of women, such as in pornography, also constitutes a form of gender discrimination.

10.3 Women Liberation

The term ‗women liberation' refers to collection of opinions and developments that seek to end discrimination against women. Equal right for women is the goal. Adherent of the women's liberation movement urge that school textbooks and teachers take note of women contributions to

history, science, and other fields. They argue for an end to what they see as stereotyping of women on television and other media. They seek to raise the consciousness of all American concerning what they consider to have been a pervasive, unfair, and unwarranted anti-female attitude in society.

The themes underlying women's liberation movement are individualism, independence, and equality. They believe that women have been unfairly denied the rights and opportunities that all American citizen ought to have.

Women liberation brings many impacts to men-female relationship, such as:

10.4 Women working and househusband

In 1960's, only 33,3% of the American work force was female. By the 1985, the percentage had risen to 54,7. More and more women, both single and married, are working outside their homes. Women liberation no doubt has something to do with this situation. Difficult economic time has contributed to the increase in female participation in the labor force. Moreover, advanced technology also influence the role of women outside the house.

Couple of decades ago, women spent many hours a day for doing household chores. It made them less time for working outside or having work. With the invention of advanced life tool, such as washing machine.

Single parent

The single parent family in the United States is increasing markedly. According to U.S census information, the number of families headed by a single parent has more than doubled in the past 20 years. Most single-parent households are headed by women. Most of these women were once married, although an increasing number of American women are deliberately having children with no intention of having husband.

Analyze this situation!
Li, is a Japanese student in a sixth grade math class.

    Teacher : okay, class. Please take out the homework. I want to review the answer to the problems you did. Li, what's the answer to number one?

    Li : (looks down his paper)

    Teacher : Li, please look at me when you're called on. Did you do the assignment?

Li : (shyly) Yes, Ms. Davidson. The answer is 31. I always do my homework.

Teacher : Good! Now remember, I want you to speak up when you know the answer. We're all take part in this class.

Later, after the class.

Li : is Ms. Davidson angry at me? She always seems to call me.

Jack : She's not annoyed. She wants us to participate in the class to speak up when we know the answer.

Li : but I don't want to be impolite

Jack : don't worry, you're doing fine. You always do the homework, and know the answer correctly.

EXERCISES II.

1. What is meant by:
a. Norms
b. Values
c. beliefs
2. What is cross cultural understanding?
3. How can cross cultural misunderstanding arise?
4. Mention the cultural patterns of behavior!

5. Mention types of culture!

6. What is:

a. Cultural relativism

b. Cultural universals

c. Ethnocentrism

7. What is language?

8. Language and culture are intertwined. Explain!

9. Give an example on how language can cause cross cultural misunderstanding!

CHAPTER 11

NATIONALITY CULTURE

American culture has been enriched by the values and belief systems of virtually every part of the world. Consequently, it is impossible to be comprehensive. Nevertheless, a few selected values are at the core of the American value system.

11.1 Freedom

Americans commonly regard their society as the freest and best in the world. Americans' understanding of freedom is shaped by the Founding Fathers' belief that all people are equal and that the role of the government is to protect each person's basic —inalienable‖ rights. The U.S. Constitution's Bill

of Rights assures individual rights, including provisions for freedom of speech, press and religion. No one single church dominates or controls in the US, there is a religious diversity.

Americans' notion of freedom focuses on the individual, and individualism has strong philosophical roots in America. Thomas Jefferson believed that a free individual's identity should be held sacred and that his or her dignity and integrity should not be violated.

Individualism, understood not only as self-reliance but also as economic self-sufficiency, has been a central theme in American history. Frontiers heroes who braved the wilderness alone, farmers whose success depended on their ability to confront the hardships of land and resourcefulness, the celebration of the small businessman who became a financial success on his own; individual proprietorship in business is still extolled as the ideal.

Erica   **:** Welcome to America Chintya. How's it going? I'm Erica Kay.

Chintya : How do you do, madam Erica. Thank you for showing me your station. Im studying radio broadcasting at the University of Minnesota. I look forward to meet your staff.

Erica : Just call me Erica…

(A man enters a room)

Erica : Hi Fred! How's it going! Glad you're back from vacation. We missed you here

Fred : Hi Erica. How are you doing girl?

(***He slaps Erica's open palm with his palm***)

Erica : Bad boy! You've been late for 15 minutes in your first day!

Fred : Terribly sorry for that. I had a very bad jet lag.

Erica : oh Fred...meet Chintya...she's from Senegal.

Fred : What's happening girl?

Chintya : I'm visiting your station, Sir.

11.2. Nationality stereotypes

Generalizations about cultures or nationalities can be a source of pride, anger or simply bad jokes. Some people say that in all stereotype there is some basis in reality, as they don't develop in vacuum. Nationality stereotype is a system of culture-specific beliefs connected with the nationality of a person. This system includes beliefs concerning those properties of human beings that may vary across nations, such as appearance, language, food, habits, psychological traits, attitudes, values etc.‖

Here are some national stereotypes famous in the world:

- **American** : arrogant; assertive; open-minded; materialistic; ambitious; progressive; efficient; straight-forward; alert; practical; US-centered world view; egoistic; anxious; fast food eaters.

- **Arabs** : intelligent; modest; insecure; anxious; impulsive; —billionaires, bombers and belly dancers—, men wear beards and are womanizers; have subservient and repressed women who wear burka or headscarf; —play & pray‖ attitude; love celebrations and ceremonies; tea and shisha are important.

Argentinians : disagreeable; megalomaniac; warm and friendly people; can be vain & arrogant; beautiful women; cultured society; lazy.

- **Australians** : nature lovers; surf all day – drink all night; open-minded; free spirited; men are useless dads; uncultured; sports lovers; meat eaters.

- **Belgians** : make good beer; poor personal hygiene; dishonest in money matters; make bad lovers; distrust of authority; tax evaders; eat only french & fries.

- **Brazilians** : impulsive; incestuous; megalomaniac; most women are super-models, most men are gay or machos; always late; soccer lover; active; inventive and constructive people; always trying to

outwit government and regulations; impossibly favor-oriented; family- and community-oriented.

- **British (UK)** : lousy food; bad teeth and hygiene; rude; thin; smoke cigar or pipe; heavy drinkers; swear all day long; artistic; deep thinkers; intelligent and articulate; boastful; anti-American; ride bikes.

- **Chinese** : stingy and noisy spitters; fast-learners; open-minded; ambitious; progressive; efficient; materialistic; do kung fu and other material arts; great at mathematics; terrible drivers; arrogant; assertive;

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